

TESTIMONY OF JOHN F. HALL

BEFORE THE

ANIMAL FEEDING OF DISTILLER'S DRIED GRAIN STUDY  
COMMITTEE

SENATOR OLIVE  
REPRESENTATIVE WHITAKER

IOWA SENATE CHAMBERS

DES MOINES, IOWA

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My name is John Hall. My sons and I are fifth and sixth generation cattle producers located in Northern Polk County. Our family also operates a corn milling co-product brokerage and delivery business, handling both wet and dry milled products.

First of all I want to state that corn co-products can be very beneficial to the livestock industry in Iowa. By consuming the co-products close to the site of their production there is a significant cost savings in freight alone, an advantage to all parties involved.

I think the next most important task that is essential to co-product feeding is nomenclature or the understanding of descriptive terms. Many of the products are dried to approximately 10% moisture and called dried distillers grains or DDGs . Those dried with distillers syrup included are DDGS or dried distillers grains with solubles. Syrup is approximately 70% moisture-30% dry matter. DDGS is also a product of ethanol manufacturing. It can also be fed directly to cattle as a liquid feed. "Wet cake", "wet feed", "wet gluten" and "sweet bran" are also other common names heard in the industry.

These are all nutritious and valuable livestock feeds when used appropriately. Due to their varying individual characteristics they are not always used for the same purpose nor can they all be stored in the same way. As you can see, this can be very confusing unless everybody knows exactly which feed stuff is being used and for what purpose.

The next problem of uniformity that needs to be recognized is that feed material leaving plants is not all the same because types of milling processes are substantially different.

The particle size, fat content, suspension of fat in the syrup and sulfur content can vary greatly from plant to plant. Trying to develop uniform, industry-wide nutrient labels would not be appropriate and may be nearly impossible. Even the growing season may have considerable influence on co-product value. Also, as different feed stuff materials for the plant are introduced variability becomes wide. "Fractionation" and improved fermentation methods may produce great differences. New enzymes and fermentation processes are being continually added to our ethanol plants further diversifying nutrient profiles.

I firmly believe that any purchaser of co-products needs to be told exactly what is in each load, but load to load and day to day variations can occur. Some plants and companies have extensively researched their own products and have branded their products as such. Cargill "Sweet Bran" and "Dakota Gold" from Poet (formerly Broin) come to mind. These products command a higher price and some feel that their consistency is worth the extra cost.

When I caution that at present developing a uniform state-wide nutrient label is not appropriate I do not in the slightest way feel the state should turn its back on co-product feeding. I feel that funding more unbiased research at the university level is of extreme importance. We, meaning all of animal agriculture, have barely scratched the surface of knowledge in feeding co-products. About all that we know to date is that the rumen of a beef animal is a very forgiving organ and fairly wide variations of feed stuffs can be tolerated without harming the animal or hurting its performance. Dairy, pork and poultry

have much more precise needs and cannot tolerate even the narrowest of nutrient variations. Scientists tell us about sulfur concentrations and problems therein, but some animals tolerate this problem well and it is lethal to others. There are also some people that are very concerned that co-products above minimal amounts can cause reproductive problems in cattle. Concerns about carcass quality, cost of gain, and composition of fat in the animal also may still need to be addressed. Without first addressing these and perhaps other questions involving animal performance and tolerance levels, a nutrient label is of no value and is not a necessity. Research is the key and because of Iowa's unique location and lower freight costs we will be able to use co-products to a distinct advantage in our state.

Again, as a state of relatively small producers we need public research that can be used here in Iowa. Otherwise, large western feeders that can conduct their own research will haul our good feed right past our front doors and use it to their financial advantage. The feed that goes west will have to be sold by our Iowa corn millers at a reduced price and reduced profitability to cover greater freight costs.

Thank you very much for asking me to be here and for your time. I will be very happy to answer any questions.