**Maintenance Tip: Silo Roofs**

**Presented as a Public Service for the purposes of Farm Safety**

**LET’S TALK SILOS - SILO SENSE - COMMON SENSE**

**For many years, tower silos have stood – like soldiers standing at attention – protecting farmers valuable feed crop – protecting it from not only spoilage but against contamination and other negative outside sources. Tower Silos have performed so well and for so long that often little attention is given to their value and importance on the farm, or to their maintenance.**

Hemispherical domes; they adorn churches, homes, parks and they can even be found at Disney World. They’re architectural wonders. They’re free standing, requiring no trusses or rafters. They come in sizes of up to 36’ in diameter. They are economical and easy to install and are beautiful.

These domes and the engineering for them was developed for farm silos. Because your silo roof is the “highpoint” of your farmstead, you want it to look good. New roofs have replaced old roofs on many silos just to make the farm more attractive. One thing about a silo roof, you certainly can’t hide it.

So, how do you take care of this unique architectural structure, this hemispheric dome the “high point” of the farm that protects your feed? Fiberglass, aluminum, aluminized, steel, galvalume, galvanized, Railoc, DeMuth, Lancaster, Madison and Fiberdome are all different manufacturers and materials. But, the recipe for roof care remains the same.

First, keep your roof tight and your door closed. Depending upon the style of roof, you may want to take a bungie up with you after filling to make sure it stays closed. If your roof is damaged, fit it. An open roof gathers the wind and eventually will come apart.

When your silo is full, clean the feed off the top of the silo wall. If this feed is left there, it will pick up condensation off the inside of the roof and eventually rot the bottom of the roof sheets and roof mounting brackets. With the materials being used today, rust on the outside of the roof shouldn’t be an issue for a long time. If you have an older roof that is rusting, with the right equipment, it can be painted.

If birds are finding their way into your silo, a little sheet metal, self-tapping screws and a cordless drill will fix it up in a hurry. The challenge today in roof repair is that many of the manufacturers have discontinued business, so replacement parts may not be available.

**Your tower silo is protecting your valuable feed. It needs to be in top notch condition to do its job. You can’t expect it to do its job if it’s not maintained. If your roof is showing signs of wear or rusting, repair or replace as needed. And remember: ----- If you have roof damage, fit it right away!**

Disclaimer

These articles are contributed by Bruce Johnson of Wisconsin Silos. They are meant to be informative and fun to read. They are not all inclusive. Your best source of information is the International Silo Association Operator’s manual or call the International Silo Association at 610-607-3622.