

## Special Bulletin—Desiccation (Part 2)

### *Sunflower moisture content and desiccation timing. How to test?*

#### **Is there another method to determine if sunflowers are ready to desiccate?**

The answer is “yes”. This season many sunflower fields are not showing ALL the typical characteristics for physiological maturity, particularly brown bracts. Therefore, how can you tell if the sunflower seed moisture content is 30-35% moisture?

Here are two tested methods for determining accurate moisture content in sunflowers:

#### **Moisture Tester**

- ◆ In field, hand thresh seeds from a minimum of 5 different locations throughout the field into a pail. Be sure to select locations inside of the field headlands.
- ◆ Mix up seed sample within the pail to allow for a fair field representation.
- ◆ Calibrate the moisture meter according to recommendations. In most cases, this will be 73 on your dial however different models may vary.
- ◆ Weigh out a 150 gram sample and add to meter, determine number given from reading and consult moisture meter guide for the moisture content.
- ◆ If the full 150g sample does not fit in tester tube, remove the seed and weigh out half (75 grams) and test. Take reading and consult meter guide for the moisture content. The number from this test, multiplied by two will provide the final moisture content.
- ◆ NOTE: If using the 75g sample. The tested result is 15% moisture content, multiplied by two = 30% moisture. **Time to desiccate!**

#### **If you don't have a moisture meter, try the microwave test?**

Following the link below for the protocol on how to test sunflower moisture content using a microwave oven. Sourced from the NDSU.

[https://library.ndsu.edu/ir/bitstream/handle/10365/6109/farm\\_45\\_02\\_03.pdf?sequence=1](https://library.ndsu.edu/ir/bitstream/handle/10365/6109/farm_45_02_03.pdf?sequence=1)