



Seed and Grain Theft

The gross value of crops harvested in Australia for 1999-2000 was \$16.6 billion. Thefts of seed and grain can occur from silos or storage sheds on farm. During harvest, trucks or bins full of grain may be taken directly from a paddock. Another scam occurs on properties where there is no weigh bridge onsite. Some of the grain delivered to silos in town can be unloaded enroute and only the remainder is delivered for the farmer.

As with many thefts of farm produce, it is often difficult to be sure that a theft has actually occurred, or exactly how much grain is missing.



What you can do

There are some things farmers can do to ensure the security of their produce.

- Store grain in protected and locked locations.
- Silos and other storage areas should be located for high visibility, for example within sight from the farm house or an employee's home or a neighbour's house.
- To increase visibility, storage areas should be well lit.
- Storage areas should have one entrance requiring a secure gate that can be chained and locked. All other approaches can be protected by deep ditches, fences or other barriers.
- Render augers or other loading equipment locked and inoperative when not in use.
- Don't leave trucks full of grain standing overnight in paddocks. It is better to have them stored close to the main sheds and house.
- Ideally, have a weighbridge on farm to weigh trucks before they leave your

property. Alternatively, arrange with a close neighbour to use the weighbridge on his/her property. A portable weighing machine may be an option.



- Be sure of the people you employ on farm. Employee theft is a considerable problem. Before they start, talk about your crime prevention measures.
- In the United States, confetti, which has the grower's identification printed on it, is added to grain. Confetti can be added as grain is being augered into a bin. Confetti can also be mixed with hay as it is being baled. The confetti, being biodegradable, breaks down over time in grain to be used for stock feed. For grain for human use, fans can blow out the confetti. A similar system is currently being developed in Australia.

Acknowledgment:

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URL: <http://www.nhwatch.asn.au/>

For more information, or if you wish to comment on the material in this leaflet, or if you have any other suggestions for crime prevention strategies on farm, please contact Elaine Barclay at:

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