

## THE ADVANTAGES OF STATIONARY CUBING

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We have been cubing with a John Deere stationary unit for 4 years. Prior to that we ran 3 field cubers for 3 years. With the stationary unit, the hay is put into windrows as it is for baling. The same day it is ready to bale, it is ready to chop. We chop it as soon as the dew is off the hay. We chop it the same length as the field cubers and blow it into covered trailers that hold approximately 7 tons. The hay is brought to the cuber and dumped on a blacktop slab, ready to be cubed. We have found that leaving the hay 2 or 3 days on the blacktop before cubing, produces a denser cube. After cubing, the cubes are handled the same way as with a field unit.

I feel that there is a place for both the field and stationary cubers. With the stationary cuber, there must be enough hay available within a 10 mile radius to supply at least 10,000 tons of hay. Hauling the chopped hay to the stationary cuber is the most costly item in stationary cubing. With the stationary unit there is no lost time because of the humidity being too high, either in chopping or cubing. We can also get a more uniform cube with a constant flow of hay.

With the stationary unit, we can make a 50% concentrate grain mix cube, and get a very good cube. We also make a good cube with off quality hay for dry stock. Another advantage is that wire and foreign material can be removed from the chopped hay with magnets. With the field cuber, as far as I know, there is no way to get the hay to run thru magnets. There is also less field compaction with the way we are set up than with field cubers.

The cost of setting up for 10,000 tons of cubes, either way, stationary or field cubing, is practically the same. Also, the cost of producing the cubes is very close. I feel the main advantage with the stationary unit is the production of a more uniform cube in quality and density. Of major importance to the feeder is the ability to take out the hardware. There is also the added advantage of being able to make a grain cube.

Some type of binder is a must to get a satisfactory cube. There have been different materials used as a binder. Some were very good, but too costly. By using one type of binder, the cost would be approximately \$4.00 more per ton for the cubes, which would be too costly for the cattle feeders. At the present time it seems Bentonite is doing a good job, and the present cost is such that the cube price does not have to be raised. Again, with the stationary unit, it is much simpler to build a unit to put a binder in with the hay than it would be with a field cuber.