

Abstract

An experiment was conducted to compare different ways of storing small quantities of silage. Barley/pea bi-crop silage that had initially been prepared as large round bales was chopped through a stationary forage harvester. Replicate 25 kg quantities of this material were then stored using two different container types, plastic basket or evacuated plastic bag, at each of three different temperatures, room temperature, chilled to 4 °C and frozen to -15 °C. The temperature within each container was recorded every hour for 7 days, and then the silage within containers stored chilled and at room temperature sub-sampled for routine chemical analysis. The frozen silage was allowed to thaw, with temperature changes being recorded, before being sub-sampled in the same way. Freezing had little impact on the chemical composition of the silage, but the silage took over 4 days to thaw. Storing the silage chilled was more convenient, and again had little effect on the chemical composition of the silage. There was substantial spoilage of the silage stored in baskets at room temperature. In contrast, the silage stored at room temperature in evacuated bags showed little deterioration.