

The Saskatchewan Hay Report

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Saskatchewan Forage Council

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Editor's Note

The Saskatchewan Forage Council would like to take this opportunity to thank Phil Curry, PAg for his work as Editor of the Saskatchewan Hay Report. Phil has been the Editor of this publication since 2000 and his dedication has provided Saskatchewan forage producers with an excellent source of information. Thank you Phil, your work is greatly appreciated. We look forward to Phil's continued article submissions in future issues of the Hay Report.

We would like to welcome Art Westlund, PAg as the new Editor of the Saskatchewan Hay Report. Art has been involved in agriculture at many different levels, including forage production in Saskatchewan and brings a wide range of expertise. The Saskatchewan Forage Council looks forward to Art's contributions in this role. Readers are encouraged to submit comments and suggestions via the contact information listed at the end of this issue.

Forage Technical Updates 2005

The Saskatchewan Forage Council recently hosted Forage Technical Updates 2005 which were held in early June in Swift Current, North Battleford, Yorkton and Redvers. The two-day training sessions were designed for agronomists with emphasis on plant identification, insects, fertility, environmental stresses, disease and agronomic practices for stand establishment. The Forage Updates workshop format of classroom time combined with hands-on field exercises provided a stimulating exchange of information and participant response was excellent.

The Saskatchewan Forage Council gratefully acknowledges financial support for these workshops by Greencover Canada Technical Assistance Program (Saskatchewan).



Watch for dates and locations of upcoming Forage Technical Updates to be announced early in 2006.

Partners for the Forage Technical Updates 2005 included:

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Canada-Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Saskatchewan Watershed Authority
- Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

Provincial Forage Resources

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

www.agr.gov.sk.ca/Crops/Forage-Pasture

Saskatchewan has approximately 30,000 forage growers with in excess of 2.8 million acres in tame hay production. The value of the hay produced is approximately \$260 million. Rangeland in Saskatchewan exceeds 16 million acres while improved pasture occupies 1.1 million acres. Provincial forage resources currently support a cattle herd of over 2.8 million head.

There exists an opportunity for improved production on existing forage acres. With minimal management, the condition and class, and subsequently the forage production of these lands could easily be increased by 20 per cent. This would translate into an annual increase in revenue of \$40 million. The future expansion of the forage industry in Saskatchewan places emphasis on multiple use, where wildlife, recreation, and aesthetics, along with livestock grazing are included in range resource planning.

Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission Update

Submitted by Philip Curry

The proposed Saskatchewan Forage Seed Development Commission (SFSDC) is winding through the legislative process and should become reality within several weeks. A final draft of the *Regulations* outlining the powers and operating procedures for the SFSDC will go to the Legislative Instruments Committee (LIC) on June 21, 2005. If approved, it will go to Cabinet for final approval the following week.

The fiscal year for the SFSDC begins July 1st, so there is much work to be done once the Commission is established. The most important tasks will be to register buyers and familiarize them with the check-off process, develop a producer database and begin the process of holding elections for the Board of Directors. All forage seed producers in the province will be eligible to vote or hold office but must be registered with the Commission. The annual meeting of the SFSDC will be held in late fall 2005.

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food Crop Report #12 (For the week ending June 19, 2005)

Flooding in fields and delays in spraying caused some concern for farmers according to Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food's weekly crop report.

The northeast, northwest, and west-central regions all averaged over 50mm of rain during the past week. Crop damage from flooding was reported in many areas.

Topsoil moisture conditions on crop land deteriorated during the past week as a result of the heavy rains. Moisture conditions are rated as adequate by 52 per cent of reporters, with the balance reporting surpluses. Hay and pasture land fares slightly better, as 71 per cent of reporters rate topsoil moisture conditions as adequate.

Haying operations have not yet begun. Reporters indicate that crops have been delayed due to cool weather, frost, and lack of precipitation earlier in the growing season. Recent rains and warmer weather have helped and most hay crops are rated as good to excellent.

Grazing Legumes and Bloat

Russel Horvey

Beef/Forage specialist - Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development

Ag-Info Centre, Settler, Alberta

Excerpt from Alberta Agriculture's June 20, 2005 Issue of Agri-News

While grazing is a natural activity for cattle, problems can occur when they graze on some legumes, such as alfalfa, sweet clover, red clover, alsike clover and white clover. These legumes can cause bloat in cattle.

"While there can be problems with some legumes that have a tendency to cause bloat in cattle, there are also non-bloat legumes such as bird's-foot trefoil, sainfoin and cicer milk vetch," says Russel Horvey, beef/forage specialist with Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development's Alberta Ag-Info Centre, Stettler. "The bloat caused by legumes is usually a frothy bloat. Understanding frothy bloat and how it is caused may help cattle producers understand bloat control on legume pastures."

Frothy bloat results from the quick degradation and fermentation of plant material in the gut and the rapid release of plant cell material. This material traps fermentation gases in thick foam. The foam prevents the animal from being able to burp up the gases and the accumulation of these trapped gases in the rumen can lead to the animal's death.

"Forage maturity is the most significant contributing factor in pasture bloat," says Horvey. "The highest risk of bloat occurs when legumes are in the pre-bud or vegetative stage. As the plants mature the risk of bloat declines. Again, this is because the fibre content in the plant increases as the plant matures and therefore breaks down more slowly in the rumen."

To reduce the risk of bloat when grazing legumes:

1. Never move hungry ruminants into legume pastures in the morning.
2. Cattle graze the heaviest in the morning. Put animals out to pasture when the plants are dry. Water tends to speed up the rate of digestion which contributes to the risk of bloat.
3. Feed another source of dry roughage, one that contains long fibre material, before grazing a bloat-causing legume pasture.
4. Maintain a uniform and regular intake of legume forages. Once cattle have started grazing, leave them on the pasture, even at night.
5. Graze full bloom mature plants.

Saskatchewan Hay Market Report

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

www.agr.gov.sk.ca/feedforage



to June 20, 2005							
	Listings	Listings Priced	Tons Listed	Tons Priced	Lowest Price/ton	Highest Price/ton	Weighted Average Price/ton
Alfalfa	17	16	6,023	5,768	\$34	\$73	\$56
Brome/Alfalfa	11	11	992	992	\$21	\$100	\$58
Clover	1	1	560	560	\$36	\$36	\$36
Greenfeed	1	1	4	4	\$80	\$80	\$80
Other	4	4	514	514	\$46	\$80	\$59
Wild Hay	1	0	83	0			

Wyoming Hay Report

Thursday, June 16, 2005 - USDA Market News Service

Dennis Widga

Torrington, Wyoming

Trade very slow. Demand light on light offerings with prices remaining steady. Rains this past week slowing progress of first cutting and some cut hay has been damaged due to the moisture. Producers commenting on the amount of mustard weed in the alfalfa fields. Buyer inquiry light as most wait to see how the first cutting is processed. Pastures rated mostly good and forage is mostly adequate. All prices dollars per ton FOB stack, in medium to large square bales and rounds, unless otherwise noted. Horse hay in small squares.

Eastern Wyoming

Alfalfa - New crop 60.00-65.00 out of the field; Supreme 90.00; Premium 70.00-85.00; Good 60.00-70.00; Fair 55.00; ground and delivered 76.00. Dehydrated Alfalfa Pellets (17 percent protein) 125.00 wholesale.

Central and Western Wyoming

Alfalfa - Premium 70.00-85.00; Good 60.00-65.00. Mixed Grass 60.00-70.00.

Western South Dakota

Alfalfa - New Crop Contract 83.00 delivered; Good 80.00-95.00 delivered; ground and delivered 85.00.

Weekly Montana Hay Report

Friday, June 17, 2005 - USDA Market News

Justin Lumpkin, OIC

Billings, Montana

Compared to last week, trade very slow. Temperatures warmed up into the 80's (°F) this week bringing some welcomed sunshine to the state. Cutting of grass hay underway this week, however late week showers have slowed that down with chance of showers throughout the weekend. All sales FOB the stack and per ton basis in large rounds or large square bales, unless otherwise stated.

Alfalfa: Good alfalfa in large squares and rounds 60.00-65.00 north-central and northeast parts of the state.

Grass: No reported sales.

Timothy: No reported sales.

Alfalfa Relative Feed Value (RFV):

Supreme over 185; premium 170-185; good 150 -170; fair 130-150; low < 130.

Grass Hay Crude Protein Scale:

Premium over 13; good 9-13; fair 5-9; low < 5.

Frequently Asked Questions - At what stage should I cut alfalfa?

Submitted by André Bonneau, Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

The decision when to cut alfalfa is based on three factors: desired harvest quality; the expectation of a second cut; and the weather. The quality of an alfalfa crop is at its highest just before flowering. At this stage, however, forage yield has not been maximized. For producers who need the higher quality, such as feedlots or dairy operations, the optimum time may be just before flowering. For cow/calf producers, protein and forage yield is maximized at 10% to 25% flowering. At this stage, the balance between forage and quality are maximized.

If you are expecting a second cut from your alfalfa, consider that alfalfa needs about six weeks of good growing conditions before a second cut and six weeks before the first killing frost. Generally, the first killing frost occurs in late September (earlier in the north and later in the south). Therefore, the second cut should occur sometime in early to mid-August with the first cut in late June or early July.

If the alfalfa is not staged properly for the first cut by the first week of July, decide whether to wait to cut later, and forget the second cut, or cut the alfalfa at the earlier stage and hope for sufficient growth for a second cut.

The weather should be considered in your decision. Perfect harvest timing is fruitless if drying conditions aren't favourable. The advantage of optimum forage quality at the desired harvest stage can be lost if the windrow gets an inch of rain. Watch the long-term forecast and try to find a reasonable harvest window.



Saskatchewan Forage Council
ANNUAL MEETING & TOUR
Tuesday, July 12, 2005
Saskatoon, SK

- 10 AM Forage Research Tour**
Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada Research Farm – Saskatoon, SK
- 12 Noon Lunch – Saskatoon Golf & Country Club**
“Opportunities in the Forage Industry”
Mr. Vern Racz – Prairie Feed Resource Centre
- 1:30 PM SFC Annual Meeting – Saskatoon Golf & Country Club**

Registration (including lunch) - \$15 per person. Contact the SFC at 306-966-2148 or jbruynoghe@saskforage.ca to confirm your attendance.

Everyone is encouraged to attend and lend their voice to the future direction of the province's forage industry

The editors would like to thank the following people who contributed to this issue:
André Bonneau - Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food; Philip Curry; Russel Horvey - Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development; Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food; and the USDA Market News Service

The Saskatchewan Hay Report is published by the Saskatchewan Forage Council and is available online at www.saskforage.ca. Comments and suggestions are appreciated. If you wish to be placed on an electronic mailing list or have articles and suggestions for upcoming issues, please send them to the editors:

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