



# Saskatchewan Hay & Pasture Report

Volume 20, Issue 3

September 26, 2019

This third edition of the Hay & Pasture Report features information on nutritional requirements and balancing rations as we look ahead to the fall and winter seasons. With variable weather and late harvest conditions, we hope these articles will help you consider how best to plan for the upcoming year. Read on for this information and more.

We'd love to hear from you! If you have ideas for article topics, forage research information to share or updates on forages from your part of the province, send us an email or share your thoughts with us on social media @saskforage.

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## Saskatchewan Agriculture Crop Report

For the period ending September 16, 2019



Warm weather and wind has allowed combining to resume, according to Saskatchewan Agriculture's Weekly Crop Report. Twenty-three per cent of the crop is now in the bin, up from 18 per cent last week, still well behind the five-year (2014-2018) average of 50 per cent for this time of year.

Thirty-six per cent of the crop is now swathed or ready to straight-cut. A general rain fell over much of the province with the largest amounts being reported in the central and southern regions.

Across the province, topsoil moisture conditions on cropland are rated as 14 per cent surplus, 77 per cent adequate, eight per cent short and one per cent very short. Hay land and pasture topsoil moisture is rated

as three per cent surplus, 83 per cent adequate, 11 per cent short and three per cent very short.

Most crop damage this past week was due to localized flooding and strong winds. There have been some reports of crops bleaching and sprouting in areas with excess moisture.

Farmers are getting back out in the field and continuing with harvest operations as the weather permits.

[Read the full report here](#)

## Meeting Cow Calf Nutritional Requirements This Winter

Terry Kowalchuk, Saskatchewan Agriculture Provincial Forage Specialist

Limited hay supply along with high prices in many areas of the province have some cow calf producers seeking alternatives to perennial hay to carry their herd through the winter. Rainfall since late June has helped with supply recovery but hay yields were generally average to poor this year and may need to be supplemented with grain, greenfeed, or straw.

Availability and cost of alternative feeds vary depending on local supply and demand and may buying additional feed may not be practical in areas dominated by range and hay land where distances and trucking costs may be prohibitive. In these areas harvest alternatives such as slough and ditch hay may be the only viable option. Regardless of location or source, the nutritional value of feed will vary between feed (different hay types, greenfeeds, straws, and grains) between fields, and from year to year. Knowing the nutritional value of these feeds is essential to meeting the requirements of your animals.

Protein and energy requirements of cows increase through the gestation period (Table 1).

A survey conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture a few years ago, found that much of the feed surveyed did not meet nutritional requirements of cows in their third trimester which often coincides with cold winter conditions. Feed testing and ration adjustment can help match nutritional needs during pregnancy and lactation to maintain animal health and improve overall productivity of the herd.

**Table 1.** Protein and energy requirements of beef cows

<b>Cows (all values as 100 % Dry Matter)</b>		
	<b>Crude Protein (%)</b>	<b>Total Digestible Nutrients (% min)</b>
Mid pregnancy	7 - 8	55
Late pregnancy	9 - 10	60
Lactation	11 - 12	65

In areas where hay the main available feed increasing the amount fed may not be adequate if the neutral digestible fibre of the hay is high because as NDF increases intake decreases. In these situations, a grain supplement may be required. In areas where alternative feeds are available, feed tests can be used to blend them into a ration that meets the specific needs of your animals.

Each type of forage should be submitted for a feed test. For instance, if a producer harvests an alfalfa/grass mixed stand, barley greenfeed, and a salvage canola crop for greenfeed, samples from each of these fields should be collected separately and submitted for feed analysis. Listings for feed testing labs can be found under the Sask Forage Council links page under the heading Forage Testing Labs.

[Read more](#)

## Considerations when planting forage brassicas

by Alberta Ag-Info Centre

"Tillage radish is a great addition to a cover crop mixture as a high quality forage for grazing or silage, and is beneficial to combat soil compaction problems," says Karin Lindquist, forage and beef

specialist at the Alberta Ag-Info Centre. "Seeding it at the right time helps maximize the benefits you wish to obtain from such a forage species."

She adds that there are some tricks of the trade to ensure this species does what it is intended to do. "Some of its benefits include providing a high-quality forage crop for grazing, providing the root pressure necessary to beat soil compaction and possibly invite some pollinators in to the field."

Lindquist says that the goal of all plants - wild or domesticated - is to produce seed, which is ideal for harvesting or allowing plants to contribute to the seed bank.

"That way, new plants emerge to take the place of the old and dead ones. In the case of tillage radish and other brassicas such as appin turnips and daikon radishes, if the plants are allowed to set seed, they may not provide those big, wide taproots that you may want."

Solving that issue begins with retaining the plants in their vegetative stage to encourage more root production.

"This is very important if you want to maximize the benefits of tillage radish. Allowing plants to flower will certainly attract pollinators if you are not concerned about these plants going into flower and consequent seed set. However, be aware that this may compromise your goal of having those large roots to combat compaction and hardpan issues in your fields.

Soil compaction occurs when soil particles so fine that very little air and water penetrates into the soil. It can affect rooting ability deep into the soil and encourage more runoff instead of water infiltration. To encourage root production consider these two options - plant late in the season or graze multiple times.

[Read the full article here](#)

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## Ration Balancing Checklist for Cattle

### Manitoba Agriculture

The protein (CP) and energy (TDN - total digestible nutrients) that an average beef cow needs:

- Mid pregnancy: 7% CP and 55% TDN
- Late pregnancy: 9% CP and 60% TDN
- After calving: 11 to 12% CP and 65% TDN

### Checklist

- Target forage DMI (dry matter intake) of 2.5% BW (body weight) for cows. Increased DMI of 2.7 to 2.8% BW is possible under cold (-30°C) conditions with poor forage. For every 10°C decrease in temperature below -20°C, feed should be increased by 15% or an extra 6 ½ lbs of hay or 4 ½ lbs of grain per day.
- Feed wastage with round bale feeders is 15%. If there is forage on the ground, it is 15% waste.
- Maintain a rising plane of nutrition three to four weeks prior to calving. This is important for adequate milk production, return to estrus and high conception rates.
- Adequate energy (TDN) can be monitored by assessing body condition score (BCS). Low TDN ration will result in loss of BCS.
- Mineral supplements at 0.1 lbs per day prepartum and 0.15 lbs per day postpartum. 1:1 for legume based rations and 2:1 for greenfeed/grain/straw based rations.
- Sodium (Na) levels of 0.1% will result in decreased consumption of salt and salt based mineral.
- The calcium to phosphorus ratio (Ca:P) should be between 2:1 and 7:1.
- The tetany ratio is potassium (K) divided by magnesium (Mg) plus calcium (Ca). The K/Mg+Ca ratio should not exceed 3.0:1 High potassium forage (over 2%) and/or low calcium forage (under 0.6%) and low magnesium forage (under 0.3%) can impact animal performance.
- Adequate feed supplies can be estimated by rule of seven. The combination of tonnes of silage, bales of hay and bales of straw need to add to seven.
- Assume light barley has a TDN analysis of 75% (regular barley had 83% TDN).
- Formula to adjust TDN in forage with an unexpectedly low TDN analysis is  $TDN = 88.9 - (0.779 \times ADF)$ .
- For Cowbytes ration program, set temperature to -15°C current and previous month, 1.3 cm hair

depth, 10 KMH wind speed, ADG = 0.25 lbs, slaughter weight 200 lbs higher than cow weight and calf birth weight of 95 lbs.

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## Registration now open for 2019-2020 BCRC Webinar Series

This year's webinar series will cover a range of topics from feed testing to external parasites and other practical, science-based information for Canadian beef producers.

Register here: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_GuHDnU5NTU2EU2-uzDtp0Q](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_GuHDnU5NTU2EU2-uzDtp0Q)

[Learn more on the Beef Cattle Research Council website](#)

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## Saskatchewan Hay Market Report

A review of online asking price for forages for the past week showed more listings than in previous weeks, but pricing was variable and supplies limited. Asking prices remain fairly high, particularly for small square bales. Average asking prices were:

Alfalfa-Grass Hay: \$148/metric tonne and/or \$86/bale (10 offers)  
Alfalfa Hay: \$183/metric tonne (3 offers)  
Grass Hay: \$94/metric tonne and/or 125/bale (4 offers)  
Greenfeed Hay (barley, mixed): \$120/metric tonne and/or \$85/bale(3 offers)  
Small Square Hay Bales (various types): \$7.70/bale (10 offers)  
Small Square Straw Bales \$3.37/bale (2 offers)  
Straw (cereals): \$35/bale (7 offers)  
Straw (pulses): \$35/bale (2 offers)

Additional hay for sale, with no price associated was offered for mixed hay, grass hay, various types of greenfeed and straw bales.

Hay wanted ads tend to have no price associated and are generally for a small number of round bales or small square bales, good quality hay. Wanted ads with prices listed averaged \$50/bale, but no specific bale weights were requested.

*Note that very few ads include detailed forage quality analysis, or offer to provide these details. Before purchasing hay, be sure to request this information. Bale weights are often only estimates, so it is prudent to ask if the bales have been weighed.*

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## USDA Market News Service Hay Report

September 20, 2019

### Wyoming Hay Report

Compared to last week hay sold steady. Demand was moderate to good from local buyers with very good demand from out of state buyers. There are loads of small squares getting shipped to several eastern states. The calendar says fall will begin next week, however snow has been reported again to this office in some of the mountain ranges. One report said the Big Horns looked really white this week. Note: "All prices are dollars per ton FOB the field or hay barn unless otherwise noted." Read the full report [here](#).

**South Dakota Hay Report** Compared to last week: Alfalfa and grass mostly steady, reported sales still rather limited. Good demand for high quality alfalfa hay, especially from out of state buyers, demand only moderate for lower quality hay as this supply is more plentiful due to the persistent summer rains. After the heavy rains a week ago the sun came out and warmed up greatly, but more rain in the forecast for the weekend still making it hard to put up hay without rain on it. All hay and straw sold by the ton FOB, unless otherwise noted. Read the report [here](#).

**Montana Hay Report** Compared to last report: Alfalfa hay sold fully steady. Slow market activity was seen again this week as ranchers are slow to buy. Late season rains continue again this week as many places around the state received around an inch with more on the way for the weekend. This has been very beneficial for range and pasture conditions, but has curbed demand for hay. Many producers in central Montana continue to have issues putting hay up. Some even have yet to cut second cutting. This is proving problematic as late rains and cool temperatures are keeping producers from cutting. All prices below are new crop hay unless otherwise noted. All prices are dollars per ton and FOB unless otherwise noted. View the report [here](#).

**USDA Hay Prices for September 20, 2019**

	Wyoming	South Dakota	Montana
Alfalfa			
Supreme	-	-	160-165
Premium	180 220-270**	230	150-160 225-250**
Good	150-165	-	130-135 110-120* 175-180**
Fair-Good	-	165	110-125 75-100* 125-150**
Fair	120-140	120-130*	-
Utility	-	100 100*	90-100 40-60*
Grass			
Premium		-	125*
Good	-	120*	85-110*
Fair	-	80-110*	100-125 75-80*
Utility	-	65*	65-75*
Timothy Grass			
Premium	-	-	240-270**
Good		-	160-180**
Alfalfa/Grass			
Premium	200-215 225-250**	225	180**
Good	-	-	130-135*
Fair	120-130	135	100-110 75-90*
Straw	70-80	110-120 90-100*	35-45*

\*large rounds \*\*small squares

All prices per ton and FOB stack, unless otherwise noted

To read the full reports and to view the hay quality designations - physical descriptions [click here](#).

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Bronze





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