Saskatchewan Hay & Pasture Report

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Inside This Issue:

Note from the Saskatchewan Forage Council

To kick off the growing season in true fashion, here is the first issue of the *Saskatchewan Hay & Pasture Report*. This is the 14th season of the report, and as in the past, it will continue to provide current information and updates related to the forage industry. The goal of the report is to help keep you informed and engaged about our wonderful industry. Now that thoughts of the long winter are further behind us, we can look forward at the 2013 growing season. The spring so far has presented challenges to forage producers in some areas of the province. Cool weather, a lack of rain, and flooding all have been experienced this spring in different areas throughout Saskatchewan. Forage production in many areas will be very dependent on the conditions in the coming weeks. In this issue of the *Saskatchewan Hay & Pasture Report*, you will find details on regional crop conditions, alfalfa weevils, a new sanfoin variety, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture forage specialists, alfalfa winterkill, and corn silage, as well as information on upcoming events in the province. In addition, you will find a summary of forage market information from Saskatchewan and surrounding jurisdictions.

As always, we welcome your feedback and encourage anyone interested in being placed on our email distribution list to contact the SFC at office@saskforage.ca. You may also want to visit our website www.saskforage.ca for regular news and information related to the forage industry.

Saskatchewan Forage Council Tour and AGM

The Saskatchewan Forage Council (SFC) is celebrating their 25th Anniversary this year! Stakeholders from across the industry are invited to celebrate with us at the upcoming SFC Field Tour & Annual Meeting to be held **Monday, June 24, 2013** in **Saskatoon, SK**. (click here for a complete schedule of events).

The field tour begins at 1:30pm and will include tours of Kernan Prairie and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)/University of Saskatchewan forage variety plots. This venue provides an excellent opportunity to hear updates from the industry and discuss forage-related issues. Following the tour the **SFC Annual General Meeting begins at 4:45pm**. Presentation of the Forage Industry Innovation Award will be followed by a BBQ steak supper at 6:15pm. Enjoy a great meal and visit with colleagues and acquaintances from across the industry.

Registration, including supper, is $20/person (payable at the door). Please add your name to our registration list by June 19th by contacting the SFC at 306.969.2666 or office@saskforage.ca. We look forward to seeing you there!

Saskatchewan Agriculture Crop Report

(for period ending May 27, 2013)

Sixty-seven per cent of the 2013 crop has been seeded according to Saskatchewan Agriculture's weekly Crop Report. The five-year (2008-2012) average for this time of year is approximately 70 per cent seeded.

Sixty-seven per cent of the crop is seeded in the southeast, 85 per cent in the southwest, 60 per cent in the east-central area, 65 per cent in the west-central area, 51 per cent in the northeast, and 69 per cent in the northwest.

Seeding was temporarily halted in some regions over the weekend as the majority of the province received rainfall. The Coronach and Humboldt areas received the most rainfall with more than two inches.

Provincially, topsoil moisture on cropland is rated as 13 per cent surplus, 81 per cent adequate and six per cent short. Hay land and pasture topsoil moisture is rated as seven per cent surplus, 81 per cent adequate, 11 per cent short and one per cent very short.

Livestock water availability is adequate and pasture conditions are rated as 20 per cent excellent, 56 per cent good, 20 per cent fair and four per cent poor.

Farmers are busy seeding, controlling weeds and moving cattle to pasture.

For a breakdown of regional conditions, please visit the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture's Crop Report online.

Alfalfa Weevil – Management Options

Lorne Klein – Regional Forage Specialist, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

Alfalfa weevils are an invasive alien species, inadvertently imported from Europe into North America in the early 1900's. They now appear to be fully acclimatized and established in southern and eastern Saskatchewan where they caused significant economic damage to alfalfa fields in 2012.

Alfalfa Weevil Larvae

The adult weevil is a beetle that can fly 10-15 miles in spring. The beetle overwinters in trash cover and emerges in spring to lay eggs. The eggs hatch into larvae (worms) that cause the feeding damage. On the western Canadian prairies, there is only one generation per year. For detailed information on history, description, biology, feeding damage and population monitoring in Saskatchewan, refer to the following documents: "*Alfalfa Weevil Fact Sheet*" and "*Saskatchewan Forage Insect Survey 2010-2012*". There is also an *AgriView* article (May 2013) called "*Watch for Alfalfa Weevil in 2013*" that provides a general overview of the weevil situation in SK.

The current article will focus on management options for alfalfa weevils:

Alfalfa Weevil Larvae – Lorne Klein

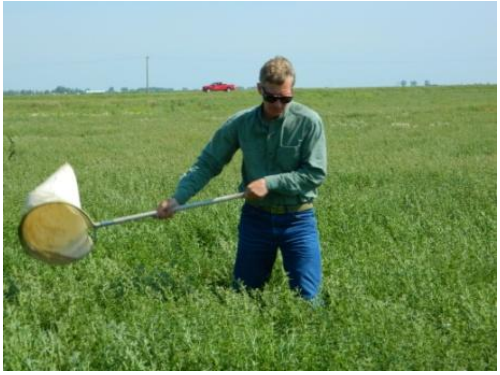
1. Monitor Alfalfa Fields

Check fields every 3-4 days starting in early June. In 2012, monitoring should have started in mid May due to the early warm spring temperatures that resulted in early egg laying and hatching. Spend more effort checking the pure alfalfa fields as these are preferred by the weevil. Prior to 2012, it was unusual to find weevils in fields with 30% or higher grass content. In 2012, a few alfalfa/grass hay fields had high weevil numbers.

2. Inspect Leaves for Signs of Feeding

Typically the leaves are "skeletonized" with the leaf veins left behind. The majority of feeding occurs in the top third of the canopy. Note the percentage of stems that have feeding damage and to what degree. At more advanced stages, the field will have a grey appearance and a lack of flowers.

Alfalfa Leaf Skeletonized – Marlin E. Rice



Sweeping for Weevils – Lorne Klein

3. Monitor Weevil Population and Growth Stage

Attempting to count larvae on stems is difficult because the larvae often drop to the ground when there is a disturbance. A sweep net is very effective for collecting larvae to monitor both the instar stages and population numbers. Another method is to carefully grab a handful of stems at the base, cut them off and quickly slap the stems on a flat surface. Whatever the method – use a consistent routine each time.

Larvae (worms) have four instar stages. The first instar is 1 mm, and the fourth is 7-10 mm long. The time from first to fourth instar is about 3-4 weeks. The majority of feeding damage is done by the third and fourth instars. Previously, with average weevil development and populations, economically significant feeding begins in early July.

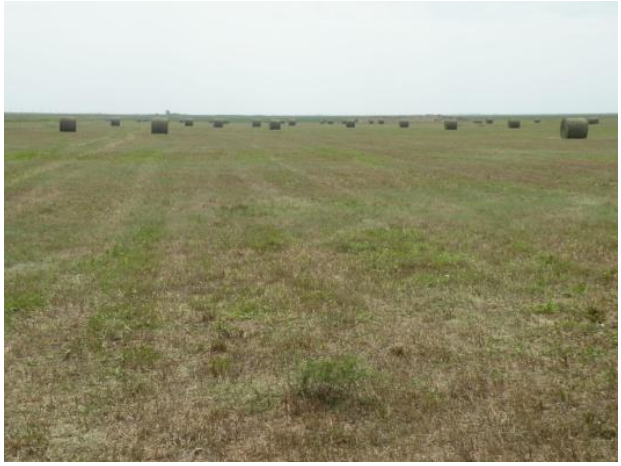
Hay Field with Weevil Damage – Lorne Klein

4. Determine Economic Significance

Whether an infestation is economically significant depends on: 1) value of the forage, 2) cost of insecticide and application, and 3) the projected level of yield and quality loss based on forage stand vigor, weevil population, larvae stage and time until harvest. Yield loss is more than just the leaves consumed. Weevils rob the plant of moisture, nutrients and photosynthetic area. Significant feeding levels will result in stunted plant growth.

Due to the numerous interactions listed above, **economic thresholds based on weevil numbers or current feeding damage will vary considerably depending upon days until harvest.** As a general guide, 1-3 larvae per stem or 25-50% of leaves on the upper third of the stem showing damage are thresholds to consider control measures.

5. Management (Control) Options



Hay Field Baled after Weevil Damage – Lorne Klein

Cut: Historically the majority of feeding damage occurs in early July, so the simple solution is to cut the stand. As the leaves dry, the weevils are starved. Fields with the highest levels of alfalfa, and alfalfa fields older than 3 years tend to have the highest weevil populations. Cut the fields with the highest potential for damage first.

Graze: Research in the USA has documented significant weevil reductions with fall, winter and/or spring grazing treatments on alfalfa. Producers in western Canada have reported noticeable weevil reductions when alfalfa hayfields are grazed in fall, or when highly infested alfalfa hayfields are converted into pasture. There is no research in western Canada that documents season, duration or intensity of grazing to significantly reduce weevil populations. It appears grazing may be effective as weevils are seldom reported on pastures.

Insecticide: Apply insecticide when the potential for economic damage is high and early cutting to stop the damage is not an option. Consider spraying the stands that have the highest weevil numbers, with the intent of cutting those fields last.

Hay Field Rebounds after Weevil Control with Insecticide – Lorne Klein

Fire: Research at Lethbridge (1983-1989) has shown inconsistent weevil reduction with the use of fire. Autumn fires resulted in significant reductions in 3 of 8 years, and Spring fires resulted in significant reductions in 2 of 8 years. In a single case in Saskatchewan, an accidental fire in April burned a portion of an alfalfa hay field. During summer it was easily noticed the fire reduced the weevil population compared to the unburned area. Fire can be quite effective, but there is no way to predict the results with certainty. At this point, fire is not recommended as a weevil control option.

Winning the Battle with Bloat

NEWSTREAM Forage Science Extension Article – Meristem Information Resources Ltd.

New 'Mountainview' sainfoin cultivar promises bloat-free alfalfa pasture grazing for Western Canada. It's a marriage made in cattle heaven. Scientists have developed a new variety of sainfoin that when paired with alfalfa in a mixed stand offers the holy grail of bloat-free alfalfa pasture grazing for cattle.

Development of the new cultivar, tested as LRC 3902, was led by Dr. Surya Acharya of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) in Lethbridge. With a proposed name of Mountainview, it offers cattle producers a brand new 'king' to pair with 'queen of forages' alfalfa, to provide innovative new options and many superior benefits.

Announcement of the new variety was made by Acharya at the Alberta Forage Industry Network AGM, Feb. 5, in Ponoka, Alta.

Mountainview Sanfoin – Meristem Information Resources Ltd.

"This new sainfoin cultivar is truly one-of-a-kind and represents an exciting new opportunity for cattle producers," says Acharya, a long-time forage breeder and recipient of the 2012 Canadian Plant Breeding and Genetics Award. "It is the first sainfoin cultivar that will survive in alfalfa pasture and grow back at the same rate after cutting or grazing. It will prevent bloat in mixed stands to provide producers with their first real, economically viable option to allow for highly productive, bloat-free alfalfa pasture grazing."

High-quality crop

A new way to win the battle with bloat is a big step forward to benefit beef and dairy industries in Western Canada. The forage industry is very significant across the Prairie Provinces. According to the most recent census of agriculture by Statistics Canada there are 28.8 million acres of forage land in Alberta alone.

Sainfoin is a high quality forage legume crop that features a condensed tannin concentration. This is very effective at preventing deadly pasture bloat in ruminants. However, until now, sainfoin cultivars have not survived well in alfalfa pasture or grown back after the first cut.

The new cultivar was bred to overcome those two hurdles and field trials show it represents a great success. It was derived from parental clones selected for improved forage yield in mixed stands with alfalfa and regrowth after cutting. When grown under irrigated and rainfed conditions of Western Canada, LRC 3902 out yielded Nova, the check variety, by 22 to 42 percent in pure stands and 30 to 39 percent in mixed stands with alfalfa. It also showed strong regrowth.

"The Mountainview cultivar achieves what we set out to accomplish with our sainfoin improvement program," says Acharya. "It grows very well and fits all the criteria cattle producers have required to have a solid, reliable option to support bloat-free alfalfa grazing. This cultivar is well suited for preventing bloat in mixed alfalfa stands without loss in animal productivity."

Sanfoin Seeds – Meristem Information Resources Ltd.

Peak of performance

Moutainview promises to live up to its name by delivering results at the peak of forage performance. Through four years of testing at different locations in Western Canada it proved a consistent leader in yield, maturity, seed weight, disease resistance and winterhardiness. Mountainview reaches flowering 10 days earlier than Nova and has a seed weight with pod of 20-24 g per 1,000 compared to 18-22 g for Nova.

"Mountainview's rapid regrowth after cutting is very different from Nova and is one of its greatest benefits," says Acharya. "I think cattle producers will find a lot to like in this new cultivar."

That sentiment is echoed by Doug Wray, Wray Ranch, Irricana, Alta., Chair of the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association. "Legumes are vital to the productivity and sustainability of our tame pastures," says Wray. "Mountainview sainfoin offers exciting potential to increase the carrying capacity of our ranch."

Sanfoin Flowers - Meristem Information Resources Ltd.

Breeder seed for LRC 3902 will be produced at AAFC in Indian Head, Sask., and the multiplication and distribution rights will be awarded through a competitive process. Seed is expected to become available to growers for 2015 seeding.

The forage breeding program at AAFC in Lethbridge has a major focus on the development of innovative, superior new varieties that benefit Canadian cattle producers and their industry.

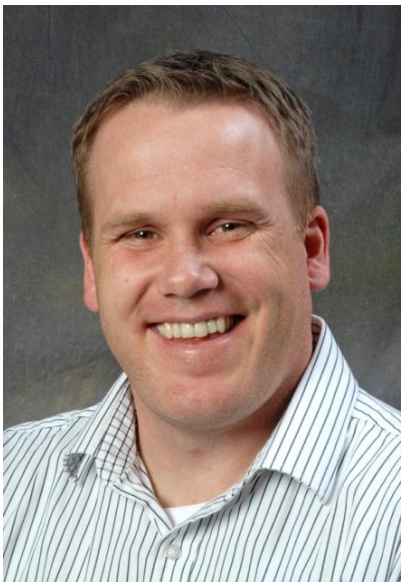
Acharya and his forage research colleagues at AAFC Lethbridge are part of Alberta Forage Industry Network (AFIN), which was formed in 2010 to represent the forage industry in the province. Key parts of the AFIN mandate are to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas among producers and other stakeholders in the forage industry, and to champion research, education and extension for the management and use of forages. More information is available at http://www.albertaforages.ca.

To view the original *Extension Article*, click here.

Who Are Your Saskatchewan Forage Specialists?

Kevin France - Provincial Forage Specialist, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

Provincial Forage Specialist
Kevin France is the new Provincial Specialist, Forage Crops with Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture.



Kevin France, Provincial Forage Specialist, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

Kevin grew up in Coldstream, British Columbia, and developed an interest in ecology, range, and cattle at a young age. Kevin ran a yearling ranch in B.C. while pursuing an Undergraduate Degree in Natural Resource Science at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, B.C.

Kevin then moved on to a Masters Degree in Rangeland Ecology and Management at Oregon State University, researching livestock grazing management in sage grouse nesting habitat.

Kevin was previously with the Department of Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (Alberta Government) for the past 8 years as the Provincial Rangeland Specialist (Grasslands) based in Lethbridge.

The provincial specialist provides services to forage producers and ranchers, producer groups, other government and industry specialists. With the responsibility of developing the forage industry through the identification and evaluation of opportunities for production, marketing and processing.

Regional Forage Specialists
Regional Forage Specialists are available across the province to assist with all your forage information needs. You will find that Regional Forage Specialists can provide the latest information on forage varieties, agronomics, storage techniques, pasture assessments, marketing and management strategies. They will work with producers

to customize a management plan or examine options tailored to suit the individual needs of the producer and their resources. As with all of the Regional Services Branch specialists, Forage Specialists are available for on-farm consultations to provide a customized approach.

Regional Forage Specialists are closely linked with researchers and industry specialists, including experts at the University of Saskatchewan, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Research Centres, Agri-ARM sites, Saskatchewan Forage Council, the Western Beef Development Centre and several other industry associations. They collaborate on projects and events bringing the latest findings in forage research and trends in management practices to producers. Regional Forage Specialists provide opportunities to take part in field days and tours, allowing producers to see firsthand the results of projects on a field scale basis.

This summer, producers will have the opportunity to see several projects through the Agricultural Demonstration of Practices and Technologies (ADOPT) program. Contact your local Regional Forage Specialist for all of your forage questions and more information on projects near you.

A contact list of all the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture Forage Specialists is on the left.

Provincial Forage Specialist	Office	Contact
Kevin France	Regina	306-787-7712 Kevin.France@gov.sk.ca
Regional Forage Specialist	**Regional Office**	**Contact**
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Sarah Sommerfeld	Outlook	306-867-5559 Sarah.Sommerfeld@gov.sk.ca
Trevor Lennox	Swift Current	306-778-8294 Trevor.Lennox@gov.sk.ca
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Charlotte Ward	Yorkton	306-786-1608 Charlotte.Ward@gov.sk.ca
Bill Biligetu	Moose Jaw	306-694-3721 Bill.Biligetu@gov.sk.ca

15th Annual Native Prairie Appreciation Week "Rediscover Your Roots in the Prairies"

Natasha Wilkie – Manager, SK Prairie Conservation Action Plan

Plans are underway for the **15th Annual Native Prairie Appreciation Week (NPAW)**, a celebration dedicated to increasing awareness and appreciation of native prairie ecosystems and their importance to Saskatchewan's environmental and agricultural sectors. Native prairie, a grassland ecosystem influenced by the interaction of climate, fire and grazing, supports rich and highly specialized plant and animal communities.

Saskatchewan led the way in recognizing the importance of one of the world's most threatened ecosystems. Provincially declared as the third week in June since 1999 by the Saskatchewan Ministries of Agriculture and Environment, NPAW was also

declared for the first time municipally in 2011 by the Cities of Moose Jaw, Regina, Saskatoon, Swift Current and Weyburn.

Saskatchewan Prairie Conservation Action Plan (SK PCAP) is encouraging all families to "Rediscover their Roots in the Prairies" and embrace an important part of Saskatchewan's heritage by taking part in one of the many activities during NPAW **June 16-22, 2013**.

Activities include:

1) **Passport Contest**: Saskatchewan offers many ways for citizens to see, explore and discover the native prairie attractions. Check items off our list throughout the summer and you can be a winner!
2) **SK PCAP/NPAW Booths:** Stop by and pick up the latest SK PCAP partner materials, native seed packets or visit about native prairie issues at our booth where we will be promoting NPAW and native prairie conservation.
3) **Partner Events/Workshops**: Including the annual Society for Range Management – Prairie Parkland Chapter tour which has joined forces with Saskatchewan Pasture School to offer a 2-day event on June 18-19 based out of the Weyburn and Big Muddy Badlands areas. As well, the Native Plant Society of Saskatchewan is hosting a tour on June 22-23, exploring the fescue grasslands of the West Block of Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park.

Additional details regarding the above activities can be found on the SK PCAP website (www.pcap-sk.org) under *Native Prairie Appreciation Week > 2013 Native Prairie Appreciation Week* or feel free to contact the SK PCAP office at (306) 352-0472 or pcap@sasktel.net.

Alfalfa Winterkill in the US

Dr. Dan Undersander – Extension and Forage Agronomist, University of Wisconsin

The alfalfa winterkill situation is gradually worsening as green-up occurs and we can evaluate stands. Generally in Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin, alfalfa kill has occurred on an east-west line. South of Madison, Wisconsin the alfalfa kill is spotty with low areas in fields only affected. North of Madison losses become greater (up to 50% in some areas), with low areas of fields most severely affected; however, entire fields are lost in areas of Minnesota and Wisconsin North to the Twin Cities and east to Appleton, Wisconsin. Alfalfa stand damage in the areas of northwest Wisconsin and Minnesota north of the Twin Cities is still unknown. Eastern Ontario has reported some areas with up to 75% winterkill losses.

Alfalfa/Grass Hay Crop – Nancy Johns

This extensive alfalfa winterkill appears to the be the result of multiple stresses as fields that were cut more frequently and fields that were cut late have generally suffered more damage. While a good recommendation for last year (especially due to reduced yield because of the drought), coupling the management stress with the drought was just too much for some fields.

Some areas of the US are desperately short on forage. Some of the western reservoirs are low on water and western hay production will be reduced in some areas. With the damage to alfalfa fields suffered this past winter, alfalfa will be scarce through 2014.

Supplies of peas are limited and oats will likely be sold out soon for those planting oats and peas for dairy feed. There is also talk that the alfalfa seed supply is running low so producers should be encouraged to lock in seed quickly if they are wanting to re-seed forage stands.

Relationship between Heat Units and Nutritive Value of Cool Season Corn Forage

Dr. Peiqiang Yu – Professor and Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Feed Research Chair, University of Saskatchewan

This study investigates how corn varieties grown in cooler climates are affected by crop heat units (CHU) in relation to nutrient storage, composition and nutritional characteristics.

Corn Cob - Leanne Thompson

Corn grown on Canadian prairies (Saskatchewan) is known as cool season corn, and is different from conventional corn grown in warm climates such as USA. The main differences are due to shorter growing season and lower growing temperatures (cool) in Saskatchewan compared to warm season corn in USA. These differences lead to changes in chemical profiles and nutrient compositions of silages from the cool and warm weather conditions. Determining whether corn silage grown in Saskatchewan, cool climate, can be nutritionally effective as the counterpart grown in USA, warm climate, is important because it may substitute commonly used but expensive silages such as barley.

In relation to corn cultivation, crop heat units (CHU) are calculated from daytime temperature above 10°C and night-time temperatures above 4.4°C on a daily basis from seeding to harvest. In general, many corn cultivars require 2000 or more CHU to reach silage harvest stage with kernel maturity of 45% dry matter. A common visual maker used by farmers to identify this stage is a white line extended about halfway down the kernel. This white line appears due to crystallized starch at this stage and almost all of the potential starch will be in the kernel. However, this is inconclusive information; therefore, there is a need for further information on corn cultivars and heat unit requirements for optimum maturity under Saskatchewan conditions. In this project an evaluation of corn silage stage of maturity with emphasis on the nutritional characteristics is carried out for ration formulation with advanced models such as National Research Council (NRC) 2001 and Cornell CNCP.

The main objective of this project is to evaluate nutrient profiles of Saskatchewan corn silage, and their availability to ruminants, mainly to dairy and feedlot cattle.

Corn cultivars (Pioneer and Dekalb) were from seven farm locations in Saskatchewan. Samples were analyzed for major nutrients (energy and protein).

Current results indicate that cool corn cultivars grown in Canadian prairie climatic conditions also have a nutrient composition similar to those grown in warm weather with the exception of starch content. Cool corn silages are a substitute to replace other forages in a cattle operation. Nutrient compositions and potential nutrient supply to the animal showed a relation to crop heat units. Molecular structural characteristics vary with cultivars grown in different CHU areas. Those reached target crop heat unit levels would be apparently optimal in nutrient availability and energy synchronization. Cool corn cultivars would be an alternate source of forage to grow in Canada (cool climates) for feeding cattle.

To read the complete *Research Paper*, click here.

Saskatchewan Hay Market Report

Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture
www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/FeedForageListing

There is a limited quantity of reports for forage listings as of May 31, 2013. There are two listings for baled forage (224 tonnes) with only one asking price listed of $0.363/lb or $80 per T (metric). There is no standing hay listed at this time. There is only one listing for available pasture at a rate of $100 per head per season with a capacity of 25 animals.

USDA Market News Service Hay Report

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) collects a wide variety of information from hay markets across the country. Presented below is information from those jurisdictions closest to Saskatchewan. For complete USDA hay market listings, please visit the USDA Market News webpage.

Wyoming, Western Nebraska, and Western South Dakota
Weekly Hay Summary (Week ending May 31, 2013)
Dennis Widga, Torrington, WY
www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/to_gr310.txt
All classes are trading steady. Supply remains very light on all classes with many producers being sold out. The spread between high quality and dry stock hay has narrowed with cost and accessibility being the limiting factors, not quality. All areas have seen increases in moisture, renewing optimism as livestock have begun to move to summer pastures. Cool morning temperatures are slowing the progress of the hay crop in Wyoming. According to USDA-NASS, Wyoming topsoil is rated as 29 percent short to very short, 70 percent adequate and 1 percent surplus. Nebraska topsoil has seen improvement due to recent spring rains. Topsoil is rated 12 percent very short, 19 percent short, 65 percent adequate and 4 percent surplus. Additionally, Nebraska's alfalfa crop is rated 2 percent very poor, 15 percent poor, 41 percent fair, 40 percent good and 2 percent excellent. First cutting is 2 percent complete compared to 78 percent last year and a yearly average of 27 percent. South Dakota has also seen advancement in topsoil conditions due to heavy precipitation. Topsoil is rated at 11 percent short, 77 percent adequate and 12 percent surplus. Trading activity was slow with light demand.

Weekly Montana Hay Report (Week ending May 31, 2013)
Justin Lumpkin, Billings, MT
www.ams.usda.gov/mnreports/bl_gr310.txt
No trade to report this week as supplies of available hay have been exhausted. There is very little talk of forward contracting on new crop hay yet. There are concerns of how much hay will be available this year along with concern if cattlemen will be able to hang onto their cows or will have to cull deeper and pull cows off grass early. Rainfall amounts varied across the state with much of it centered over the eastern half, with the largest amounts in the eastern third. Some areas received more than twice the normal amount of rainfall for the month but this was desperately needed as those areas were tightly gripped by severe to extreme drought conditions. Hopefully this is enough rain to allow ranchers to hold onto their herds and not have to reduce them further. U.S. Drought Monitor maps show the northern half of Montana to be out of drought conditions, while the southern half ranges from moderate to extreme drought. (no price reports for Montana).

Prices are for the week ending May 31, 2013

	Eastern Wyoming	Central & Western Wyoming	Western Nebraska & South Dakota	Montana
Alfalfa				No reports
Supreme	$251-255	-	$255	-
Premium	$244-251 $283**	-	-	-
Good	$235-246 $210*	$150*	$220	-
Fair –Good	-	$180-200	$150*	-
Grass	$210*	$150*	$150*	-
Timothy	-	-	-	-

All prices in U.S. dollars per ton FOB stack in large square bales unless otherwise noted.
Most horse hay sold in small squares.
** large rounds **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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