

RAVEN AG TEAM MONTHLY UPDATE - November 2009

Greetings from the Raven Ag Team: Message Archive

Hello,

I am going to start this month's update by asking the question "Is anyone else tired of the weather this fall"? Here in the upper Midwest, we have been experiencing a couple days of rain every week. While the moisture is appreciated, because we can always use the subsoil moisture, the progress of the harvest is off substantially. Most of the soybeans in the field are going to have to be taken wet and the corn never really made it to maturity. The silver lining is the yields appear to be up in most areas of the country.

I assume you already knew about the challenges, because you are living them. The thing I wanted to be sure you are aware of is that things are going to get pretty dicey this fall with storage. I would expect that the days where combines can run, the elevators are going to quickly get filled up with wet corn. It takes time to dry 25% moisture corn, so how's this going to work? I would typically NOT SUGGEST this, but it is something to think about within the current circumstances. What about temporarily storing the wet corn on the ground, so you don't bury the elevator and can continue to take in bushels? I know you are thinking "this guy is nuts", but let me explain why I would do it this way. If you are taking in wet bushels anyhow, this will allow your customers to get the crop out of the field, which is the biggest hurdle. IF YOU COVER the piles while you make them, it would be much like putting it into the bin as far as the condition of the grain goes. This fall is going to be a lot of work, no question, but by using either Raven's 6 mil or 8 mil GrainMax™ covers, we can help your business manage the risk of grain condition by keeping the elements off the grain and assist in keeping the heat off the grain with our white/black design.

What does the color have to do with it? The white assists in diffusing the light of the sun, keeping the surface of the cover cooler and the black provides the opaqueness to keep any light from the grain. Merriam-Webster defines opaque as "exhibiting opacity: blocking the passage of radiant energy and especially light". I have seen some really nasty grain in my days in the elevator management world, so take my word that COVERING THE GRAIN IS CRITICAL. Do the math, let's say you have a 75,000 bu. pile of corn (which is very small) and you have paid \$3/bu. If you have 5% shrink, your cost would be \$11,250, but if you had 10, 15 or even 20% shrink, which is very possible with an uncovered pile of grain getting rain or snow, and you can very quickly see the thousands of dollars you can add to your bottom line. On top of all of this, the people running the elevator will be very happy to be bringing in grain that isn't all crusty and still having to run it through the dryer. Finally, there come those issues of how to get rid of it, once it's dry, but that's a whole topic on its own.

Raven is ready to help you with all your grain cover needs. We have the ability of getting covers turned quickly for you, but some forethought should be done on the size and location for your pile. If you already know how wide your pile is going to be (typically calculated by the height of the peak), but do not have the length. It would definitely be in your best interest to give this some thought and get your covers ordered, so they are ready and on your yard, when you need them. I would like to close by wishing you all a happy Thanksgiving and a safe and successful harvest!

Rodney Scholten
National Market Sales Specialist - Agriculture