

PIONEER

A YATES FAMILY BUSINESS



MAIZE

for Silage

2026-2027



Nothing else compares

As the Weir family looks ahead, they see a major role for maize.



Silage inoculants
proven to
perform

Staying
safe around
silage

A new
high-yielding
BMR forage



PIONEER
BRAND • SEEDS



Welcome to the 2026-27 season issue of the Pioneer Maize Silage Catalogue which contains information on our latest maize, forage and inoculant product line-up. It also includes technical articles on establishing a high-yielding maize silage crop and keeping safe around silage. We are grateful to silage stack collapse survivor Rebecca Ford, who has allowed us to share her harrowing story on pages 26-27. Thanks also to the Weir (pages 10-13), Nutting (pages 28-31) and Bagot (pages 44-47) families who have shared the stories behind their successful farming businesses.

This season's Pioneer maize line-up includes 12 industry-leading hybrids covering a range of silage maturities and includes brown mid-rib (BMR) and imidazolinone-tolerant (IT) options. Whether you are milking cows in Queensland, Western Australia, Tasmania or anywhere in between, you will find the right hybrid for your paddock in our comprehensive range.

We are pleased to introduce our new brown mid-rib sudan Prime BMR to our forage range. This exciting new hybrid delivers outstanding quality and exceptional yield potential, making it the premium choice for intensive grazing or high-quality conserved feed. We have also added Pioneer® brand 11GFT grass and cereal silage inoculant to our range. 11GFT is formulated to improve fibre digestibility and fermentation efficiency, while also improving aerobic stability at feed out.

Last year, Pioneer Seeds celebrated 50 years since the company first began selling seed to Australian farmers. This year marks another significant milestone - the centennial anniversary of the Pioneer brand and its global business. Sincere thanks to the generations of farmers and those others who supply and support them, who have helped shape the company's development through the years.

During the past year, many of you will have had the opportunity to meet our Dairy Specialists, Greg Morris and Leighton Hart, who are based in Gippsland and Western Districts respectively. Greg and Leighton bring broad dairy experience and are available to share their knowledge with those looking to improve on-farm productivity and profitability. Feel free to call them directly or contact them through your local Pioneer representative.

We appreciate your support of Pioneer products and wish you all the best for the 2026-27 season.

With warmest regards,

Ben Vercoe
Pioneer® Seeds Summer Crop Portfolio Manager



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SAME CROP, DIFFERENT NAME

Maize silage is also known as corn silage in some regions of Australia. Both terms refer to silage made from the plant species *Zea mays* and can be used interchangeably.



PIONEER LONG LOOK

We strive to produce the best products on the market.

We deal honestly and fairly with customers, employees and business associates.

We vigorously market our products, but without misrepresentation.

We provide helpful management information to assist customers in making optimum profits from our products.

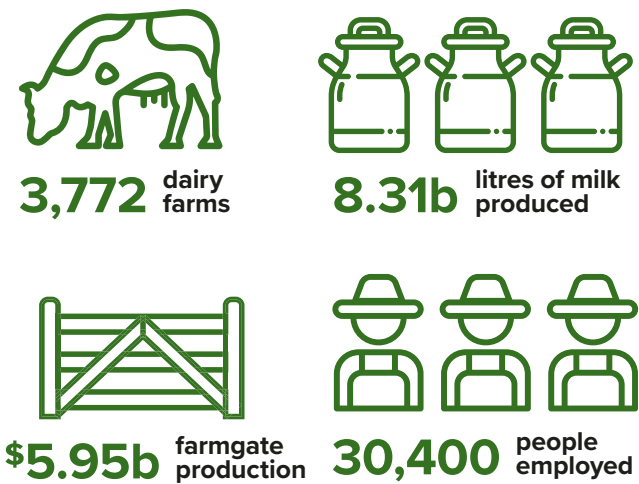




Feed of the future

Whichever way you look at it, dairy farming is a vital industry for Australia providing revenue and employment as well as high quality dairy products for consumers. But life on the farm isn't always easy.

Australian dairy farmers run complex businesses in a world of greater climatic volatility, higher input costs and significant labour constraints. We asked Pioneer Seeds Dairy Specialists Greg Morris and Leighton Hart how maize silage can help farmers improve the profitability and sustainability of their systems both now and into the future. Here's what they said.



Source: Dairy Australia Annual Report 2024-2025.

Controlling feed costs, protecting margins

On most Australian dairy farms feed is the dominant operating cost, often at least half the cost of producing milk and even higher in more intensive Total Mixed Ration (TMR) systems¹. When seasons turn dry or wet, farms are pushed into buying more feed often at an inflated cost and this magnifies margin swings.

“Maize silage helps future-proof margins by shifting feed supply from the 'spot market' to managed inventory” says Leighton.

“Unlike most other forage crops which must be grazed when they are ready, maize silage can be harvested, stored and fed when you really need the feed”.

Maize is a high yielding crop which, depending on your growing region, can produce yields close to 30 tonnes of dry matter per hectare (tDM/ha) when moisture and nutrients are not limiting and over 12 tDM/ha under dryland conditions. The high dry matter yield means most dairy farmers can grow a crop of maize silage for 25-30 c/kgDM in the stack with some growing it for less.



Supporting high cow performance

“Maize silage is an ideal ration base delivering a blend of high energy grain (starch) combined with quality fibre from the stem and leaves” says Greg. “It can be used to increase energy intakes, stabilise rumen function and support higher per cow performance”.

The transition period sets the biological and productive trajectory for the entire lactation by determining how well the cow adapts from pregnancy to peak milk production. Effective

transition management supports dry matter intake, maintains rumen health, primes calcium metabolism to reduce milk fever risk, and minimises excessive negative energy balance, all of which underpin early lactation milk yield, fertility, and health.

Maize silage is an ideal option for transition cows because it has low levels of potassium, sodium and calcium. It also serves as an excellent carrier for anionic salts which can be fed to help reduce dietary cation-anion difference (DCAD).



Reducing labour pressure and simplifying farm operations

Labour is an increasingly binding constraint on Australian dairy farms. By supplying a large volume of consistent, predictable feed from a single forage source, maize silage simplifies daily feeding decisions and reduces the need for constant tactical responses to pasture shortfalls. When used as a base feed in pasture based or partial mixed rations (PMR), it enables more standardised feeding routines that are easier to delegate, automate, or combine with feeding infrastructure such as feedpads or stand off areas. This reduces time spent shifting cows, reallocating paddocks, managing pasture damage, or sourcing multiple supplements at short notice. In effect, maize silage shifts labour demand away from daily “fire fighting” toward fewer, more planned feed events.

Maize silage stands out as a feed of the future by giving dairy farmers greater control over cost, risk and system complexity. Its ability to reliably produce large volumes of cost-effective, high energy, storable feed supports more consistent cow performance, protects pasture persistence, and reduces exposure to seasonal feed shortages and price spikes. By improving whole farm feed supply resilience, water-use efficiency and labour efficiency, maize silage enables dairy systems to remain productive, adaptable and profitable as climate, cost and workforce pressures continue to intensify.

If you’d like to find out more about how maize silage could fit in your farm system, contact Greg or Leighton for a chat - see back cover for contact details.



¹ DairyUp, 2024. Project Update: P4 Feedbase – maize for silage March 2024. ² Garcia, 2023. The hidden losses of pasture utilisation. The Australian Farmer December 2024 p188-190

Want more content
like this?

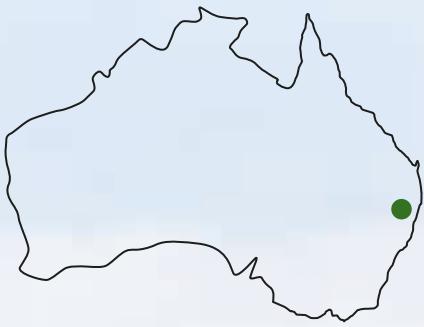
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Maize silage helps build *resilience*



PAUL AND SHARON WEIR,
TUNCETER, NORTH COAST, NSW



For Paul and Sharon Weir, farming has always been about making the most of what the land offers while respecting what it can take away.

The couple's dairy farm is situated on the fertile river flats of Tuncester, near Lismore, on the NSW North Coast. It is a location with enormous natural advantages, including deep alluvial soils, secure irrigation water, and the ability to grow feed virtually year-round. But it's also a landscape shaped by extremes, including persistent summer heat, intense rainfall and most notably, flooding.

"We live on a floodplain" says Paul matter-of-factly. "That's always been part of the deal here. The soils are incredibly productive, but you farm knowing that too much water can come".

Paul's family have dairy-farmed on the North Coast since 1870, and he is the fourth generation to milk cows in Australia. The Weirs have been on their current property since 1989, with Paul milking there himself for more than three decades.



LEFT Pioneer Territory Sales Manager Haman Coulter with Sharon and Paul Weir.



Today, the farm operates over a total area of around 277 hectares, including owned and leased land, with a 122-hectare dairy platform. Around 90 hectares are irrigated using hard- and soft-hose travelling irrigators, providing the system with a reliable base even during dry spells. Up to 400 predominantly Friesian cows are milked at peak, with the herd averaging around 320 in-milk cows across the year. The farm produces approximately 2.4 million litres of milk annually, which is supplied to Norco for the domestic liquid milk market.

Supplying fresh milk year-round means the Weirs run an all-year calving system, with around two-thirds of cows calving through autumn and winter and the balance in spring. Avoiding peak summer calving helps manage heat stress which is a key challenge in the region.

Feed consistency is critical for production, and this led the Weirs to maize silage around a decade ago.

“We’re growing grass all year, but because we’re in the subtropics, we get a lot of lignin in our grasses, and that’s a real negative for intakes” says Paul. “In this environment, pasture alone just doesn’t give you the consistency or quality you need, especially once you start pushing production”.

In the 2024–25 season, the Weirs

planted 43 hectares of maize silage across the dairy platform and outblocks, harvesting around 2,400 tonnes of wet silage. The bulk of that area was sown in Pioneer hybrids with Pioneer® brand P17822 IT being the main hybrid, and yielding over 60 tonnes of silage per hectare, equivalent to around 20 tonnes of dry matter per hectare.

While yield is important, silage quality also drives the Weirs’ hybrid decisions. Over the past four seasons, the farm’s maize silage has consistently exceeded 11 MJ ME/kg DM.

The Weirs’ preference for Pioneer maize hybrids is built on reputation and local product performance.

“Pioneer’s reputation is good” Paul

says. “There was some work done last year only 20 minutes from our farm. The P17822 IT looked good, and the fact you can use different chemistry for weed control is an added bonus as well”.

Paul establishes his maize crops at the end of October using traditional cultivation. Because the forecast was for a wet growing season in 2025-26, he planted P17822 IT at 80,000 seeds per hectare. A maize blend base fertiliser is applied and harrowed into the seedbed, and urea is side-dressed at 300 kg/ha at the last point the tractor can get over the crop. While most weeds are easily controlled with a pre-emergent spray, fall armyworm requires more careful attention throughout the growing season.



“We typically spray for fall armyworm within 10 days of planting, and most crops require three to four sprays” says Paul. “It’s a significant cost, but even with this added in, our maize silage still only costs us around \$83 per wet tonne or about \$250 per tonne of dry matter in the stack”.

In February 2022, Lismore experienced a flood unlike anything seen in recorded history, rising more than two metres higher than previous records. The Weirs woke to water lapping their home and daylight the next morning revealed their cows swimming past the house.

The flood drowned 130 cows, took out the power supply and destroyed half their silage and most of the fences. The

“I’ve always been on a path of continuous improvement, trying to do a better job each year and building a barn was the next step” says Paul. “The flood slowed our plans by a couple of years; we had to get back on our feet and rebuild the herd”.

The farm is now close to commissioning a new 400-cow compost barn, which has been positioned well above historical flood levels.

“We did a flood study which showed the maximum probable flood level for Lismore could be two metres higher again. We built our new shed to accommodate that. If we get that 2022 flood again, we won’t lose anything” says Paul. “That gives us confidence”.

Maize silage is the king of forages. For yield and for quality, nothing else compares. To get that much quality feed off such a small area just makes sense

ensuing days and weeks provided a lesson in community resilience.

“As a district, we rescued and accommodated each other’s stock, and neighbours came together to help bury each other’s dead cows”.

Prior to the flood, Paul had been planning to move to a shed based system to address heat stress and extreme wet conditions. The flood reinforced the need for infrastructure that could protect both livestock and business in extreme events.

The move to housing will also improve cow comfort, labour efficiency, and long term succession opportunities for the couple’s four sons, who are keen to carry on the family tradition of dairy farming.

In their current pasture-based PMR system, maize silage was fed alongside pasture and brewer’s grain to balance energy and quality. As the Weirs transition toward a housed compost barn system and a full TMR, maize silage plays an even more central role.

“Our goal is to grow as much of our own forage as possible, and maize will be the backbone of our TMR” says Paul. “Maize gives us certainty around feed supply, quality and cost. Once we’ve got the ration base right, everything else becomes easier to balance”.

As the system evolves, one thing is clear - maize silage will remain central to the Weirs’ future.

“Maize silage is the king of forages” says Paul. “For yield and for quality, nothing else compares. To get that much quality feed off such a small area just makes sense”.



Farm walk

- 277 ha total farm area
- Up to 400 Friesian cows milked
- 43 ha maize silage
- Moving to compost-barn TMR system



ABOVE LEFT Pioneer Territory Sales Manager Haman Coulter with Paul and Sharon’s son, Matt.



Maize hybrids

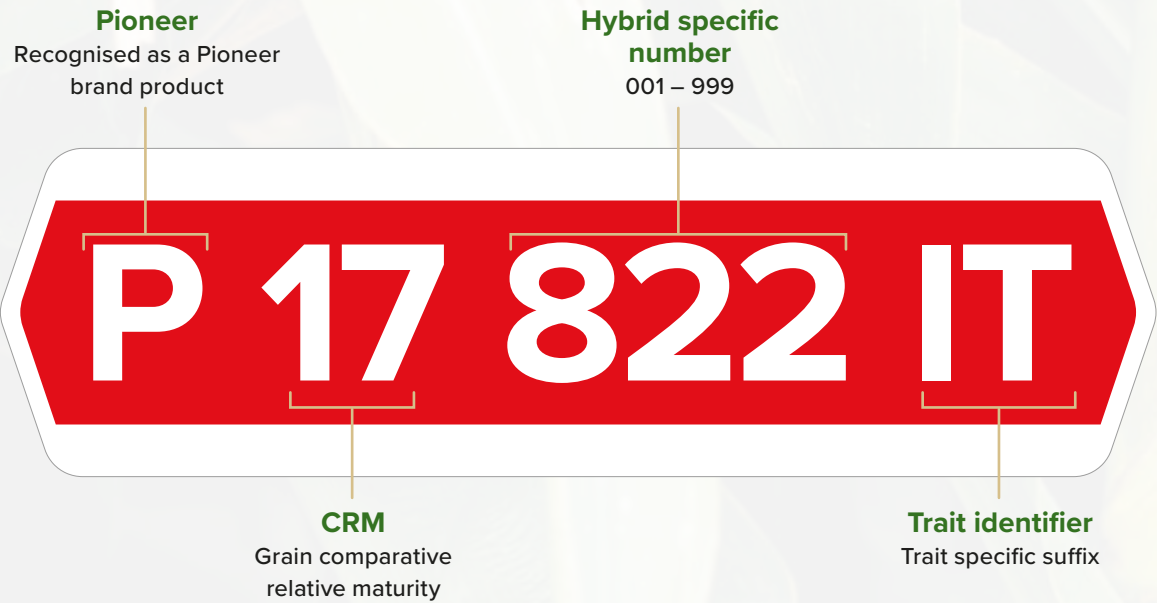
Pioneer has a long heritage as an industry leader – from 100 years of hybrid innovation to a world-class germplasm library, advanced conventional breeding technologies and an extensive global research program. Pioneer® brand maize hybrids are for those farmers who refuse to settle for anything less than a great yield of high-quality maize silage.

Pioneer’s elite genetics are tested in our industry-leading Australian Seed Technology Research In Key Environments

(STRIKE) trialling program, allowing us to identify superior hybrids and to position them in the growing environments where they will perform the best. Whether you’re looking for a long or short maturity conventional hybrid, a highly digestible brown mid-rib (BMR) or an imidazolinone tolerant (IT) option, we are confident you will find the right product for your paddock amongst this season’s outstanding Pioneer hybrid line-up.

What’s in a name?

Pioneer’s naming system is designed to help growers instantly recognise the grain comparative relative maturity (CRM) and added traits of a maize hybrid.

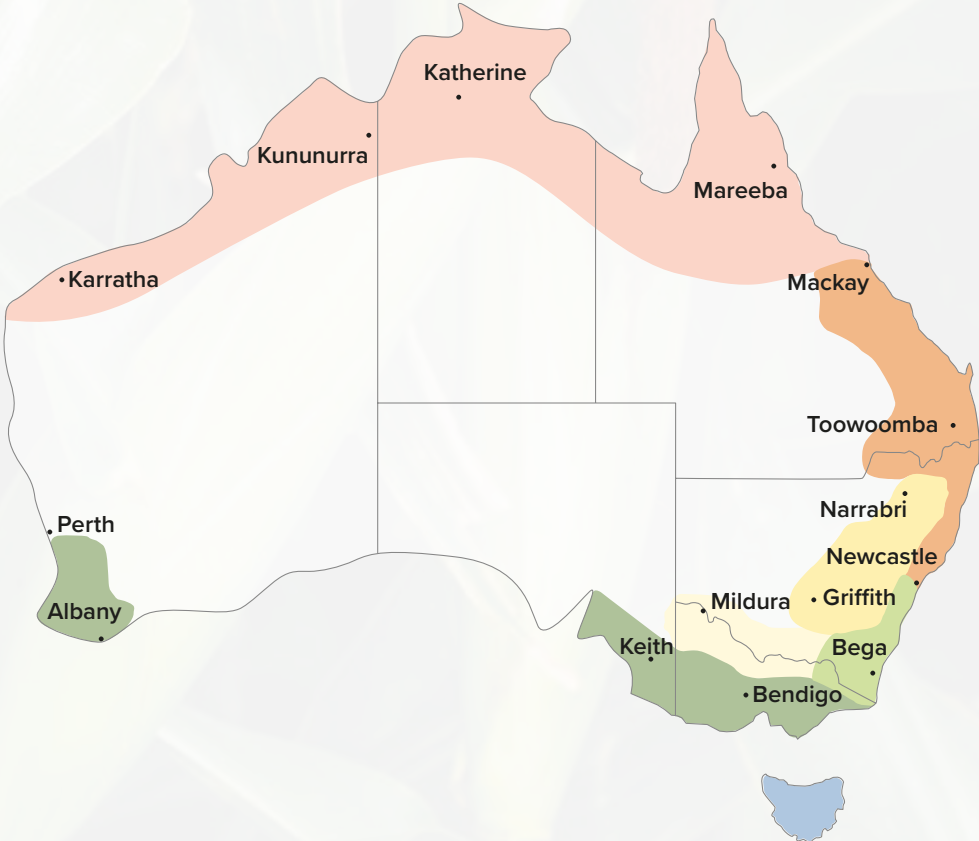


CRM: Comparative relative maturity. For products over 100 CRM, only the last two digits are used (P17822IT = 117 CRM).
Trait identifier: BMR = Brown mid-rib, IT = Imidazolinone tolerant, W = White

Choosing the right Pioneer hybrid for your farm

Maize hybrids mature according to heat unit accumulation, with high CRM hybrids requiring more heat to reach silage harvest maturity than low CRM hybrids. The maize growing region map is a simple tool to help growers quickly select

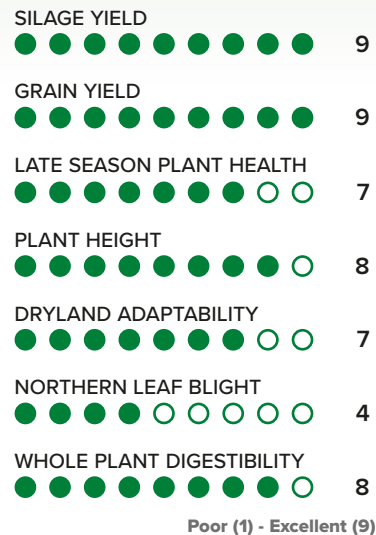
those hybrids that are most suited to their growing regions. For further advice on the best Pioneer hybrid for your paddock, talk to your local Pioneer representative, agronomist or reseller.



- Region 1** Northern Australia including, North QLD, Northern Territory and Northern WA
- Region 2** Central QLD, Wide Bay & Burnett, Darling Downs, Western Downs, Border Rivers, South-East QLD and North Coast NSW
- Region 3** Northern NSW, Liverpool Plains, Central West NSW, Riverina
- Region 4** Northern VIC and Southern NSW
- Region 5** Hunter Valley, Sydney Basin, Central and South Coast NSW
- Region 6** Gippsland, Western Districts of VIC, South-East South Australia, Southern WA
- Region 7** Tasmania



PIONEER
BRAND · SEEDS
P7524
SILAGE
CRM 75

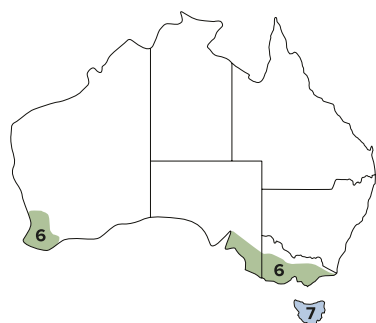


Stands tall and delivers tonnes of high-energy feed.

Ultra quick maturity with flexibility for silage and grain.

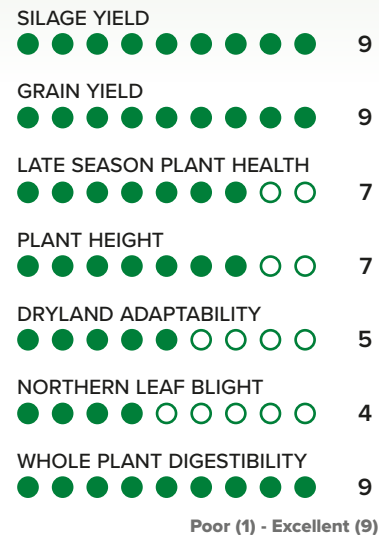
- Very tall plant with dependable root and stalk strength.
- Dependable late-season plant health and toughness in drought conditions.
- Delivers impressive yields of quality silage in the coolest maize growing regions.

An important earlier companion hybrid to **P8500** for growers seeking a quicker option for a shorter season, without compromising yield.



☐ Recommended for me

PIONEER
BRAND · SEEDS
P8500
SILAGE
CRM 85

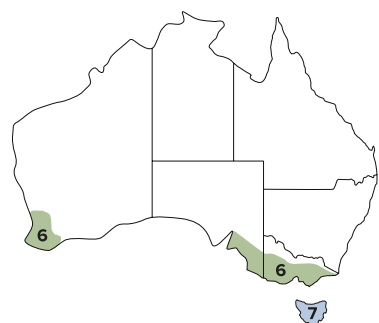


Yield leader with looks to match.

Impressive silage yield with a good all-round agronomic package.

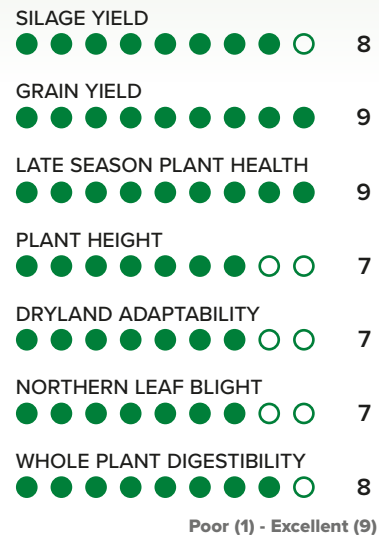
- Tall hybrid and an industry leader for silage yield in its maturity.
- Solid drought tolerance provides flexibility in double-cropping programs.
- Excellent feed quality combines with high silage yields, maximising energy when fed out.

Very popular hybrid across Gippsland, Western Districts and Tasmania, with perfect maturity and high silage yield.



☐ Recommended for me

PIONEER
BRAND · SEEDS
P92575
SILAGE
CRM 92

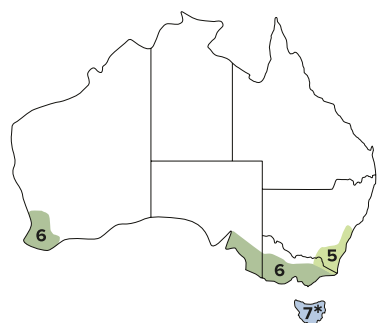


Solid, balanced hybrid with top-of-the-line foliar health.

Plant where Northern Leaf Blight, standability and drought tolerance are seasonal concerns.

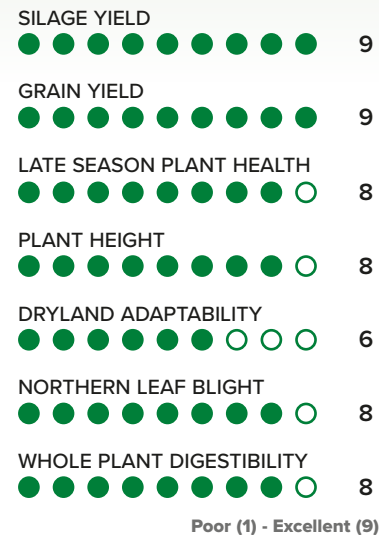
- Strong silage production with high grain content for maximum quality.
- Moderately tall with strong agronomics, superior root and stalk strength.
- Combines excellent drought tolerance and foliar health to deliver high and stable silage yields.
- Late-season plant health delivers a wide harvest window and silage with exceptional digestibility and energy.

First choice in southern Victoria, where plant health and yield are a priority.



☐ Recommended for me

PIONEER
BRAND · SEEDS
P9978
SILAGE
CRM 100

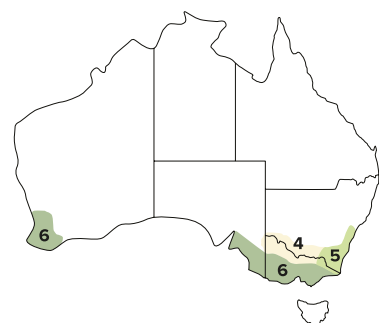


Very productive. Very stable. Very defensive.

P9978 sets the new standard for quick maturity performance.

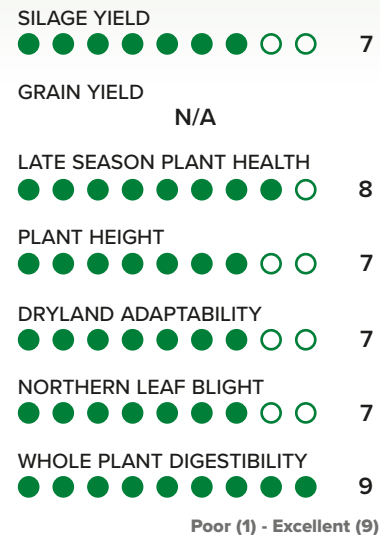
- A moderately tall plant with low ear placement, strong root strength, superior drought tolerance, late-season plant health and Northern Leaf Blight resistance.
- Delivers exceptional silage yields in this maturity with excellent feed quality.
- Key maturity for maximising silage yield across a broad range of environments.

All growers will reap the rewards of excellent defensive traits, standability, and yield reliability across seasons.



☐ Recommended for me

NEW
PIONEER
BRAND · SEEDS
P07003
SILAGE
CRM 107

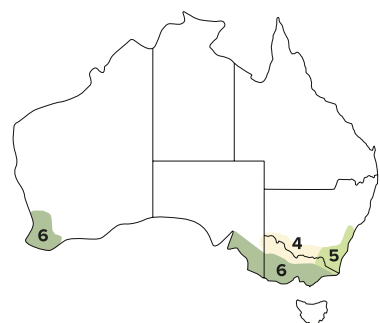


Solid hybrid with unmatched silage quality.

BMR trait increases digestibility with lower lignin and is partnered with well-rounded agronomics.

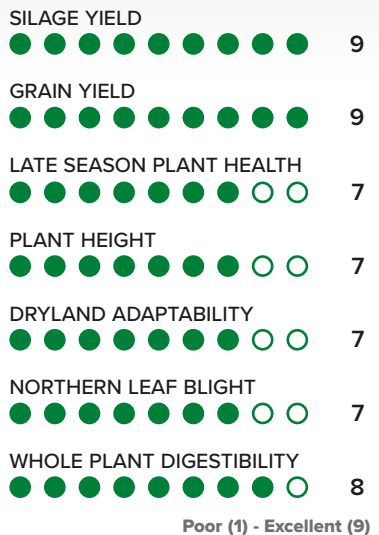
- Great option for high-producing dairies with the ability to feed during peak energy requirements.
- Produces silage with superior digestibility and energy content.
- Strong standability with solid root and stalk strength.
- Consider planting **P0937** if cool, wet conditions are present at sowing.

Plant with **P9978** and **P0937**, depending on maturity requirements. Talk to our Dairy Specialists to learn more about the best fit for BMR and **P07003**.



☐ Recommended for me

PIONEER
BRAND · SEEDS
P0937
SILAGE
CRM 110

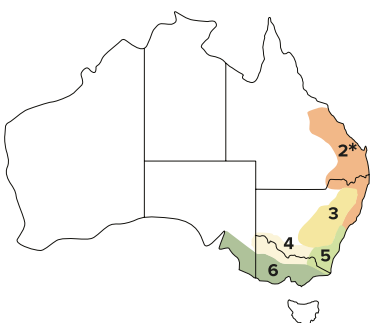


Next generation hybrid in a great maturity.

A modern plant type with erect leaves, low ear placement, notable foliar health and great standability.

- Holds the Australian grain yield record of over 23 t/ha – giving excellent starch levels in your silage.
- Widely adapted and stable, yet high-yielding hybrid.
- Excellent early vigour and emergence when sown early in cooler conditions.
- Maximise silage returns with high dry matter production and tonnes of starch.

P0937 is a reliable performer in a wide range of environments, sow with confidence and reap the rewards.



☐ Recommended for me

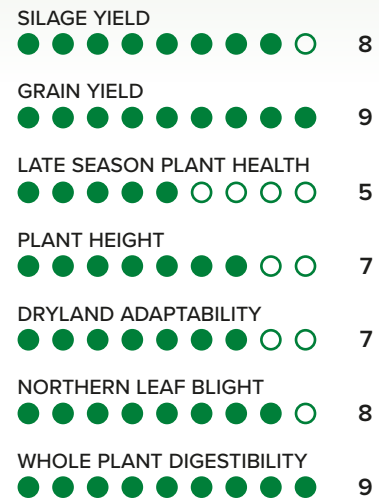


NEW



P13063 IT

SILAGE
CRM 113



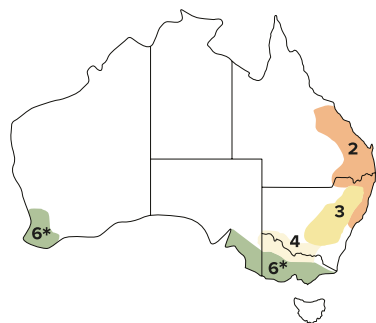
Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

Newest genetics packed with yield, agronomics and herbicide tolerance.

Moderately tall hybrid with excellent standability.

- Well-suited to most environments with excellent yield for maturity and well-rounded agronomics.
- Moderate late-season plant health helps get to harvest quickly in southern environments with a shorter season.
- Imidazolinone herbicide tolerance for in-crop management of summer grasses.
- Competitive silage yields with **P1315 IT** with greater standability

P13063 IT is a great mid-maturing option for growers chasing reliability and flexibility.



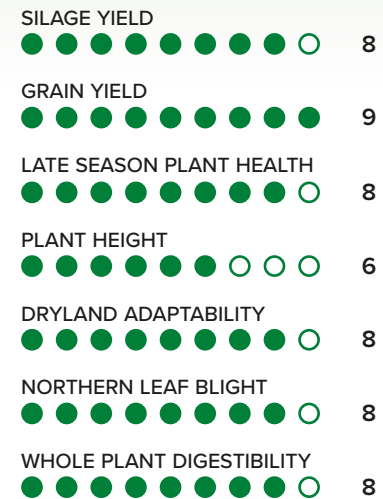
☐ Recommended for me

NEW



P15744 IT

SILAGE
CRM 115



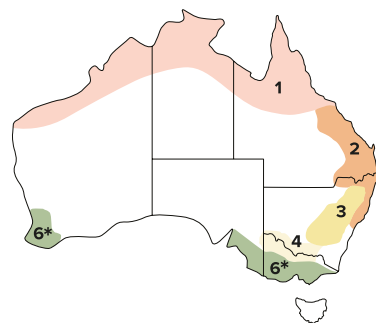
Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

Compact hybrid with top-end yield potential.

Excellent drought tolerance drives high performance in dryland and irrigated systems.

- Impressive silage yield for maturity across environments.
- High Northern Leaf Blight resistance with superior root and stalk strength.
- Sound husk cover protects the developing cob, and great late-season plant health extends the silage harvest window and maximises silage quality.
- Imidazolinone herbicide tolerance provides options for in-crop grass weed control.

P15744 IT is an excellent mid-maturity option for grain and silage production.

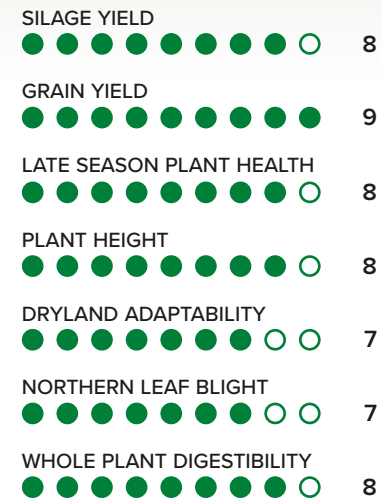


☐ Recommended for me



P1729

SILAGE
CRM 116



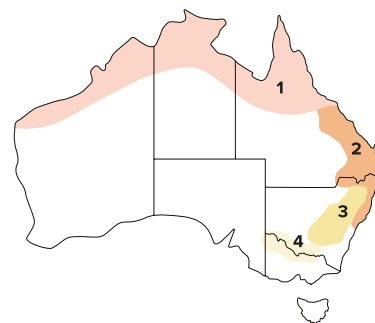
Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

Tall all-rounder that won't disappoint.

Well-balanced, full-season hybrid that delivers consistent, reliable yields with excellent agronomics.

- Excellent drought tolerance and standability – foliar health drives top silage yields for its maturity.
- High-level performance from northern Victoria to north Queensland, Northern Territory and the top end of Western Australia.
- Processing market grain quality gives flexibility of end use from silage, feed grain or processing.

P1729 is a reliable silage performer with flexible end use.



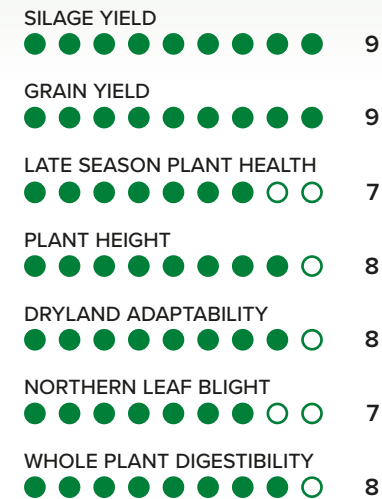
☐ Recommended for me

NEW



P17822 IT

SILAGE
CRM 117



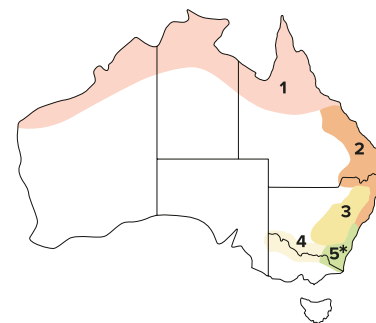
Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

High-yielding, full-maturity heavyweight.

Exceptional performance for silage and grain, breaking yield barriers.

- Tall plant with excellent root and stalk strength, impressive late-season plant health and solid resistance to Northern Leaf Blight, all combining to protect and enhance silage yield.
- Excellent grain yield boosts silage yield and quality
- Imidazolinone herbicide tolerance adds in-crop flexibility to paddock selection and rotations.

Outstanding new option to plant alongside **P13036 IT**, **P15744 IT** and **P2307**, depending on maturity requirements.

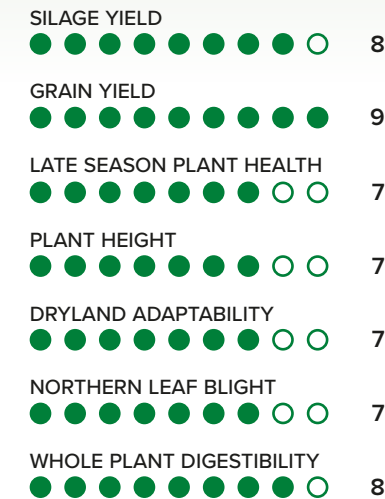


☐ Recommended for me



P1837

SILAGE
CRM 118



Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

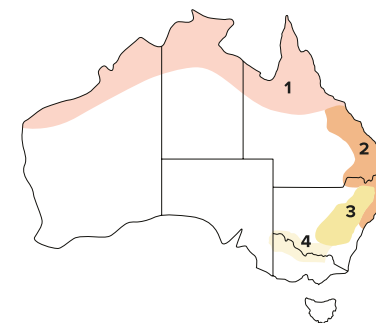
Defensive, reliable, full-season competitor.

Superior standability and solid resistance to Northern Leaf Blight and Rust.

- Excellent drought tolerance and late-season plant health, which support season-long silage appeal.
- Has better foliar health than **P1756** while being slightly later in maturity.
- **P1837** is well adapted to a range of populations, suitable for dryland and irrigated situations.

A widely adapted, stable, full-season hybrid. Plant early in high-potential paddocks in warm production areas.

Companion for **P1729** or switch to **P17822 IT** for silage, where Imidazolinone herbicide is required.

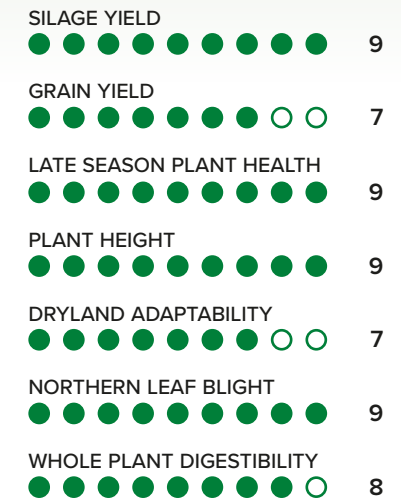


☐ Recommended for me



P2307

SILAGE
CRM 123



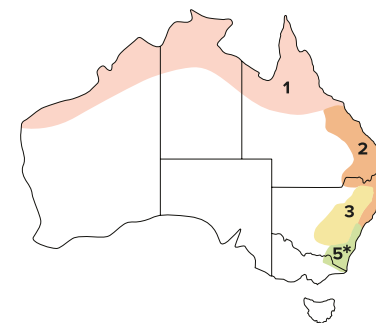
Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

Silage and coastal grain specialist.

Be prepared to be impressed by the resilience of this hybrid.

- Robust tropical genetics provides exceptional late-season plant health.
- Very tall plant with impressive Northern Leaf Blight tolerance to protect yield in high-pressure situations.
- With its hard-textured, flinty grain, ensure kernels are well processed and the crop is ensiled for at least four months prior to feeding out to maximise starch availability.

P2307 is an excellent silage option for growers in coastal and northern regions with high Northern Leaf Blight pressure who require reliable silage production.



☐ Recommended for me

IMPORTANT NOTE: Hybrid comparisons are only valid within a range of + or - 4 CRM. These descriptions mainly feature product strengths. When choosing hybrids, also review carefully the trait ratings found in the table on page 56. Asterisk denotes hybrid may be suitable in some situations. Contact your local Pioneer Territory Sales Manager or Farm Services Consultant for further advice.

See pages 54–55 for hybrid options for your region.

MAIZE FOR SILAGE 2026/2027



See pages 54-55 for hybrid options for your region.

Maize silage growing & harvest cost guide

Growing costs

	Pre-planting	Planting	Post-planting
Cost of leased land			
Soil testing (sampling and laboratory charges)			
Spraying out pasture or crop (spray and application)			
Soil ameliorations (eg lime, gypsum, manure or compost) - product + application			
Base fertiliser cost including application			
Cultivation: to planting specifications			
Pre-plant irrigation			
Pioneer® brand maize seed at the recommended planting rate (includes seed treatment)			
Starter fertiliser cost including application			
Planting			
Pre emergence weed control (herbicide + application)			
Pre emergence pest control (pesticide + application)			
Post emergence weed control (pesticide + application)			
Post emergence pest control (herbicide + application)			
Irrigation (no of waterings x cost per application)			
Sidedress nitrogen cost including application			
Interest on maize expenditure (7 months @ 6%)			

Total growing cost

Harvest costs

Harvesting	Harvesting and stacking	▶	
	Silage cover and covering	▶	
	Pioneer® brand 11C33 or 11CFT maize specific inoculant	▶	

Total harvest cost

Total growing and harvest cost



Silage safety

Silage, made from pasture and a range of crops, is an essential component of many Australian dairy farm systems, but working around silage-making equipment and structures can be risky. Machinery incidents, falls, silage face collapses, and exposure to silo gas have caused serious injuries and deaths across the agricultural sector globally. The good news is that most silage related accidents are preventable with sound planning, consistent protocols, and a strong on farm safety culture.

This article outlines some of the key risks and the strategies every business should adopt to protect workers and ensure safe, efficient silage operations.



PRIOR TO HARVEST

Communicate with your contractor

Where necessary, widen gateways and ensure everyone in the team is aware of the location of overhead power lines.

Use well-designed stacks or bunkers

Good facilities improve efficiency and reduce risk:

- The size of bunkers or the stacking area should always match the expected silage volume.
- Provide room for manoeuvring machinery.
- Ensure the area around the stack or bunker is solid and level.
- Add weights to stacking tractors to improve compaction as well as stability.
- Install markers on above-ground walls.
- If it looks like the harvest will continue after dark, make sure the entire area is well lit.

Have a pre-harvest meeting

Include everyone involved in the harvest process, establish roles, identify hazards and ensure everyone is aware of the safety protocols.

Establish “no-go” zones

Silage harvest is a high-risk time. Always contact the chopper driver before entering the paddock. The bunker or stack is a dangerous area due to the high traffic volume. No spectators or non-essential personnel should be allowed into this area and anyone exiting a vehicle should wear hi-vis clothing.

Manage fatigue

Silage harvest can be stressful and often there is pressure to get the job done. Use rotating shifts, ensure regular breaks and provide adequate food and hydration. Encourage workers to speak up early if they feel unsafe or overtired.



BUILDING STACKS OR FILLING BUNKERS

Steep bunker sides, uneven stack surfaces, and high centres of gravity increase the risk of rollovers.

Even surfaces

Ensure trucks are on an even surface before the load is tipped.

Roll over protective structures (ROPS) and seatbelts

ROPS are only effective if the operator is wearing a seatbelt and cannot be thrown from the vehicle.

Keep the bucket low

If you are using a front-end loader to keep the bucket low to help improve stability.

Avoid overfilling bunkers

Do not mound the material above the wall on above-ground bunkers.

Slope

Maintain a maximum slope of 1:3 on the sides and ends of stacks (1 metre of vertical rise for every 3 metres of horizontal distance). This will improve compaction and reduce the risk of rollovers.

Unloading height

Do not fill a bunker or build a stack higher than the unloading equipment can safely reach.

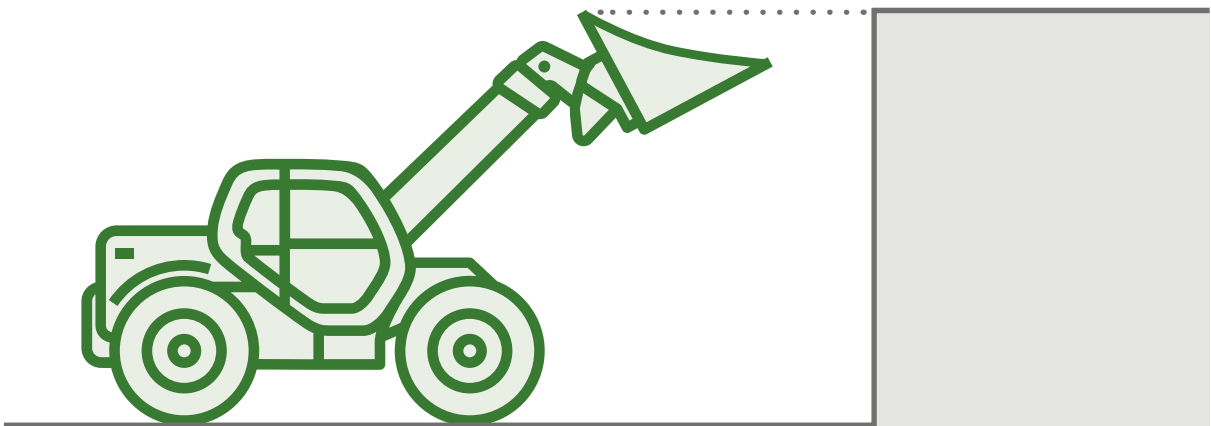


Figure 1: Do not fill higher than unloading equipment can safely reach.



COMPACTING

Good compaction management will improve silage making efficiency and help maintain silage quality.

Driving protocol

Where there are multiple vehicles on the stack, establish a driving protocol to prevent collisions.

Thin layers

Pack silage in thin (10–15 cm) layers to improve density and stability.

Progressive wedge

A progressive wedge makes packing safer and helps to improve silage quality.

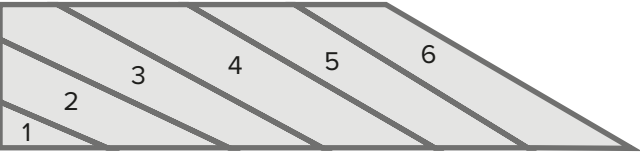


Figure 2: Progressive wedge

COVERING AND SEALING

Care should be taken to avoid the risk of falls or exposure to dangerous silo gas.

Move carefully

Wear non-slip footwear. Use long handled tools to position plastic and weights.

Edge safety

Falls can occur while covering stacks or bunkers. Wet plastic, loose gravel bags, and wind can all increase risk. Avoid standing or walking along the edge whenever possible. A harness system is recommended when working near the edge of tall bunkers or stacks.

Tyres

Use proper lifting techniques when throwing tyres. Watch out for spiders and snakes inside stored tyres. Place tyres carefully and close together. Loose tyres rolling down the plastic are a common cause of falls. Consider using gravel bags or sidewalls which are easier to handle.

Monitor silo gas

Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is a toxic gas which is produced shortly after ensiling. Silo gas is more common in crops like maize, sorghum or annual grasses that have

accumulated nitrates from exposure to stress situations including drought, frost, cloudy weather and fertility imbalances.

What to look for

- Bright orange or yellow fumes and a bleach like smell (though gas can be odourless) coming from the silage.
- Dead vegetation (like the area has been sprayed with glyphosate) around the stack.

If your forage crop is high risk

- Cover and seal the stack or bunker immediately after harvest.
- Post appropriate warning signs and keep people and animals away from the stack, bunker or nearby buildings or low-lying areas.
- Where possible, do not remove the plastic cover during the first three weeks after covering or sealing a bunker.
- Do not puncture bubbles in plastic.
- Wear gloves, protective clothing and self-contained-breathing-apparatus (SCBA) when opening the stack or bunker.
- Test suspect silage for nitrates before feeding.

FEEDING OUT

Feedout is where many silage accidents occur however, most can be avoided by applying good silage management practices and staying out of high-risk areas.

Be careful when removing the cover

When on top of the stack or bunker, keep away from the edge. A harness system is recommended for tall bunkers or stacks.

Keep away from the face

A silage face may appear solid, but internal weaknesses can cause sudden and catastrophic collapses. Every cubic metre of silage weighs close to a tonne. People should **NEVER** stand close to the face. **A rule of thumb is to remain at least three times the height of the face away from the stack or bunker.**

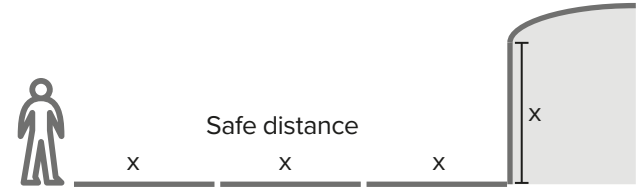


Figure 3: Safe distance guide

Never undermine the face

Do not dig the bucket into the bottom of the silage face, build a bunker which is too tall for unloading equipment or try to feedout without peeling back the cover. All these errors can create an overhang which can collapse unexpectedly. Instead use a face shaver or a bucket to remove a thin layer of silage from the face.

Watch for cracks and wet layers

Keep an eye out for cracks in the silage face or distinct layers. Very wet pasture silage can become prone to slippage, especially if the chop length is too short and/or it is stacked in layers with drier material.

Always use machinery to move silage

Do not manually remove spoiled silage from the top of bunkers or stacks. If there is loose material on the ground, use the loader bucket to clear it. Never drive unloading machinery parallel to the face especially if the bunker or stack is overloaded.

Take care when sampling silage

Where possible take silage samples from the tractor bucket once it has been moved away from the silage face. Alternatively closed stacks can be cored from the centre of the top (away from the edges), or samples can be collected from the sides of open stacks provided the height is low.

Don't work alone

Nobody should work alone around silage faces. The ideal is to have another person positioned a safe distance from the stack. At the very least always ensure someone knows where you are.



Forage and Nutrition Specialist Raewyn Densley has spent the last 35 years working with silage users across Australasia.

“Most farmers are either unaware of the risks associated with stacking and feeding out silage, or they think it isn’t going to happen to them” says Raewyn. “Unfortunately, it can, and while silage accidents are not common, each year lives are changed or lost due to silage-related injuries”.

“Silage safety is not just a set of rules - it is a mindset. Regular discussions about the risks, debriefs after near misses and a culture of speaking up all help reduce the risks of injuries”.

The late Dr Keith Bolsen was a global pioneer in silage safety and many of his articles and published papers were used in the preparation of this article.

For more information see:

The Kansas State University website <https://www.asi.k-state.edu/extension/silage.html>

Safety in silage operations <https://www.asi.k-state.edu/doc/beef/safetyinsilage.pdf>

Silage review: Safety considerations during silage making and feeding <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0022030218303308>





Silage stack collapse survivor

A quick trip to the bunker to get silage for a down cow has had life-changing consequences for Gippsland farmer Rebecca Ford.

Rebecca and her husband Dean milk 460 cows on 172 ha on the outskirts of Darnum. When one of the couple's "friendly cows" went down on the feedpad and was moved to the calf sheds for recovery, Rebecca thought it would be nice to get her a treat of maize silage.

Rebecca was 4-5 metres away from the bunker face scooping some spilled maize silage off the ground into two 20 litre buckets when the wind of an incoming storm caused the silage cover to flap. Looking up, she noticed a crack near the top of the 5 m tall bunker face.

"I didn't think too much about it and bent back down to fill the buckets" says Rebecca. "Next thing I felt the silage hitting the back of my head and middle of my shoulders and it just kept on coming".

Before she knew it, Rebecca had been completely buried. Initially she tried to push up using her arms, but after she realised it was too deep, she used her left hand to dig and clear a breathing space around her mouth.

"Nobody knew I was at the silage stack, and I realised I was in really big trouble" says Rebecca. "It was at that point I remembered I might have my mobile phone in my jacket pocket".

Rebecca managed to get the phone, and she used it to call her cousin who was at the top of her frequently used numbers list. She told her that she needed help and that she was buried in the maize silage. The family rushed to the bunker and managed to clear the silage off Rebecca's head while they waited for emergency services to arrive.

Country Fire Authority (CFA) crews from Warragul and Nilma North brigades were among the first on scene, arriving shortly after 4.30 pm alongside State Emergency Services, Fire Rescue Victoria, Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria. It took crews just over an hour to successfully extricate Rebecca, who remained conscious throughout the ordeal. She was carried by stretcher to a waiting ambulance, which took her to the road. There she was transferred to a helicopter and transported to the Royal Alfred Hospital in Melbourne.

Rebecca was in bad shape, and her family was told there was a chance she wouldn't make it. Her injuries included a decompressed lung, 24 ½ (out of 26) ribs broken off, broken or cracked and five fractured lumbar

vertebrae. She had broken the top of her right hip; her right femur was sticking out of her body, and her left femur was also broken. Rebecca had broken both tibias, fibulas, knees and ankles.



Upon arrival, Rebecca went into surgery for 10 hours and this was followed by a second 4-hour operation seven days later to insert a shield to stabilise her ribcage.

Surgeons told the family that Rebecca would be in hospital for at least six months, but they had underestimated the courage and tenacity of a farm girl from Darnum. After 100 days she made it home.

Rebecca's rehabilitation is ongoing and she has more surgery ahead. While it's fair to say that life will never be the same as it was before the accident, Rebecca prefers to look at the positives. She is keen to share her story in the hope it may prevent others from having to go through a similar ordeal.

"I was lucky the accident didn't take me out" says Rebecca. "I hate to think what would have happened if I was closer to the silage face or if I didn't have my mobile phone with me".

“Nobody knew I was at the silage stack, and I realised I was in really big trouble”

Rebecca's injuries:

- Decompressed lung
- 24.5 broken or cracked ribs
- 5 fractured lumbar vertebrae
- Top of her right hip broken off
- Right femur sticking out of her body
- Both tibias, fibulas, knees and ankles broken



BRETT NUTTING AND
JODI PROBERT,
CURDIEVALE, VIC

Building feed security *with maize*

Brett Nutting and Jodi Probert have shaped Bayriver Pastoral around a clear goal – to run a high producing dairy farm that relies on homegrown feed and is practical to operate day in, day out.

“I’m focused on homegrown food” Brett says, but he is just as clear that efficiency matters, with cows, feed, infrastructure and labour all needing to work together if the business is going to perform long term.

The couple grew up and started their dairy careers in Tasmania before moving to the mainland in their mid-20’s. Their goal was always farm ownership and this came to fruition in 2011 with the purchase of 214 ha at Curdievale in Victoria’s Western Districts.

Brett and Jodi had 29 percent equity when they took possession of the property, and they lifted that to 70 percent within a decade. They also purchased an adjacent 47 ha ex-forestry block and converted it back into productive pastoral land.

Next on the list was a milking shed upgrade. Brett describes the old dairy as a 40 unit rotary that had become “a handbrake” on the business.



LEFT Brett Nutting, Jodi Probert and Toby Nutting.



Farm walk

- 220 ha (eff) milking platform
- 750 Holstein cows
- 20 ha maize silage
- Focused on homegrown feed

“I sort of cracked with the old shed” says Brett. “Long milking, stuff always breaking down, and staff coming and going all the time”.

The family invested in a new 60 unit rotary built on a greenfield site, designed to support scale and take the pressure off labour. The shed is supported by an 800 cow feedpad, a large recycle dam and upgraded effluent and water infrastructure, all aimed at simplifying day-to-day operations.

In the 2024-25 season the farm milked 750 predominantly Holstein cows on a 220 ha (eff) milking platform which includes 65 hectares of hard hose irrigation. The herd produced just over 520,000 kgMS, or around 700 kgMS/ cow, which was supplied to Coles.

Heifers are synchronised using CIDRS and inseminated with sexed semen while cows are put through a Double Ovsynch hormone program designed to tightly control ovulation. Every cow is put forward for artificial insemination (AI) on the first day of mating.

“Last year 54 percent of the herd got pregnant on day one” says Brett “...and the six week in-calf rate was around 70 percent”.



Brett is targeting a medium stature 600-620 kg cow and selects bulls to deliver excellent milk yield, high components and good udders and feet. All replacements are generated from the first round of AI on the heifers and first and second-calvers, while older and later-calving cows are inseminated to low-cost Holstein or Angus.

Heifers calve in mid-November, with the main herd starting on 10 January. That timing means a large number of high producing cows are milking through winter. While their ration includes purchased concentrates, it is underpinned by homegrown forages including pasture, pasture silage and fodder crops such as turnips.

Recent seasons have delivered challenging grass growing conditions.

“A big constraint for us has been finding quality forages to purchase at a reasonable price” says Brett.

While Brett has fed maize silage in the past and liked the results, this season marks the first time growing the crop on-farm. The decision came down to managing risk in a market where the cost of bought-in forage can move quickly.

“At the time we made the decision to grow maize, hay was \$500 per tonne” says Brett. “Everyone’s telling me that maize silage works out at about \$250 a dry tonne in the pit. Well, that’s half the price of hay, isn’t it?”.

For a high stocked winter milking system, the move to maize silage is not just about saving money, but also about reducing exposure to volatile feed prices.

Maize also fits the way the Nuttings want to feed their fresh cows.

“Instead of loading them up with wheat grain which has very fast starch, we can feed them maize silage which has slower starch” says Brett.

It is a practical decision aimed at steadier intakes and a smoother transition into peak milk.

This year Brett planted 20 hectares of Pioneer® brand P92575 which was



yield by going to a really short variety” says Brett. After talking with Leighton, it seemed the P92575 was the best fit”.

The crop was planted on 23 November, with harvest planned for mid-April. Once it comes off, Brett plans to keep those hectares productive.

hold it for the next calving, unless the season demands it earlier.

The first maize crop may also be a stepping stone to a different way of dairy farming longer term. Brett has looked closely at housed, TMR-style systems and believes they can be “good for cows and everyone else”.



“I wanted a hybrid I could get off early, but I didn’t want to sacrifice too much yield by going to a really short variety. After talking with Leighton, it seemed the P92575 was the best fit”

recommended by local Pioneer Seeds Dairy Specialist Leighton Hart.

“I wanted a hybrid I could get off early, but I didn’t want to sacrifice too much



“We need that 20 hectares to be productive over the winter, so I’ll put it into annual ryegrass” says Brett. “Then we might re crop it to maize again in the spring”.

When asked why maize silage suits his system, Brett comes back to the fundamentals.

“High yields, good water use efficiency and being able to carry the feed over are important” says Brett. “Turnips and other crops have their place, but they generally need to be grazed when they’re ready. Maize silage can be stored and fed when the cows need it most”.

The plan is to stack the maize silage and

Strong infrastructure and a well-run business have also helped attract the next generation’s home. Son Toby, a diesel mechanic, has been working on the farm for the past two years while his brother Reagan, a qualified boilermaker and welder, is joining the family business in a few weeks.

“I’m running the ship at the moment, but they’re going to take over at some stage” says Brett. “Where we head will also depend on what they want to do”.

ABOVE Toby Nutting and Pioneer Dairy Specialist Leighton Hart.



12 STEPS TO
growing
a high
yielding
maize silage crop

Growing a high yielding maize silage crop is all about getting a number of small decisions right. Yield potential is generally set early, while the second half of the season determines how much of that potential is actually realised. So how can growers help maximise the potential of their maize silage crop?

1 Choose the right paddock

High yields start with paddock selection. Maize performs best on well drained soils with good structure that allow rapid root growth and early canopy development. Poor drainage and compaction can restrict roots and early seedling growth. Paddocks should be walked well before planting to look for signs of waterlogging, perennial weeds, headlands that suffer from compaction and areas that may require contour correction. Maize has limited ability to compensate for early stress, so problems ignored at this stage often reappear as lost yield later.

2

Get the crop nutrition right

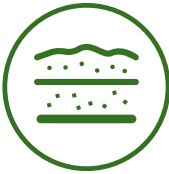


Soil testing is essential if you are chasing high maize silage yields. Collect soil samples to cultivation depth and use the results, along with realistic yield targets, to determine an appropriate fertiliser program.

Balanced nutrition is critical. Nitrogen and potassium are required in the largest amounts, but phosphorus, magnesium, sulphur and trace elements must also be adequate. Nutrient deficiencies rarely cause obvious symptoms early but can still limit yield. Equally, excessive nutrient applications increase input costs and environmental risk, with no yield benefit and can create nutrient imbalances resulting in toxicity or nutrient lockups.

3

Prepare a consistent seedbed



Research shows that a uniform plant stand is the foundation for high yield potential. Uniform emergence begins with seedbed preparation. A firm, level seedbed, that contains adequate moisture, allows for consistent seed depth and good soil to seed contact. Compacted, cloddy, uneven or overly loose seedbeds almost guarantee variable emergence and plant stands.

Where conservation tillage systems are used, extra attention to planter setup and early nutrition helps overcome potentially cooler soils and slower early growth.

4

Plant at the right time



Planting date should balance soil temperature, moisture and frost risk. Maize establishes rapidly once soil temperatures consistently support germination and early root growth. Early planting into cold soils can negatively impact emergence and uniformity, costing more yield than it gains. On the other hand, late planting can also carry penalties, particularly when it pushes crop pollination and early grain fill into hotter, drier periods. The goal should be to plant as soon as 9 am soil temperature is 10°C and rising at planting depth.



5

Select the right hybrid



Hybrid choice is one of the most powerful levers available to growers. A good silage hybrid combines high yield potential with the right agronomic traits, and the ability to stay green through grain fill. Good grain production is critical, as roughly half of dry matter yield and up to 75% of the energy in maize silage comes from the grain component.

Maturity must match the growing environment as well as the target planting and harvest dates. Shorter maturity hybrids can allow earlier follow-on cropping or regrassing, while longer maturity hybrids can deliver higher yields where season length and moisture allow. Talk to your local Pioneer Seeds representative for more information on the right product for your paddock and management needs. As well as knowing which hybrids are performing the best on different soil types in your area, they can also access multi-site, multi-year data from Pioneer Seeds STRIKE (Seed Technology Research In Key Environments) trial program.

6

Establish the right plant population



Modern maize hybrids tolerate higher plant populations than older genetics. Increasing population has been a major contributor to yield gains. However, there is still an optimum range that depends on hybrid, yield goal, soil type, fertility and moisture availability.

Low populations could underutilise available resources and cap yield potential. Excessive populations increase competition for light, water and nutrients, raising the risk of barrenness, lodging and reduced grain fill.

The aim is to select a population that maximises dry matter yield per hectare for the environment, then focus on achieving that population evenly across the paddock. Talk to your local agronomist or Pioneer Seeds representative for paddock specific advice on seeding rates.



7

Get nitrogen timing right



Nitrogen supply has a direct relationship with maize silage yield, but timing is as important as the total application rate.

In maize, kernel number is set relatively early in the plant's growth. The number of kernels around the cob (cob girth) is determined early in vegetative growth typically around V5 to V6 (five to six leaf stage). The potential kernel number (cob length) is determined from V8-V12 while pollination success determines actual kernel count. A number of stresses (including nitrogen shortage) can limit potential cob size.

Split applications are often more effective than single early applications, particularly on lighter soils or where rainfall or irrigation increases the risk of nitrogen loss. For this reason, most nitrogen programs will include side-dress as well as starter and/or pre-plant nitrogen application.

Don't be tempted to use a "standard recipe" for nitrogen application. Matching nitrogen timing and quantity to crop demand improves yield, nitrogen use efficiency and environmental impact.

8

Match water supply to crop requirements



If you are irrigating, use soil moisture monitoring to match water supply to crop requirements.

Don't switch off the irrigation too early. Moisture stress before physiological maturity can reduce grain and stover yield. It also accelerates leaf senescence and can decrease fibre digestibility.

9

Control weeds



Walk your crops regularly taking note of the number and type of weed seedlings present.

Maize is a poor competitor when small and weed pressure during the first four to six weeks can permanently reduce maize silage yield, quality and palatability. Weed control should be planned before planting and adjusted based on actual weed pressure and conditions.

10

Watch for insects



Early insect pressure, while often sporadic, can reduce plant numbers and uniformity. Always plant insecticide treated seed. Monitor crops throughout the growing season for insect pests including fall armyworm and consult your local agronomist to determine whether it is economic to spray.

11

Keep plants green till harvest



Late season plant health plays a significant role in silage yield and quality. Neutral detergent fibre (NDF) digestibility is set during the first part of the growing season and does not decline substantially provided the maize plant remains healthy through the grain fill period. Hybrids with good disease tolerance, combined with management practices that minimise stress, help maintain green leaf area through to silage harvest.

12

Harvest at the right time



Silage harvest should be timed to maximise tonnes of dry matter per hectare without compromising feed quality. The general recommendation is to harvest when the plant is at 30-38% whole plant dry matter.

Correct chop length, effective kernel processing, the use of a high-quality Pioneer® brand silage inoculant and good stack management help preserve the feed energy that has been grown in the paddock.

Good management can help you get the most out of whatever the cropping season delivers in terms of weather. Consistently high yielding maize silage crops are the result of good planning, timeliness of management operations and attention to detail at every stage of the season. By focusing on paddock selection, uniform establishment, well matched hybrids, appropriate plant populations, balanced nutrition and controlling pests, growers can achieve the best possible result.





Summer forage for flexible feed

As summers become hotter and pasture growth more variable, forage sorghum is a great crop option for dairy farming systems. Its ability to grow quickly in warm conditions, tolerate heat stress, and

integrate easily into pasture rotations makes it a practical option for maintaining feed supply while reducing risk. Forage sorghum also offers flexibility – if you need the feed, you can graze it, otherwise it can be harvested and stored as silage or hay.

High heat tolerance and water use efficiency

Forage sorghum is a warm season C4 grass. It maintains photosynthetic efficiency at temperatures above 30 °C and has better water use efficiency than cool season pastures. Its physiology allows continued growth during heatwaves and dry periods where ryegrass struggles.

Late planting window with minimal opportunity cost

Sorghum can be planted later than many other summer crops and without any specialised sowing equipment, enabling farmers to take a cut of pasture silage before crop establishment.

Lower pest pressure and minimal disease challenge

Compared with brassica crops, forage sorghum generally experiences fewer economically significant pest issues especially in southern Australia. It also has relatively few major diseases, lowering management input and production risk.

Can be fed alongside brassicas to reduce risk

Forage sorghum complements brassica diets well. Feeding it in parallel helps moderate total brassica intake, reducing the risk of acidosis, photosensitivity and/or milk taint while maintaining overall summer feed supply.

Provides effective fibre when concentrate feeding increases

As pasture availability declines in summer, many systems respond by increasing grain or meal feeding. Forage sorghum contributes physically effective fibre, supporting stable rumen function during these higher concentrate feeding periods.

Excellent fit for pasture renovation programs

Sorghum works well as a break crop, allowing for improved weed control and delivering additional summer feed while still enabling timely autumn re-grassing. It is an excellent option of mining surplus nutrients from effluent, stand-off or sacrifice paddocks.

Reduced prussic acid risk

Sudan grass cross hybrids like Pioneer® brand SSS and Prime BMR have a lower prussic acid risk than sorghum x sorghum hybrids. This increases harvest flexibility and allows growers to maximise the feed value of their crops¹.

As farms adapt to hotter summers and more variable pasture performance, forage sorghum stands out as a practical tool for maintaining feed supply while strengthening whole farm resilience.

If you are looking for a summer forage option, look no further than our Australian-bred product range which includes proven hybrids that suit a range of end use options.

¹ Risk can still increase under extreme stress conditions such as frost, drought, or very young regrowth. In these conditions test crops prior to feeding.



NEW



PRIME BMR

SUDAN HYBRID



EARLY SEEDLING VIGOUR	●●●●●●●○	8
FAST FEED	●●●●●●●●	9
LATE SUMMER/CARRY OVER FEED	●●●●○○○○	4
BEEF GRAZING	●●●●●●●●	9
DAIRY GRAZING	●●●●●●●●	9
SHEEP GRAZING	●●●●●●●●	9
HAY MAKING	●●●●●●●○	8
PIT SILAGE	●●●●●○○○	5
ROUND BALE SILAGE	●●●●●●●●	9

Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

Outstanding quality, exceptional yield.

- Highly identifiable brown mid-rib (BMR) sudan hybrid with multiple BMR genes present.
- Excellent lower leaf retention, extending the window of quality feed availability.
- Exceptional biomass production supported by strong stems and roots, keeping the crop standing.
- Medium maturity provides management flexibility while maintaining feed quality.
- Low prussic acid risk, suitable for grazing at around 75 cm.

Prime BMR delivers standout forage quality with dependable agronomic performance, making it a premium choice for intensive grazing or high-quality conserved feed.

☐ Recommended for me



SSS

SUDAN HYBRID



EARLY SEEDLING VIGOUR	●●●●●●●○	7
FAST FEED	●●●●●●●●	9
LATE SUMMER/CARRY OVER FEED	●●●●○○○○	4
BEEF GRAZING	●●●●●●●●	9
DAIRY GRAZING	●●●●●●●●	9
SHEEP GRAZING	●●●●●●●●	9
HAY MAKING	●●●●●●●●	9
PIT SILAGE	●●●●●○○○	5
ROUND BALE SILAGE	●●●●●●●○	8

Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

A unique Australian hybrid, bred for Aussie conditions.

- Exceptional quick regrowth supports multiple cuts and grazings across the season.
- Super fine stems deliver exceptional hay quality and bale-wrapped silage – suitable for grazing by all stock types.
- Lower prussic acid potential compared with sorghum-type forages improves grazing safety.
- Strong tillering ability drives fast recovery and reliable biomass production.
- Super sweet leaf and stem mean SSS is highly palatable at all stages of growth, giving better utilisation by all stock.

SSS is quick to graze and highly responsive to intensive grazing management while also producing consistently high-quality hay and round-bale silage for sheep and cattle systems.

☐ Recommended for me



MEGA FEED

SORGHUM X
SUDAN HYBRID



EARLY SEEDLING VIGOUR	●●●●●●●●	9
FAST FEED	●●●●●●●○	8
LATE SUMMER/CARRY OVER FEED	●●●●●●○○	7
BEEF GRAZING	●●●●●●●●	9
DAIRY GRAZING	●●●●●●●●	9
SHEEP GRAZING	●●●●●●○○	7
HAY MAKING	●●●●●●●●	9
PIT SILAGE	●●●●●○○○	5
ROUND BALE SILAGE	●●●●●●●●	9

Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

An ultra-late all-rounder.

- Ultra-late maturity (120 days+ to flower), maintains high-quality and biomass late into the season.
- Flexible and adaptable all-rounder hybrid that is well-suited to grazing, baling or silage.
- Excellent early vigour, giving the option to sow early and extend the growing period.
- High leaf to stem ratio for increased palatability and quality yield.
- High sugar content and energy availability in the leaf and stem convert dry matter into liveweight and milk production.

Mega Feed is suited to most situations; with its ultra-late maturity, it retains its high-quality feed later than anything else. Its combination of early vigour and very late maturity can help to reduce spring feed gaps while maintaining production late into the season. Mega Feed is an excellent option for almost all forage situations.

☐ Recommended for me



MEGA SWEET

SWEET X
SORGHUM HYBRID



EARLY SEEDLING VIGOUR	●●●●●●●○	7
FAST FEED	●●●●○○○○	5
LATE SUMMER/CARRY OVER FEED	●●●●●●●●	9
BEEF GRAZING	●●●●●●●●	9
DAIRY GRAZING	●●●●●○○○	6
SHEEP GRAZING	●●●●○○○○	4
HAY MAKING	●●●●○○○○	5
PIT SILAGE	●●●●●●●●	9
ROUND BALE SILAGE	●●●●●○○○	6

Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

The flexible forage sorghum.

- Flexible grazing option for beef, providing stand-over feed late in the season.
- High-energy stover and white grain produce quality silage for meat and milk production.
- Strong regrowth enables extended grazing or multiple silage cuts.
- Highly sweet and palatable, improving utilisation in the field and in the feed trough.

Mega Sweet continues to increase in sweetness and feed value as it matures. It fits all sowing windows and is a top choice for quality silage, and late-season carry-over feed.

☐ Recommended for me



PIONEER
BRAND • SEEDS

GRAZE N SILE

SORGHUM X
SORGHUM HYBRID



EARLY SEEDLING VIGOUR	●●●●●●○○○	6
FAST FEED	●●●●○○○○○	4
LATE SUMMER/CARRY OVER FEED	●●●●●○○○○	5
BEEF GRAZING	●●●●●○○○○	5
DAIRY GRAZING	●●●●○○○○○	4
SHEEP GRAZING	●●●●○○○○○	4
HAY MAKING	●●●●●○○○○	5
PIT SILAGE	●●●●●●●●●	9
ROUND BALE SILAGE	●●●●●●○○○	6

Poor (1) - Excellent (9)

The best choice for pit silage production.

- A water-efficient hybrid delivering silage quality comparable to corn silage.
- High white grain content produces proven, high metabolizable energy silage for meat and milk systems.
- Good leaf disease resistance for better silage quality and yield.
- Regrows after cutting, meaning it can be cut a second time or grazed.
- Greater tolerance to Fall Armyworm than corn, with improved control due to Graze-N-Sile's open head.

Graze N Sile is a tall, grain-bearing forage sorghum designed to deliver high yields of energy-dense silage. It is an excellent alternative to corn silage in dryland or limited irrigation environments.

☒ Recommended for me

Table 1: Forage seeding rates for a range of growing environments

LimitedPLANT AVAILABLE NUTRITION & WATERExcellent				
PRIME BMR				
Target established plant population (plants/ha)	95,000 to 145,000	145,000 to 280,000	280,000 to 450,000	450,000 to 1,000,000
Approx sowing rate (kg/ha)	2 to 3	3 to 5	5 to 8	8 to 15
SSS				
Target established plant population (plants/ha)	95,000 to 145,000	145,000 to 280,000	280,000 to 450,000	450,000 to 1,000,000
Approx sowing rate (kg/ha)	2 to 3	3 to 5	5 to 8	8 to 15
MEGA FEED				
Target established plant population (plants/ha)	45,000 to 50,000	65,000 to 100,000	140,000 to 225,000	225,000 to 350,000
Approx sowing rate (kg/ha)	2 to 3	3 to 5	6 to 10	10 to 15
MEGASWEET				
Target established plant population (plants/ha)	30,000 to 50,000	50,000 to 80,000	80,000 to 110,000	110,000 to 150,000
Approx sowing rate (kg/ha)	2 to 2.5	2.5 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 6
GRAZE N SILE				
Target established plant population (plants/ha)	30,000 to 55,000	55,000 to 75,000	75,000 to 110,000	110,000 to 150,000
Approx sowing rate (kg/ha)	2 to 3	3 to 4	4 to 5	5 to 6



CHRIS AND CHARMAINE BAGOT,
JINDIVICK, WEST GIPPSLAND, VIC

Evolving farm system *returns to maize*

Chris Bagot didn't come into dairying through a traditional pathway. A civil engineer by trade, he jokes that when he and his wife Charmaine bought their first farm, he had "never milked a cow in my life". Nearly two decades on, the Bagots are running a well-established spring-calving dairy at Jindivick in West Gippsland, shaped by steady expansion, deliberate system choices and a strong focus on homegrown feed.

"We've been on this farm just under 20 years" says Chris. "When we bought it, I'd been engineering and we started off leasing family land near Warragul, running beef cows and calves while I was still working off-farm as a civil engineer".

A partnership arrangement with a friend who was share-farming followed. Chris took responsibility for fodder and machinery while his business partner handled stock.

"He looked after anything with blood in it, and I looked after anything with diesel in it".

It was during that period that maize first entered the system. Access to a leased turnout block with a large irrigation dam opened the door.

"We were able to start growing maize there" says Chris. "That was our first foray into maize growing and we loved it".

The first crop went in around 2004, initially with a contractor, before Chris purchased a secondhand maize planter himself.

"We did maize every year after that".

As opportunities arose, the business expanded. Eventually, Chris and Charmaine purchased the Jindivick home farm themselves and gradually added neighbouring blocks as they became available.

"Land next door never comes up again" says Chris. "Unfortunately, if someone tells me I shouldn't, I'll probably try to find a way".



The result was a long stretch where no two seasons looked the same.

“We had probably 10 to 12 years where we never really had a status quo”.

After taking on the Jindivick farm, the focus shifted to establishing a workable dairy system.

“I realised that I couldn’t do everything myself” says Chris. “Not ever having milked a cow before and starting up our first dairy farm, cropping went by the wayside, while there was a pretty steep learning curve on how to run the farm”.

That constant change shaped the system the Bagots run today. The milking platform now totals about 168 ha, supported by 138 ha of out blocks.

After peaking at around 580 cows, Chris has deliberately reduced numbers.

“This year we’ll probably milk around 500 cows” says Chris. “I think less cows doing higher production suits this block better”.

Maize silage has become a key part of supporting that approach. After a period away from growing maize, Chris purchased maize silage and reintroduced it to the ration about three years ago.



“One thing I noticed was during spring we used to get the smell of ammonia in the shed” says Chris. “When we had maize in the system, we never had that. We put maize back in, and the ammonia went away”.

In 2024, he planted 12 ha of dryland maize on farm to augment his contracted tonnage. The feed turned out to be invaluable given the season’s challenges of limited pasture growth and high purchased forage costs.

This year he planted 20 hectares of maize silage on farm and has also contracted 150 tDM.

“We’ll probably harvest in two to three weeks” says Chris. “We’re sitting around 13-15 tDM per hectare at the moment, all dryland”.

Plans are already in place to expand the crop area next season and Chris hopes to irrigate part of the area using a 70 megalitre on farm dam on one of the leased support blocks.

“There’s no pivot or anything fancy. It’ll just be hard hoses and travellers, and it’s not easy, but it works for our country”.

Maize silage feeding strategies are also designed around existing infrastructure.

“We don’t have what people would call a proper feedpad” says Chris. “We’ve got some concrete areas and troughs that we make work”.

Transition cows are fed maize silage, ad-lib pasture hay in racks and come to the dairy once a day for their lead feed. Rumination through this period is monitored using smaXtec rumen boluses, with data integrated into a DeLaval DelPro system. Around five days before calving, springers are automatically drafted onto a calving pad, continuing on the same hay and maize diet through calving. After calving, fresh cows remain in a maternity mob close to the dairy, until health treatments are complete and rumination has stabilised, before joining the main milking herd. Maize silage feeding continues through early lactation and into joining.

While Chris avoids drawing straight lines between feed changes and



performance, he is confident maize has shifted outcomes in the right direction.

“There’s never a single cause-and-effect in dairy farming. Any outcome is usually preceded by 10 or 15 small decisions” says Chris. “Since we’ve brought maize

“Pioneer were good to me early on, and I’m big on relationships”.

Hybrid selection is based on planting window, harvest timing and local conditions, rather than chasing one trait in isolation.

“Since we’ve brought maize back into the system, we’re getting more cows in calf in a shorter period. I can’t say that’s only maize, but it’s a big part of what we’ve changed”

back into the system, we’re getting more cows in calf in a shorter period. I can’t say that’s only maize, but it’s a big part of what we’ve changed”.

When it comes to hybrid choice, Chris has always planted Pioneer maize.

Beyond feed, the Bagots have invested heavily in long-term sustainability. Nearly all waterways are now fenced, with thousands of native trees planted across the farm. Energy efficient dairy infrastructure has been adopted to



Farm walk

- 168 ha milking platform
- 500 spring-calving cows
- 20 ha maize silage
- Focus on feed consistency

reduce electricity demand and improve overall system efficiency.

Looking ahead, maize remains central to the system.

“It’s got some almost magical properties” says Chris. “It puts condition on cows far more easily than ryegrass at our stocking rates. Get the basics right and you get cheap energy into cows”.

His advice to others considering maize is simple.

“Do the fundamentals well. Once you’ve had a taste, then you can start tweaking things. The worst-case scenario is you learn something”.

ABOVE Pioneer Dairy Specialist Greg Morris with Chris Bagot.

LEFT Charmaine and Chris Bagot.





Silage inoculants

that stack up

Faster, more efficient fermentation means less dry matter loss and improved stability and digestibility of silage crops.

Whether you are making maize, pasture, cereal or sorghum silage, using a proven Pioneer inoculant maximises the feed value of the forage and helps drive profitability.



Not all products deliver benefits – always ask for Pioneer® brand inoculants

Pioneer inoculants 1127 & 1174

FERMENTATION AND ANIMAL PERFORMANCE

Complementary, proprietary, and highly efficient strains of lactic acid-producing bacteria are incorporated into many Pioneer silage inoculants, such as Pioneer® brand 1127 and 1174. These strains rapidly and efficiently convert sugar to lactic acid, resulting in a faster drop in silage pH with many beneficial consequences, including higher dry matter recovery, increased microbial protein and a reduction in ammonia content. The end result is more milk or meat per tonne of pasture ensiled¹.

Pioneer inoculants 11C33 & 11G22

REDUCE HEATING

FERMENTATION AND ANIMAL PERFORMANCE

Pioneer's own strains of *Lactobacillus buchneri* are included in Pioneer® brand 11C33 and 11G22. These strains are intended for use on forages that will produce silage at risk of heating at feed-out time (also known as aerobic instability). These powerful strains convert lactic acid to acetic acid and propanediol, which suppresses mould growth and minimises silage heating. Pioneer's Rapid React *Lactobacillus buchneri* strain delivers stable feed in 7 days¹.

Pioneer inoculants 11CFT & 11GFT

IMPROVE FIBRE DIGESTIBILITY

REDUCE HEATING

FERMENTATION AND ANIMAL PERFORMANCE

The proprietary strains of *Lactobacillus buchneri* in Pioneer® brand 11CFT and 11GFT produce esterase enzymes that decouple cellulose and hemicellulose from lignin, leading to improved fibre digestion rates and enhanced silage nutritional value. This enables higher forage dietary inclusions and allows for slight reductions in energy and protein concentrate feeding rates².

¹ Trial results available on request. ² Always consult your nutritionist before making ration changes.





Pioneer® brand
11CFT

Maize silage specific Nutrivail® inoculant with unique strains of Lactobacillus buchneri, which produce enzymes to improve fibre digestibility³. 11CFT also contains Lactobacillus buchneri strains designed to reduce heating and improve silage quality⁴.



Pioneer® brand
11C33

Maize silage specific inoculant with Lactobacillus buchneri designed to reduce heating and improve silage quality. Rapid React aerobic stability technology provides less heating and stable feed in 7 days⁴.



Pioneer® brand
1174

Improves dry matter recovery and silage quality of all forage crops.



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MORE INFORMATION
REGARDING PIONEER
BRAND INOCULANTS

NEW



Pioneer® brand
11GFT

Grass and cereal specific Nutrivail® inoculant with unique strains of Lactobacillus buchneri, which produces enzymes to improve fibre digestibility³. 11GFT also contains Lactobacillus buchneri strains designed to reduce heating and improve silage quality⁴.



Pioneer® brand
11G22

A grass/lucerne/cereal silage inoculant with L. buchneri designed to reduce heating and improve silage quality. Rapid React aerobic stability technology provides less heating and stable feed in 7 days⁴.



Pioneer® brand
1127

Produces top quality pasture silage with enhanced fermentation for high-producing dairy cows and specialised beef production.



Pioneer® brand
1174

Improves dry matter recovery and silage quality of all forage crops.

³ There is no problem with feeding Nutrivail-treated silages immediately upon ensiling, but the full benefit of the enzyme activity will not be realised until the silage has fermented for 60 days.
⁴ Improved aerobic stability and reduced heating is relative to untreated silage. Actual results may vary. The effect of any silage inoculant is dependent upon management at harvest, storage and feedout. Factors such as moisture, maturity, chop length and compaction will determine inoculant efficacy.



PIONEER
HUNDRED YEARS

**MANY CROPS.
100 YEARS.
ONE
LONG
LOOK.**

PIONEER LONG LOOK

- We strive to produce the best products on the market.
- We deal honestly and fairly with customers, employees and business associates.
- We vigorously market our products, but without misrepresentation.
- We provide helpful management information to assist customers in making optimum profits from our products.



Last year, Pioneer Seeds celebrated 50 years since they first began selling seed to Australian farmers in 1975. This year marks another significant milestone, with the centennial anniversary of the Pioneer brand and its global business.



1926 - 1945

THE HYBRID REVOLUTION

Founded by Henry Wallace in 1926, Pioneer began as a bold experiment in corn breeding which quickly grew into a driving force for agricultural progress. Wallace’s vision and scientific curiosity laid the foundation for a company that would revolutionise crop genetics, empower farmers, and set enduring standards for quality and agronomic support.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF CROP SCIENCE

As the space race took off, so too did farm yields — soaring to new heights thanks to innovations like on-farm mechanisation and nitrogen fertiliser. Pioneer pushed progress even further, building research centres focused on improving yields and stress tolerance in hybrid corn and creating its first agronomy team. The company went on to expand its product offerings to include grain and forage sorghum, canola, silage inoculants and beyond.



1946 - 1985



1975

PIONEER LAUNCHES ITS AUSTRALIAN VENTURE

In 1975, the Pioneer Hi-Bred Seed Company was established in Australia. This allowed the company to make their knowledge and experience with hybrid seeds available to local farmers. Since 2016, the Yates family has been producing and distributing Pioneer brand products in Australia and continuing Pioneer’s legacy of supporting local growers with innovative products and dependable in-field advice.

THE RISE IN TECHNOLOGY

While the first 60 years saw yield growth through traditional breeding methods, the last four decades have delivered advancements in the science of genomics. Pioneer scientists now use DNA fingerprinting to help unlock the potential of seeds, while new technologies like AI and automation are being used to increase the rate of genetic gain.



1986 - today

Pioneer’s 100-year milestone reflects more than longevity — it represents a legacy built on science, integrity and partnership. Sincere thanks to the generations of farmers and those others who support them, who have helped shape the company’s growth and development through the years. Thank you for trusting Pioneer products in your fields.



Hybrid options for your region

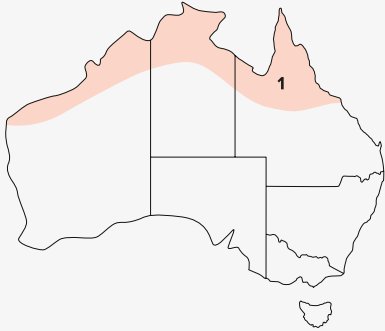
Use the tables below to choose your region then identify hybrid options which match your maturity requirements.

Notes

The hybrid options by region tables are intended as a guideline only and are mainly based on hybrid CRM. In some cases, other hybrids may also be suitable for your growing environment. For farm specific advice talk to your local Pioneer Territory Sales Manager or Farm Services Consultant.

Region 1

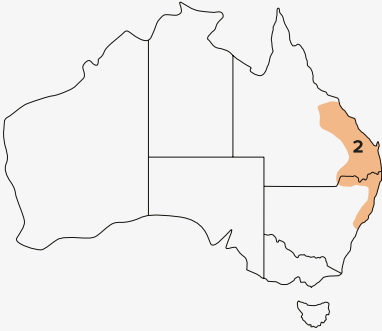
Northern Australia including, North QLD, Northern Territory and Northern WA



	Hybrids	Maturity category
NEW	P15744 IT	Mid
	P1729	Full
	P1756	Full
NEW	P17822 IT	Full
	P1837	Full
	P2307	Full

Region 2

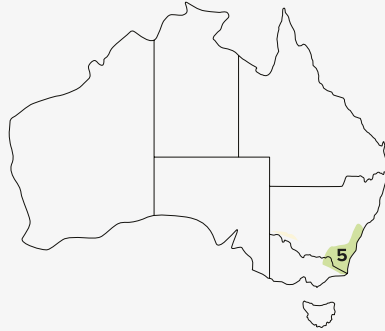
Central QLD, Wide Bay & Burnett, Darling Downs, Western Downs, Border Rivers, South-East QLD and North Coast NSW



	Hybrids	Maturity category		Hybrids	Maturity category
	P0937*	Mid		P1729	Full
NEW	P13063 IT	Mid		P1756	Full
	P1315IT	Mid	NEW	P17822 IT	Full
	P1477W	Mid		P1837	Full
NEW	P15744 IT	Mid		P2307	Full

Region 5

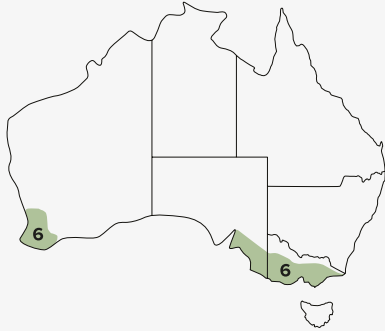
Hunter Valley, Sydney Basin, Central and South Coast NSW



	Hybrids	Maturity category
	P92575	Quick
	P9978	Quick
NEW	P07003	Mid
	P0937	Mid
NEW	P17822 IT*	Full
	P2307*	Full

Region 6

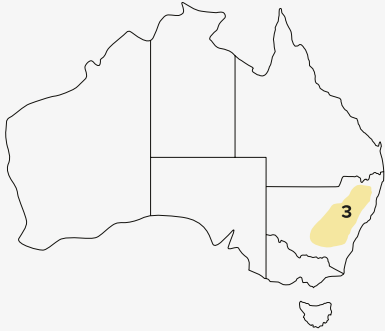
Gippsland, Western Districts of VIC, South-East South Australia, Southern WA



	Hybrids	Maturity category		Hybrids	Maturity category
	P7524	Ultra quick		P0937	Mid
	P8500	Ultra quick	NEW	P13063 IT*	Mid
	P92575	Quick		P1315 IT*	Mid
	P9978	Quick		P1477W*	Mid
NEW	P07003	Mid	NEW	P15744 IT*	Mid

Region 3

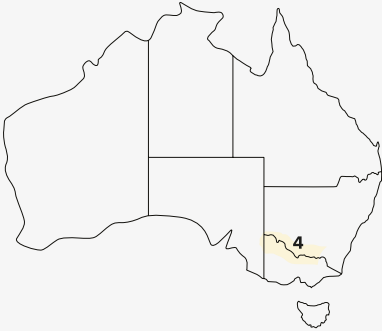
Northern NSW, Liverpool Plains, Central West NSW, Riverina



	Hybrids	Maturity category		Hybrids	Maturity category
	P0937	Mid		P1729	Full
NEW	P13063 IT	Mid		P1756	Full
	P1315IT	Mid	NEW	P17822 IT	Full
	P1477W	Mid		P1837	Full
NEW	P15744 IT	Mid		P2307	Full

Region 4

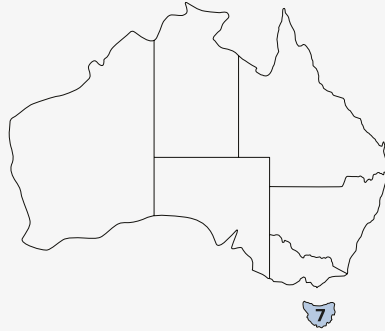
Northern VIC and Southern NSW



	Hybrids	Maturity category		Hybrids	Maturity category
	P9978	Quick	NEW	P15744 IT	Mid
NEW	P07003	Mid		P1729	Full
	P0937	Mid		P1756	Full
NEW	P13063 IT	Mid	NEW	P17822 IT	Full
	P1315IT	Mid		P1837	Full
	P1477W	Mid			

Region 7

Tasmania



	Hybrids	Maturity category
	P7524	Ultra quick
	P8500	Ultra quick
	P92575*	Quick

*Hybrids with an asterisk are suitable in this region in some situations. Contact your local Pioneer representative for paddock specific advice.

Notes:

Trait characteristic notes.

6 Plant height:

9 = Tall. 1 = Short.

7 Late season plant health:

A measure of late season plant health. A lower score means that the plant stover loses colour and dries down more rapidly at maturity. Higher ratings indicate the plant stays greener allowing for a wider harvest window.

8 Whole plant digestibility:

Whole plant digestibility is based on starch content and fibre digestibility measurements taken from samples collected from Pioneer STRIKE trials in Australia. Maize silage quality can vary greatly between seasons and growing environments. This rating should be used as a guide only.

9 Northern Leaf Blight (NLB):

8 to 9 = Highly resistant. 6 to 7 = Resistant. 4 to 5 = Moderately resistant. 1 to 3 = Susceptible. Ratings are based on visual assessment data from overseas and/or Australian trials. In conditions where NLB risk is high, growers should consider planting hybrids with higher NLB resistance ratings

Publication abbreviations

DM = dry matter
ha = hectare
kgDM = kilograms of dry matter
kgDM/ha = kilograms of dry matter per hectare
kgMS = kilograms of milk solids
kgMS/cow = kilograms of milk solids per cow
N/A = not available
tDM = tonnes of dry matter
\$/tDM = dollars per tonne of dry matter



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