

Postharvest Loss Prevention: Dry, Inspect, Clean and Examine (D.I.C.E.)

Aflatoxins are poisons produced by certain mould found in food if not well stored that can cause liver damage and cancer. Quality can be maintained by the DICE process.

First, dry your grain before storage. The recommended moisture content for most seeds for storage is 12% or below and for oily seeds like soybean, the recommended is 10% or below and after drying, put the grains in bags that have no holes and seal tightly for storage. Secondly, inspect the building where the grain will be stored and seal any damage that is seen on the building. This prevents leaking of the rain water through the roof and entry of rodents that cause damage. Also store the bagged grain off the floor.

Hygiene and weed

Clean the storage environment and also frequently check the surrounding to ensure its free from weed growth. This prevents insects and rodents from living in the area. Also do not store insecticide containers, cleaning equipment, infested grain and clothing in the same room where the grain is being stored.

Examine the grain on a regular basis to eliminate small problems before they become big problems. Check your grain for mould or excess moisture and also check for holes or tears, and insect pests in your grain bags. If insect infestation is found in the bag, it may be necessary to fumigate the bag depending on the level of infestation.