

Fact Sheet

Clamp Construction and Preparation for Crimped Maize

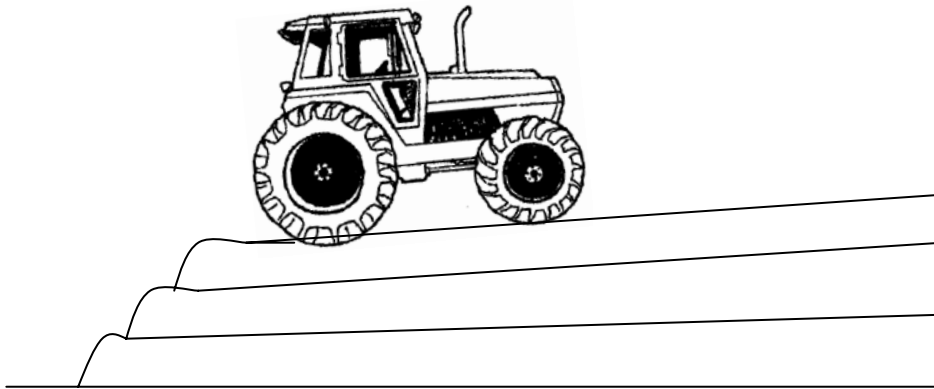
Clamping Crimped Maize is easy; however there are a few things that need attention to detail to avoid any spoilage or energy loss through heating.

The Clamp must be of solid construction ideally with a concrete floor. Although conventional concrete or sleeper walls are ideal, many farmers have ensiled crimped maize very successfully with improvised temporary clamps, with walls built from materials as diverse as pallets and stakes lined with 30mm ply supported by half tonne fert bags, or big straw/hay bales. Big bales are not ideal however as they attract vermin.

Which ever construction is used it is important that the walls don't move and are strong enough to withstand the pressure from a vehicle used to compact the crimped feed.

The sides of the clamp should be lined with 1000 gauge polythene sheeting.

The crimped maize should be layered into the clamp about 8-10 inches deep and then each layer should be rolled in to exclude any air before the next layer is added.



The width and the length of the clamp will depend on the feed out rate and of course the amount to clamp. You should aim to get across the clamp at least once a week by about 1 meter in depth to ensure clamp face management is easy to control.

Example:

A clamp that is 5 meters wide and 1.5 meters high and taken 1 meter back a week would give you about 7 tonnes in total therefore 1 tonne a day for feed out.

Once the clamp is made and rolled it should be sheeted down using a double layer of plastic, then wall to wall tyres should be placed on top for an air tight finish.

You may start feeding from the clamp straight away if you do so keep the sheet cut back on the edge of the clamp leaving the face open in between feeding times. If a loose sheet is pulled over the front that is not air tight the face may sweat leading to heating.

At feed out use a Shear Grab as this leaves a perfect seal on the clamp face. If you only have a bucket, chisel the face in a downward action so as not to lift the crimped grain behind it inserting air.

REMEMBER:

Consolidate to exclude oxygen seal clamp well to keep oxygen out. This will eliminate heat and therefore eliminate waste.