

# The Saskatchewan Hay and Pasture Report

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Saskatchewan Forage Council

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## **Editor's Note**

As the growing season draws to a close, we are pleased to bring you the final instalment of the 2008 *Saskatchewan Hay and Pasture Report*. In this issue we provide a summary of hay and pasture conditions and markets throughout Saskatchewan and in the surrounding areas. We want to take this opportunity to thank the extensive list of contributors to this industry focused report. We wish you all a pleasant fall and winter and will be in touch next spring!

Leanne Thompson  
*Saskatchewan Hay and Pasture Report* Editor

We welcome your feedback and encourage anyone interested in being placed on our email distribution list to contact the SFC at [office@saskforage.ca](mailto:office@saskforage.ca). You may also want to visit our website [www.saskforage.ca](http://www.saskforage.ca) for regular news and information related to the forage industry.

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## **Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture – Crop Reports Number 25 (week ending Sept 28, 2008) and Number 26 (week ending Oct 5, 2008)**

### **South Eastern Saskatchewan: September 28, 2008**

For hay and pasture land, 83% is rated as having adequate topsoil moisture, compared to 86% last week. Fifty-four per cent of the south eastern pastures are rated in good to excellent condition, compared to 61% at the end of August. Reporters indicate that 82% of the pastures in the region have adequate supplies of water for livestock. Crop District 2a has the highest rating of inadequate water supplies in the region with over one-third of the pastures short of water and livestock owners are hauling water. Bales are being hauled.

### **October 5, 2008**

Seventy two percent of the hay and pasture land is rated as having adequate topsoil moisture, compared to 83% last week. Farmers are spraying, harrowing, hauling bales, burning flax

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straw, picking rocks, baling straw, fencing, putting away machinery, hauling fertilizer, haying, and spreading manure. Cattle are being moved from summer pastures and in some cases, being placed on stubble for fall grazing.

### **South Western Saskatchewan:**

#### ***September 28, 2008***

Fifty nine percent of the hay and pastureland are rated as having adequate topsoil moisture. Pasture conditions in the southwest are better than they were in late August, with 43% of the reporters rating pastures as good to excellent, compared to 29% at the end of August. Some cattle are being let out into harvested fields. Livestock water availability has dropped somewhat from late August. Reporters rate 63% of the pastures as having adequate water supplies, compared to 68% in late August. Some livestock owners are hauling water for their stock, while some are drilling wells. Snow is needed for spring run-off in many areas. Farmers are hauling bales, burning and working sloughs, baling straw, moving grain, and cleaning corrals.



*Photo credit: Leanne Thompson*

#### ***October 5, 2008***

Forty-three per cent of the hay and pasture land is rated as having adequate topsoil moisture, compared with 59% last week. Rain is needed to improve moisture conditions and facilitate fall work. Farmers are baling, summerfallowing, spraying, picking rocks, and hauling bales. Some south western farmers are selling their calves because they have no pasture for them. Others were moving their cattle off pastures. Several areas are experiencing water shortages for livestock including Lafleche, Moose Jaw, Coderre, and Mankota.

### **East Central Saskatchewan:**

#### ***September 28, 2008***

Fifty seven percent of the hay and pasture land are rated as having adequate topsoil, compared with 68% last week. Pasture conditions in the east central region deteriorated from late August, with 28% of the pastures rated in good to excellent condition, compared to 46% at the end of August. Some cattlemen are moving their cows out to stubble fields. Ninety-five per cent of the pastures have adequate water supplies for livestock. Farmers were baling, hauling bales, spraying, cutting wild hay, burning flax bales, moving grain, harrowing, and soil testing.

#### ***October 5, 2008***

Forty three percent of the hay and pasture land are rated as having adequate topsoil moisture conditions, compared with 57% last week. Farmers are baling, spraying, putting up hay, harrowing, fertilizing, hauling bales, burning kochia, and putting machinery away.

### **West Central Saskatchewan:**

#### ***September 28, 2008***

Thirty percent of the hay and pasture land is rated as having adequate topsoil moisture, compared to 41% last week. Large cracks are showing up in the ground in the Biggar area. Pasture conditions in the west central region have deteriorated since late August, with 19% of the pastures rated as good to excellent, compared to 35% at the end of August. Some cattle are being fed on pastures in the Conquest area. Livestock water availability has also deteriorated since the end of August. Currently, crop reporters indicate that 84% of pastures

have adequate water supplies, compared with 92% a month earlier. Farmers are hauling bales, weaning calves, spraying, baling, harrowing, and delivering grain where they can.

**October 5, 2008**

Sixteen per cent of the hay and pasture land is rated as having adequate topsoil moisture, compared to 30% last week. In the Biggar area, there were long trails of dust behind moving vehicles. Farmers were spraying, hauling bales, harrowing, and baling straw. Some cattle were moved out of the community pasture. Hay is in short supply in the Biggar area.

**North Eastern Saskatchewan:**

**September 28, 2008**

Twenty seven percent of the hay and pasture land were rated as having adequate topsoil moisture, compared with 43% last week. Rain is needed in the Star City area for fall fertilizer application, weed spraying, and pastures. Pasture conditions in the northeast region are poorer, with 20% of the pastures rated as good to excellent, compared to 53% at the end of August. Livestock water availability is the same as late August, with almost all reporters rating water supplies as adequate. Farmers were harrowing, baling straw, and spraying.

**October 5, 2008**

Twenty-five per cent of the hay and pasture land were rated as having adequate topsoil moisture, compared with 27% last week. Water is getting short in the Aberdeen area. Farmers were spraying, harrowing, baling, weaning calves and burning and working sloughs. Fall field work is minimal because of the very dry conditions.

**North Western Saskatchewan:**

**September 28, 2008**

Thirty nine percent of hay and pasture land is rated as having adequate moisture, compared to 52% last week. Dry conditions in the Glaslyn area make for a dangerous fire hazard situation. It is also very dry in the Duck Lake area. Pasture conditions in the northwest region are poorer than they were in late August, with 15% of the pastures rated as good to excellent, compared with 50% a month ago. Livestock water availability is also poorer than a month ago, with reporters indicating that 88% of pastures have adequate water supplies, compared with 94% in late August. Farmers are baling straw and hauling bales.

**October 5, 2008**

Thirty per cent of the hay and pasture land is rated as having adequate topsoil moisture, compared with 39% last week. Once the harvest is off, rain will be welcomed. Feed supplies are short in the Turtleford area. Farmers were applying fertilizer, baling, weaning calves, and hauling bales. Cattle are being moved off summer pastures.

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**Hay Auctions in Saskatchewan**

**An Interview with Bruce Switzer - Switzer Auction Services, Swift Current, SK**

*Editor's Note: The following is the second instalment of the regular industry column which includes an interview conducted by Leanne Thompson on October 7, 2008.*



Bruce Switzer is an auctioneer with Switzer Auction Services of Swift Current, Saskatchewan. Born and raised in Saskatchewan, he has been in the auction business for the past 40 years. Since 1985, Switzer Auction Services have offered hay sales and over the years, have seen interest in marketing and buying hay through auctions grow considerably.

**Q. How are most of your hay sales conducted?**

**A.** We conduct hay sales in the seller's yard as we would any other type of auction sale. Over the years we have developed several repeat customers who hold annual hay sales. These annual sales tend to develop a clientele and we often see the same buyers returning year after year. We also book hay sales for individuals who are looking to market hay on a one time basis. As well we often see hay sold as part of farm and ranch dispersals. Transportation is up to the buyer to arrange.

**Q. What trends have you seen with hay sales over the years and what type of customer do you deal with?**

**A.** We have seen more people moving towards hay auctions over the years. Often, people choose to market hay through auctions as a way to avoid some of the headaches of marketing on their own. Ultimately, the seller doesn't have to worry about getting paid when using an auction service!

We deal mostly with hay growers and mixed farmers who grow grain on their 'better' land and hay on their marginal land. For these producers, growing hay provides a lower cost option on some of their land. The capital investment required for equipment and inputs to produce hay is significantly less than for annual crops. With the higher prices for grains and oilseed crops this year, we have seen some of the hay fields in the SW broken up. However, most of the fields that were taken out of forages were older stands or had significant gopher/badger damage. These areas will likely return to perennial forages once grain prices come down.

**Q. When will sales begin for the 2008 forage crop?**

**A.** We are currently preparing our advertising for hay sales this winter. We will begin hay sales the first part of December and have some sales booked already. Some of our annual customers choose to split their sales over two dates, one in December and one in February. This is usually done to avoid the problems associated with loading trucks following the sale. The logistics of loading a large number of bales going to various locations often isn't possible, so customers choose to spread out the sales to avoid a logjam of trucks. The other benefit to the sellers of splitting hay sales is the possibility of hitting two different markets.

**Q. Have you had inquiries about hay sales yet this year?**

**A.** We have been getting inquiries about hay sales likely due to the fact that some areas in the SW have had poor hay crops this year and livestock producers may be short of hay this winter. In the south west, dryland hay production has been below average this year. There are some areas around Rush Lake with access to irrigation where they see more consistent production

each year. Straw will likely be in short supply across much of the SW as well. Demand for hay and straw will really depend on what the winter is like this year.

**Q. What area do most of your sales take place in?**

**A.** We deal mostly in the south west corner of Saskatchewan from Regina south to the border, over to the Alberta border with some sales into the south east corner of Alberta. Most of the buyers are local at hay sales, as high transportation costs limit the distance people can haul hay. We used to see some American buyers at our sales, but since the dollar has been near par and transportation costs have increased, there number of American buyers has dropped.

**Q. What are hay prices looking like in the south west for this year?**

**A.** As we haven't held any hay sales yet, we don't have any concrete prices. I've heard all kinds of predictions at the coffee shop. However, I think you can say hay is worth \$100/ton, but until you actually sell it for \$100/ton, it's not worth that price!

*Thank you Bruce for discussing your business! If you have any questions for Bruce he can be reached at 306.773.4200 or visit [www.switzerauction.ca](http://www.switzerauction.ca).*

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## **Saskatchewan Regional Forage Reports**

### **South East Saskatchewan**

*Lorne Klein, PAg*

*Forage Development Specialist – Weyburn, SK*

*Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture*

Perennial hay yields on first cut were 25-40% of normal most of which was rained on repeatedly. With late season rains in July and August, second cut was better quality than the first, but second cut yields are generally poor. In the range of 40-50% of producers took a second cut of hay this year compared to more like 10% in previous years in this area. The prediction is that the SE will be short of perennial hay. Most people were reluctant to cut annuals for greenfeed with the good grain prices, so there is little greenfeed in the area. There appears to be adequate crop residue if people want to divert it to livestock feed. There may be enough feed grain to go along with the straw. There are reports that some durum has 20% sprouts.

Pasture conditions are all over the map, however in general, those that have been under good management are in good shape. The late summer and fall rains have greened pastures considerably over the past few weeks and will replenish soil moisture going into winter.

### **South West Saskatchewan**

*Trevor Lennox, PAg*

*Forage Development Specialist – Swift Current, SK*

*Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture*

The Southwest Region as a whole will have adequate forage supplies for this year. Right at this point, there appears to be a shortage of cereal straw for bedding, etc.. The high price of

fertilizer is making it hard for cattle producers to pay the fair 'fertilizer value' of what the nutrients are worth in a bale of straw. Forage prices appear to be around the \$85-\$90/ton range for good quality hay bales.

It is hard to state an average yield due to the amount of variability across the region. Some yields were only 0.7 tons/ac, while others yielded 1.6 tons/ac. The growing season started off very dry resulting in a very poor 1st cut, however the good rainfall through June/July resulted in some producers taking a 2nd cut (which is quite unusual for this area).

Pastures are going into winter in good condition, with lots of regrowth/carryover resulting from the decent late-season rainfall. Grasshopper numbers are high in some areas this fall, suggesting they could be a potential problem next year for some regions of the Southwest.

### **West Central Saskatchewan**

*Charlotte Ward, PAg*

*Forage Development Specialist – Outlook, SK  
Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture*

In general, the West central region has lower than average hay yields, about 75% of average for the area (approximately 0.86 tons/acre). Hay was put up in relatively good, dry conditions so quality should not be a concern. A small number of producers are taking a second cut on alfalfa.

The Outlook and Biggar areas were relatively dry all summer, resulting in low hay yields and less than ideal pasture conditions. It has been reported that some producers are already starting to feed livestock on pasture. Along the Alberta border, (Kindersley-west) conditions appear to be better. Livestock producers will likely be looking for straw and chaff to help stretch the first cut of hay through the winter. There is little to no hay currently moving in this region.

### **North West Saskatchewan**

*Glenn Barclay, PAg*

*Forage Development Specialist – North Battleford, SK  
Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture*

In many areas older hay stands are at 50% of long term yields. In other areas older stands are a little less than average. The stands in newer fields had quite good yields despite not getting rains when it was needed. Fall weather has co-operated with no extreme frost events and few rain delays so harvest is basically wrapped up. The good fall weather will allow lots of opportunities for stubble grazing. Water supplies are adequate in most areas. The pasture situation is "same old same old" if you haven't overgrazed and rotated the herd they are in reasonable shape.

Straw supply is a bit of a scramble for some cattle producers since more rotary combines are being used and fertilizer prices have increased, causing crop producers to want more for their straw.

Forage supplies in the North West are likely 25 to 33% less than normal with average to above average quality. If we do not have a vicious winter and the overall herd size is less than last winter, most cattle producers will be able to cope.

### North East Saskatchewan

*Al Foster, PAg*

*Forage Development Specialist – Tisdale, SK*

*Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture*

Generally the North East was cool and dry this spring. As a result hay yields were lower probably ½ to 2/3 of normal. Rains in July helped provide some additional growth to hay and pastures but resulted in a delayed haying season. Quality of this late harvested hay will also be lower than normal. Some second cut alfalfa was taken.

There is very little excess hay or greenfeed around. Most of the hay was spoken for early. Most producers should have enough hay and straw to get through a normal winter. There will be localized shortages and some of the larger operations have been having problems accessing enough feed.

### Saskatchewan Hay and Forage Seed Production in 2008

*Michel Tremblay, Provincial Specialist, Forages*

*Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture*

Although there were few reports of winterkill and blackstem last spring, the Saskatchewan forage crop got off to a slow start in 2008. Cool temperatures and dry conditions delayed the initiation of forage crop growth and slowed development. Forage crops need adequate moisture in early to late spring for successful development. The dry conditions in many areas last fall, combined with little rainfall in most districts until the end of June lowered production (Table 1). Improved temperatures and rains in June and July were too late for the first cut to recover completely. Older fields showed the greatest reduction in yields.

Table 1. 2008 Regional hay yields, Saskatchewan.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Hay yield (tons/acre)</b>
South East	1.03
South West	1.14
East Central	1.34
West Central	0.86
North East	1.39
North West	1.06
<b>2008 Average</b>	<b>1.13</b>
Provincial Average (5 year)	1.39

Source: Saskatchewan Agriculture Crop Report

Due to poor growing conditions in spring, many producers delayed cutting until July. Advanced maturity and, in some cases, rain damage due to showers in July resulted in reduced hay quality. Due to late cutting, regrowth on hay fields was delayed. Many hay fields had less than one ton per acre regrowth in mid August. Most growers did not take the second cut, due to low yield and the risk of damaging their alfalfa by cutting during the fall critical period.

Hay prices remained in the \$80-\$90 per ton range during the summer, with trucking costs and pressure on cattle prices governing increases, despite below average production. Supplies of

feed have tightened in 2008, due to reduced supplies of hay in Saskatchewan and surrounding areas. Comparatively good harvest weather and the lack of early fall frost prevented annual crop quality loss to the extent that there is less available to the feed market.

Moisture conditions on hay and pasture remain adequate in most areas. The most recent *Hay and Pasture Topsoil Moisture Conditions Map* is included in the *Crop Report* and is available on the Saskatchewan Agriculture website at:

<http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=56a86b2d-1aaf-4754-ac6d-0285ab11438d>

Forage seed production was variable in 2008. Yields were approximately average to above average, with increasing prices for most species. Yields and prices at time of writing are included in Table 2.

Table 2. 2008 (September) Forage Seed Yields, Prices and Trends, Saskatchewan

Species	Yield Range (lb per acre)	Price \$ per lb*	Comments	Acreage Trend
alfalfa	Not harvested yet	1.35-1.40		
red clover	350 lb/ac	1.05 single cut 1.30+ double cut		
alsike clover	No acres in 2008	0.55-60		
sweet clover	400-500	0.45-50		
birdsfoot trefoil	250	2.00		
timothy	300	0.50 0.60-0.80 (pedigreed)		
meadow fescue	400	0.70		
meadow brome	400-500	1.50+ 1.70 (pedigreed)		up
smooth brome	250-300	0.60-0.80		down
crested wheatgrass	300-400	0.80-1.50 (pedigreed)		
intermediate wheatgrass	250-300	0.80		
slender wheatgrass	Average 300	0.60-0.70		
western wheatgrass	-	< 2.00	big USA crop	usage down
Russian wild rye	0-100	2.00		
annual, perennial rye grass	annual 600-700 perennial 400-700	annual 0.25 -0.30 perennial 0.60	annual acres down	
creeping red fescue	No acres in 2008	0.65		

\* common seed, price to grower, unless otherwise noted

Source: Michel Tremblay, Saskatchewan Agriculture

Information for seeding forage crops in the fall is available in the *Saskatchewan Forage Crop Production Guide* in the Saskatchewan Agriculture website at:



<http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/Production> (Then Click on [Crops - Seeding](#) and scroll down to *Saskatchewan Forage Crop Production Guide*)

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### **Alberta Hay Report**

*Gordon Hutton, Provincial Forage Industry Specialist  
Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development*

The 2008 forage season started with generally good growing conditions across Alberta but cool spring temperatures did delay forage development. By early summer, soil moisture was a concern in the Peace River and in areas north and east of Edmonton. The prevailing dry conditions during 2008 had a negative impact on forage productivity in these areas.

In southern Alberta first cut haying was delayed on both dryland and irrigation in 2008. First cut yields were average for the area. First cut forage quality was rated as high, with 70% to 85% of hay being considered in either good to excellent condition. Limited second cut haying occurred on dryland fields. Second irrigation produced average yields with the majority of the hay rated as being in good condition.

In central Alberta first cut hay yields were rated as average. Rain showers during early July delayed harvesting in many areas. Forage quality was rated high, with 70 to 75% of the first cut hay being in good to excellent condition. Dry summer conditions resulted in below average second cut yields. Second cut forage quality was rated as being fair to good.

The Peace River region experienced below average first cut hay yields in 2008. Due to the dryness in this area most producers were unable to obtain a second cut. Forage quality ratings were lower than other areas with 60% of the forage being considered good to excellent quality.

Fall estimates would suggest that for dryland pasture areas in southern Alberta, 34 % are in poor condition, 30 % fair, 33 % good and 3 % excellent. In central Alberta 20 to 40% of pastures are in poor condition, 30 to 50% fair and 20 % in good condition. In the Peace River area pastures are rated as 53% poor condition, 23 % fair, and 24 % good condition. In comparison to 2007 there has been a significant increase in the percentage of pastures being reported as being in poor condition.

Hay shortages may occur in some regions as a result below average yields. Hay pricing has increased over 2007 with prices ranging from 2.5 cents/lb to 4.0 cents/lb for beef quality hay. Higher prices would be anticipated for horse or dairy markets.

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### **Manitoba Hay Report**

*Glenn Friesen, Business Development Specialist – Forage  
Manitoba Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives*

A very wet year for the northern half of Agro-Manitoba delayed harvest to the point where some only began taking first or second cut in late September. As a result both first and second cut yields and quality in the Northwest and Westlake regions are below average. The Interlake region experienced similar wet conditions but well above average harvest yields as the second

cut harvest was significantly greater with higher rainfall – but like the rest of northern Manitoba, quality was significantly reduced. As a result of high water levels, native hay will not be harvested in much of the three regions. Average yield losses in these regions are estimated at 30% for tame hay, 70% for native, 45% for greenfeed and 30% for corn silage.

In contrast, a dry season for much of the Southwest reduced yields but provided for average to above average quality. The Central and Eastern regions were also affected by inclement weather during harvest; however to a much lesser degree. Third and fourth cut began the week of September 29th for these regions. The delay in a killing frost across the province has been welcomed by many as it left many tame hay stands growing and accumulating yield as they wait to be harvested.



Alfalfa weevil was again a concern for 2008 and in many cases much more severe than 2007. Many alfalfa hay and seed fields in the province received insecticide applications as control measures, in particular in the Interlake and Southwest regions.

The potential exists for feed shortages in the Northwest, Westlake and Interlake regions for the 2008/09 feeding period. Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives announced a feed and livestock freight assistance program to off-set transportation costs associated with feed shortages during the 2008/09 feeding period. Early indications are that some producers are simply culling with a greater degree of selection rather than purchasing additional feed.

Pasture Pastures are in fair to excellent condition, depending on the moisture received. Late summer/fall rains have helped replenish much needed soil moisture reserves; however, more will be needed in the Southwest to maintain good spring vigor. Many producers are aware that early grazing next spring will severely affect pasture longevity.

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### **Bale Grazing Summary**

*Lorne Klein, Forage Development Specialist*

*Travis Peardon, Livestock Development Specialist*

*Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture*

Bale grazing is a relatively new method of feeding beef cows during winter. It offers both economic and environmental advantages compared to traditional confinement feeding, without compromising the health or performance of the livestock.

Until now, most bale grazing has been managed where bales are hauled to a site, placed separately in lines, and allocated to the livestock every 3-5 days with electric wire. Now, some producers have started to experiment with bale grazing on hayfields where the bales are made and dropped.

When bales are transported and placed on a bale grazing site, there are several issues to keep in mind.



*Photo credit: Manitoba Agriculture Food and Rural Initiatives*

The first is land use of the site. Bale grazing is best suited on land that is seeded to perennial forage. Ideally the stand should have at least one rhizomatous grass (smooth brome grass, quackgrass, Kentucky bluegrass) that can grow through the remaining litter layer. Bale grazing on annual cropland will likely result in trash clearance problems during seeding. Bale grazing on native prairie is not recommended.

A second consideration is bale density on the site. Research at Western Beef Development Centre (WBDC) suggests

bales should be placed no closer than 40 feet apart, or about 25 bales/acre. At this density, approximately 75 lbs/acre of plant available nitrogen will accumulate in the soil profile the following spring.

A third consideration is nutrient leaching and runoff from the site. Avoid high intensity bale grazing on sites with sand and gravel textured soils, especially in areas where there is a high water table. Avoid bale grazing on steep slopes where runoff water flows directly into water bodies used as a water source.

Other considerations are controlling livestock access to the bales with electric fence, ease of monitoring during grazing, perimeter fence, access to a water source, access to wind protection, and potential wildlife interference.

Research at WBDC has shown significantly increased nitrogen cycling with bale grazing compared to confinement feeding and mechanical manure spreading. When beef cows were fed during winter on perennial pasture, 34% of the nitrogen that was in the feed was recycled back into the pasture grasses. When cows were fed in confinement and the manure spread, 1% of the nitrogen was recaptured by the pasture grasses. A 1300 lb hay bale (50% alfalfa, 50% grass) contains about 30 lbs of nitrogen. In order to capture this nutrient advantage, the pasture must be managed and the bales must be fed at a density so that pasture growth is enhanced. In cases where livestock are fed repeatedly on the same location, the nutrient advantage will be significantly reduced.

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture has produced a publication called Bale Grazing and the Bale Grazing Calculator©. This publication has further details about bale grazing. The calculator helps producers determine the cost of bale grazing with options including home grown hay, purchased hay, and hay moved during the winter months. The publication is available at [www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca](http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca).

*For more information on bale grazing contact:  
Lorne Klein, (306) 848-2382 or Travis Peardon, (306) 867-5504*

## **Forage Industry Stakeholder Forum** ***'Working Together for the Future of the Forage Industry'***

The Saskatchewan Forage Council along with our project organizing committee is pleased to present the *Forage Industry Stakeholder Forum – 'Working Together for the Future of the Forage Industry'* which will take place November 20 and 21, 2008 in Saskatoon, SK.

This forum is the initial step towards completion of the project entitled "Saskatchewan's Forage Industry: A Multi-level Analysis", which will investigate the direct and indirect effects that forages have on the economy, society and environment in Saskatchewan. While the main objective of this project is to define and place value on the resources that forages produce in Saskatchewan, a secondary objective is to raise the profile of forages through demonstrating their importance in other agricultural sectors and their "green" effects in the environment. The report generated from this project will be made available to industry stakeholders as well as policy makers, providing a valuable summary of the economic impacts of forages in Saskatchewan.

This forum will provide an opportunity for stakeholders from all sectors of the forage industry to come together and engage in an important dialogue about the future direction of this industry. Invitations are being extended to producer groups from across the province including seed growers, hay growers, livestock producers (cattle, sheep, dairy, goats and horses), forage and grazing clubs, as well as forage seed and processing companies, government staff, researchers, scientists, agency staff, policy developers, conservation groups, and parks and recreation. The organizing committee feels that it is important to have representation from all sectors to best define the nature, challenges and future opportunities facing the industry.

The Saskatchewan Forage Council acknowledges the partners on this joint initiative, including the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, Feeds Innovation Institute, Knowledge Impact in Society (KIS) and the Centre for Studies in Agriculture, Law and the Environment (CSALE). Financial support for this project has been provided by the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan through the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food in Saskatchewan (ACAAFS) program and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture.

For more information on this project or the forum, please visit the Saskatchewan Forage Council website at [www.saskforage.ca](http://www.saskforage.ca). You can also contact Leanne Thompson, Lead Consultant on this project at [thompsonleanne@sasktel.net](mailto:thompsonleanne@sasktel.net) 306.454.2777 or the Saskatchewan Forage Council office.

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### **Upcoming Events**

*For more information on any of these events, please visit the Saskatchewan Forage Council's website at [www.saskforage.ca](http://www.saskforage.ca).*

#### **Nature Saskatchewan Conservation Awareness Day** **October 21, 2008**

*Rockglen, SK*

Presentation topics include: Invasive Plant Species, Leafy Spurge, Environmental Farm Plan: What's Next?, What's Going on With Fife Lake?, Cropland Conversion Funding



*Photo Credit: Leanne Thompson*

Opportunities and more! For more information call 1.800.667.4668.

### **Holistic Management International Conference**

**October 22-25, 2008**

*Keystone Centre, Brandon, MB*

Paradigm Shifting for the Future. Holistic management is an approach to managing the resources that build biodiversity, improves production, generates financial strength and improves the quality of life while enhancing the environment that sustains us all. For more information contact Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives at 204.622.2006.

### **Forage Industry Stakeholder Forum**

**November 20-21, 2008**

*Willows Golf and Country Club, Saskatoon, SK*

This forum will bring together stakeholders from all sectors of the forage industry for an important dialogue about the challenges, opportunities and future of this industry in Saskatchewan. For more information contact Leanne Thompson at 306.454.2777.

### **2008 Manitoba Grazing School**

**November 25-26, 2008**

*Keystone Centre, Brandon, MB*

This year's theme is "Managing Risk in Dynamic Times". For more information contact the Manitoba Forage Council at 204.726.9393.

### **Strategy vs System: Grazing for Desired Outcomes**

**December 2-4, 2008**

*Marriott Hotel, Fort Collins, CO*

This conference is presented by the Colorado Section of the Society for Range Management as part of their 2008 annual meeting. It will feature a diversity of speakers on topics including, plan/animal interactions on the landscape, understanding grazing behavior and intensive grazing management. For more information contact Tim Steffens at 719.523.6251 extension 3.

### **Western Canadian Grazing Conference**

**December 3-5, 2008**

*Mayfield Inn & Suites, Edmonton, AB*

Presented by ARECA, this conference and trade show is the premier grazing event for producers, industry leaders and key stakeholders in Western Canada. This year's theme is "Grass to Cash – Building a Plan that Works". For more information visit the ARECA website.

### **Foraging into the Future V: Practical Solutions for Livestock Producers**

**December 10-11, 2008**

*Swift Current, SK*

This two day event will feature local researchers and producers, as well as experts from across North America, including Jim Gerrish, well known grazing consultant. For more information call Trevor Lennox at 306.778.8294 or Tara Mulhern-Davidson at 306.778.5000.

### **62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting Society for Range Management**

**February 8-12, 2009**

*Albuquerque, NM*

"Merging Trails: Culture, Science and Innovation". For more information on the SRM annual meeting visit their website at [www.srmmeetings.org](http://www.srmmeetings.org).

**Saskatchewan Hay Market Report**  
 Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture  
[www.agr.gov.sk.ca/feedforage](http://www.agr.gov.sk.ca/feedforage)

**Baled Forage Prices (dollars per ton) to August 19, 2008**

	# of Listings	Listings Priced	Tons Listed	Tons Priced	Lowest \$/T	Highest \$/T	Weighted Average \$/T
<b>Alfalfa</b>	8	7	524	480	\$60	\$120	<b>\$81</b>
<b>Brome/ Alfalfa</b>	10	6	1831	1686	\$80	\$90	<b>\$84</b>
<b>Green feed</b>	1	1	120	120	\$94	\$94	<b>\$94</b>
<b>Slough hay</b>	1	1	188	188	\$30	\$30	<b>\$30</b>
<b>Straw</b>	2	2	257	257	\$23	\$40	<b>\$29</b>

**USDA Market News Service Hay Reports**  
 USDA Market News Service

**Wyoming, Western Nebraska, and Western South Dakota Weekly Hay Summary**  
 Torrington, WY  
[www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/to\\_gr310.txt](http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/to_gr310.txt)

Trade and movement moderate. Demand moderate to good. Prices mostly steady through the area. Supply short in Western and Central Wyoming. Supply good in Western South Dakota, with some producers able to get second and third cuttings from dry land hay. Comments have been made about dairy hay in many areas short this season. Some areas are on fourth cutting. A good amount of hay from producers as well as the video auction has been seen leaving the state and heading south and east.

**Weekly Montana Hay Report**  
 Justin Lumpkin, Billings, MT  
[www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/bl\\_gr310.txt](http://www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/bl_gr310.txt)

Compared to last week, sales remain firm. Demand very good for all classes of hay. Unseasonal warm temperatures this week, hay growers busy making third cutting of alfalfa.

	Eastern Wyoming	Central & Western Wyoming	Western South Dakota	Montana
<b>Alfalfa</b>				
Supreme	-	\$175-200	\$85-120	\$175-195
Premium	\$125-160	\$130-150		\$160-175*
Good		\$120-140	\$75-90	\$115-140
Fair	\$100-125	\$98	\$65	-
<b>Grass</b>	-	-	\$85**	\$80-90
<b>Alfalfa/Grass</b>	-	\$105-175	\$100-110*	-
<b>Straw</b>	\$60	-	-	\$60
<b>Timothy</b>	-	-	-	180-200*
<b>Oat Hay</b>	\$90.00	-	\$75	-

All prices in U.S. dollars per ton FOB stack in medium to large square bales and rounds unless other wise noted.

\*\*Delivered

\*Small squares

### Hay Quality Designations - Physical Descriptions:

**Supreme:** Very early maturity, pre bloom, soft fine stemmed, extra leafy - factors indicative of very high nutritive content. Hay is excellent colour and free of damage. Relative Feed Value (RFV): >185

**Premium:** Early maturity, i.e., pre-bloom in legumes and pre head in grass hays; extra leafy and fine stemmed - factors indicative of a high nutritive content. Hay is green and free of damage. RFV: 170-185

**Good:** Early to average maturity, i.e., early to mid-bloom in legumes and early head in grass hays; leafy, fine to medium stemmed, free of damage other than slight discoloration. RFV: 150-170

**Fair:** Late maturity, i.e., mid to late-bloom in legumes and headed in grass hays; moderate or below leaf content, and generally coarse stemmed. Hay may show light damage. RFV: 130-150

**Utility:** Hay in very late maturity, such as mature seed pods in legumes or mature head in grass hays, coarse stemmed. This category could include hay discounted due to excessive damage and heavy weed content or mould. RFV: <130

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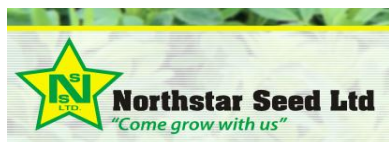
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