PIONEER® BRAND SILAGE INOCULANTS – WHY PAY MORE?

Why should I pay more for Pioneer® brand inoculants, aren't most inoculants the same?

Strain differences between silage additives appear similar to producers simply because they contain the same genus/species information on the label (e.g. *Lactobacillus plantarum*). However, there are tremendous genetic differences between individual strains within a species. Many inoculant companies claim that all *Lactobacillus plantarum* are the same and paying more for Pioneer products is simply "paying for the Pioneer brand name." While product labels may read similar, there are differences in bacterial stains just like there are differences in the milk production potential of Friesian and Hereford cattle (both of which have the zoological classification *Bos Taurus*).

What about products that claim to have higher bacterial counts?

When Pioneer® brand inoculants are applied correctly they provide 100,000 colony forming units (CFUs) per gram of fresh forage. This is consistent with industry standards and is the level shown to give the claimed benefits in Pioneer research. Bacterial counts are not as significant as many competitors would have you believe because "activity" is just as important as "counts." Products containing less competitive bacterial strains may need to be applied in higher amounts to achieve the same result as a quality product applying 100,000 CFUs per gram of fresh forage of a more competitive lactic-acid producing strain.

What allows some competitors to sell their products so cheap?

There are over 100 inoculant products on the market worldwide. It would be a tremendous financial drain to test against competitors because animal trials (the only true test) can cost upwards of $30,000 - $60,000 per trial. Undoubtedly, as soon as a comparison is made against one product, producers will want comparisons against yet another product. When Pioneer releases new products, they have made the decision to make comparisons against control silage (without inoculant) and their current best product. Customers can then see the relative improvement in shrinkage, fermentation parameters (e.g. pH, ammonia nitrogen, volatile fatty acid (VFA) profiles) and animal performance against an untreated control. One way for farmers to make product comparisons **is to ask competitors for their animal data against an untreated control.** Many competitors have no animal data (and often very little fermentation data as well) even against an untreated control.

What makes Pioneer inoculants worth the extra cost?

Pioneer® brand inoculants:

1. Contain patented bacterial strains.
2. Include crop specific inoculant products.
3. Are supported by statistically significant data from trials conducted under controlled research conditions.
4. Have guaranteed bacterial counts on the label.
5. Are assured with an ISO 9001:2015 accredited quality control system.
6. Can be applied by exclusive Appli-Pro® inoculant application systems.
7. Are supported by a team of Animal Nutritionists, Forage Specialists and Area Managers who fully understand silage.

Why can't I see the animal response your product claims in my livestock?

The animal performance data generated under controlled, research conditions are difficult to

replicate on-farm. This fact has helped generic, un-researched products claim that “they are just like Pioneer.”

When an animal is only consuming a few kilograms of drymatter of silage per day, it makes the additional animal performance difficult to observe in the vat, because the normal daily variation (e.g. 2-3 litres of milk/cow/day) created by a number of factors including fluctuations in pasture intake and quality, climatic changes can overshadow the improvements from using silage inoculants. That is why very controlled research situations are necessary to prove performance.

Pioneer strains improve the rate of nutrient digestion in the limited time they reside in the digestive tract of high producing animals. Unfortunately, traditional forage analyses measures the quantity of a nutrient (like fibre or protein) but do not measure the rate of digestion of these nutrients.

For more information visit www.pioneer.co.nz

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