

# Focus on Forage

## Friday, September 13, 2019

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### Harvest Order

Many factors go into the order we harvest fields. Our scouting will tell us a lot about starch levels. We may have to begin chopping fields with only 50% milk line. As harvest continues we should expect starch levels to go up from 0.5 to 1.0 percent per day. Entire plants can be expected to dry down in the neighborhood of 0.5 to 1.0 percentage points per day depending on weather conditions.



As we can see in the accompanying picture, chipping a sample of plants is one way to estimate whole plant dry matter. **The CVAS lab on Clinton Street in Batavia will run a dry matter tests for \$6/sample. Drop the sample before noon and have results by noon the following**

**day.**

We will balance the risks of frost with harvesting plants with higher whole plant dry matter and higher starch content.

But, what to do with the few fields that just are not going to have adequate grain development? If we have an opportunity in our harvest schedule to pause for a week or two to allow more mature fields to accumulate extra starch we could use this gap to chop these immature fields.

Store “high-forage, low grain” forage from these “gap” fields separately. It makes sense to plan on using this for dry cows and heifers that do well on this kind of feed with a lower energy level than mature corn silage.

Our next **Focus on Forage** will deal with processing.

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