BREEDING MAIZE VARIETIES FOR SILAGE

F. Glenn
Blenheim, Ontario, Canada

The talk will inform you about the breeding efforts to develop Leafy corn varieties for silage production. The basic differences between breeding for grain and for silage are outlined below.

**Grain corn hybrid selection.**
1. High grain yield.
2. Dense hard kernels, hard cobs for easy shelling.
3. Rapid kernel drying rates to reduce drying costs.
4. Strong rigid stalks.
5. High ear, small above ear portion.
6. Rapid senescence of top of plant to promote kernel drying.

**Silage corn hybrid selection.**
1. High whole plant yield.
2. Softer kernel texture, soft cobs to be digestible.
3. Slow drying rate for extended harvest period.
4. Digestible stalks, less lignin, flexible characteristics.
5. Low ear, large above ear plant component.
6. Long stay green to top of plant to keep sugar contents high and extend harvest period.