



Saskatchewan Hay & Pasture Report

Volume 20, Issue 1

May 31, 2019

Welcome to another season of the Hay & Pasture Report! Here you'll find production-related information and a snapshot of forage pricing as of the date of publication. Check out our [resources page](#); an excellent source of information to help you with seeding, pricing, marketing and more. Watch for the next three issues of the Report, throughout the growing season.

We welcome your feedback. To be added to our distribution list, contact office@saskforage.ca. Visit our website www.saskforage.ca for updates and information from the forage industry.

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Saskatchewan Agriculture Crop Report

For the period ending May 20, 2019



Seeding progress is quickly advancing across the province, thanks to very few disruptions in the weather and relatively good seeding conditions. Seventy-three per cent of the crop is now seeded, up from 38 per cent last week and well ahead of the five-year average (2014-2018) of 59 per cent for this time of year. Crops are slowly emerging, but are mostly in good condition despite the lack of moisture.

The southwest region is the most advanced, with 84 per cent of the crop in the ground. Seventy-one per cent is seeded in the southeast, while 68 per cent of the crop is seeded in the east central region, 75 per cent in the west central region, 62 per cent in the north east and 68 per cent in the north west.

Rainfall was reported this past week throughout the province, ranging from trace amounts to 23 mm in the Radville area. The majority of the province remains in need of rain to replenish the topsoil, as warm temperatures and strong winds continue to dry fields. Provincially, cropland topsoil moisture is rated as

44 per cent adequate, 40 per cent short and 16 per cent very short. Topsoil moisture on hay land and pasture is rated as 36 per cent adequate, 41 per cent short and 23 per cent very short. Hay and pasture growth has been slow due to little rainfall.

[Read the full report here](#)

Between a Rock and a Hard Place

Forage management during dry conditions

by Terry Kowalchuk, Provincial Specialist, Forage Crops
Saskatchewan Agriculture

With dry conditions persisting in much of Saskatchewan producers are having to make some tough range and pasture management decisions. In 2018 many areas of the province saw at least a 30% reduction in forage production. Dry cool conditions in the spring of 2019 have further depressed forage yields. At the time of writing, much of the province is dry to very dry and spring pasture and hay growth has been very slow.

Since many areas had poor moisture in 2017 and 2018 it is especially important to assess the condition of pasture lands as the 2019 grazing season progresses and to strike balance between pasture and herd preservation. Options available depend on pasture health, forage carry over and local supply and demand for feed.

Pasture that is still in relatively healthy condition (i.e. good litter cover and carryover, few bare patches and few weeds) is more resilient to grazing pressure during a drought, however, care needs to be taken to ensure that the stand/stands are grazed evenly. Electric fencing, moving oiler and mineral blocks, herding etc. can help spread distribution.

If tame pasture or native rangeland is in poor condition any additional grazing pressure will exacerbate the lack of litter cover, weed invasion, and erosion and extend recovery time. Grazing perennial stands can lead to loss of species thus permanently damaging the stands. Due to their greater diversity native rangelands are more sensitive to species loss.

Most stands are likely somewhere between these two extremes i.e. the stand is generally healthy but may have problems like bare patches and invasive weeds. Try to utilize under grazed areas and rest overgrazed patches to prevent further deterioration. If possible, rest or defer (delay) grazing pastures that were heavily grazed in the previous grazing season and/or where water supply is limited.

Limited forage supply on pasture can be stretched by feeding grain and hay or straw on tame pasture land or in dry lot. Feeding on native range can introduce invasive plants into the stand and is not recommended.

Perennial hay should be cut by early blossom for legumes or early heading for grass, whether there is sufficient hay yield or not. If timely rains appear in late June or July it may be possible to get a good second cut. If not cut, the first growth will simply mature with little second growth.

Determine your own and local feed options. If traditional feed is not available explore availability of alternative feeds like ditch and slough hay, crop residues, screenings etc. Alternative feeds should be tested for nutrient content and you should consult a livestock nutrition specialist prior to feeding to ensure that the feed will meet daily requirements and to avoid health risks.

If you are fortunate enough to get rain in June and July, seeding an annual crop like oats or barley or a blend of annuals can provide additional grazing especially if seeded in low lying areas with more moisture. For more information about seeding annuals for pasture consult the factsheet Annual Crops for Pasture, Silage, Greenfeed and Swath Grazing on the Ministry of Agriculture website.

In addition to all of the above and depending on your individual feed situation, reduce your stocking rate to reduce grazing pressure. Destocking earlier is better but depends on your individual situation.

Cull open cows and those in poorer condition and assess bulls. Try to hang on to healthy early to middle age productive cows.

If your grazing system allows for it, creep feed calves. Calves should also be weaned early if possible to reduce grazing pressure.



Pasture management resources

Check out these helpful resources to help keep your pastures and livestock in good health this year!

[Grazing Response Index \(GRI\) - An adapted method for tame forages](#) (Saskatchewan Forage Council)

[Initial Stocking Rate Recommendations for Seeded Pastures in Saskatchewan](#) (Saskatchewan Agriculture)

[Management of Canadian Prairie Rangeland](#) (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada)

[Management of Intensive Livestock Grazing](#) (Saskatchewan Agriculture)

[Range and Pasture Management When Dealing with Drought](#) (Alberta Agriculture)

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Research Update from Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Research Chair in Feed R&D Programs

Dr. Peiqiang Yu

Professor and Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Feed Research Chair in Feeds R&D
Department of Animal and Poultry Science, University of Saskatchewan

Feeding newly developed blend pellet products (BPP) based on carinata or canola meal, pulse screenings and lignosulfonate in high producing dairy cows

The 37th Western Canadian Dairy Seminar was successful held on March 5-8, 2019 at Red Deer, Alberta. The seminar is a place to gather the latest information in dairy production and technology advances and is very useful for dairy producers, technology transfer specialists, researchers and dairy service and supply representatives.

During this meeting, one graduate student from the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Research Chair in Feed R&D Programs (Professor Dr. Peiqiang Yu), Aya Ismael, shared her research with producers, nutritionist etc. Her presentation title was "Effects of feeding newly developed blend pellet products based on carinata meal or canola meal in combination with pulse screenings and lignosulfonate on nutrients availability and components production efficiency in high producing dairy cows". This program is being carried out in collaboration with several researchers (eg. Dave Christensen, John McKinnon, Basim Refat-Masterfeeds), Canadian Feed Research Centre (CFRC), and SaskMilk.

The objectives of this feed R&D project were to examine the effect of feeding newly developed blend pelleted products (BPP) based on carinata meal (BPPCR) or canola meal (BPPCN) in combination with pulse screenings and lignosulfonate on nutrients availability and components production efficiency in high producing dairy cows. The detailed research findings are available in an open access journal "Advances in Dairy Technology, Volume 31, 2019".

This comprehensive feed R&D research program has been supported by Sask. Ministry of Agriculture Strategic Research Chair (Professor Dr. Peiqiang Yu): Feed Research & Development, Saskatchewan Pulse Growers, NSERC-CRD, SaskMilk, and more.

Detailed research information can be found on web: <https://wcds.ualberta.ca/>

Don't delay planning your winter feed supply

by John McKinnon

Canadian Cattlemen magazine, May 29, 2019

This past winter was challenging, particularly for those of you who experienced drought in 2018. Feed supplies were extremely tight and compounded by unseasonably cold weather in February and March. As a result, many producers had to scramble to get sufficient feed to carry their cattle through the winter. While it is too early to tell what the 2019 growing season has in store for us, for those of you who got caught short last year, it might pay to do some early planning for the upcoming winter. This column will give examples of steps one can take to ensure that feed supplies are in place when needed.

When faced with the prospects of potential drought, the tried and true option that many producers turn to is the use of annual crops to supplement winter feed supplies. Crops such as barley, oat and triticale can be seeded in early spring and then cut and baled as greenfeed or left in swaths for winter grazing. Silage is also an option for those who are set up for it or have access to custom operators. For greenfeed or swath grazing, seeding is typically delayed (i.e. late May through mid-June) such that in early fall prior to a killing frost, the crop is at the soft dough stage in the case of barley and triticale, and in the late milk stage for oat. From a nutrition perspective, cereals cut at this stage are similar to good-quality grass hay. Recent research at the University of Saskatchewan has shown that barley harvested at the hard dough stage will maximize dry matter yield without negative consequences on animal performance, a strategy that can further extend forage supplies. Warm-season crops such as corn and millet have also been successfully used for swath grazing.

Crop residues such as barley or wheat straw are typically in high demand during drought situations. These byproducts, while deficient in almost all nutrients, can be successfully fed to wintering cows as part of a balanced nutrition program. Traditionally, wheat and barley straw have been considered relatively cheap forage sources. However, securing adequate supplies - whether it is for feed or bedding - has become a difficult task. This is in part due to changing crop rotations, as well as to implementation of new harvesting technology that leaves the residue in the field as opposed to laying it in rows for baling. Advanced planning and co-ordination with neighbours is often necessary to secure an adequate supply.

As discussed previously in this column, corn residue also offers significant opportunities for supplementing winter forage supplies. Corn residue consists of the leaves, husks, cobs and stalks, and any kernels or cobs not harvested. The energy value of this residue depends in large part upon the relative proportions of the above residues. If one considers only the plant residue (i.e. leaves, husks, stalks and cobs), one is typically looking at a feed source that is slightly better than cereal straw in both energy and protein content. Residue grain kernels or unharvested cobs will greatly increase the feeding value of the crop aftermath and extend the number of grazing days. For cows in early to mid-gestation and not experiencing cold stress, corn residue can be an adequate energy source. However, protein may be limiting.

[Read the full article here.](#)

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Saskatchewan Hay Market Report

Hay for sale or wanted listings are scarce in Saskatchewan and surrounding jurisdictions.

A scan of online ads in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba found a handful of asking prices for various classes of hay, as well as a number of ads with hay for sale and no price associated. Average asking prices in May 2019 were:

Alfalfa-Grass Hay: \$177/metric tonne and/or \$106/bale (3 offers)

Alfalfa Hay: no offers

Grass Hay: \$110/bale (1 offer)

Greenfeed Hay (oats, durum, rye): \$146/metric tonne and/or \$77/bale (3 offers)

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.

USDA Market News Service Hay Report

May 24, 2019

Wyoming Hay Report

Compared to last week all reported forages sold steady on a thin test. Rain across most of the state this week with some areas in the eastern part of the state getting hail that damage pastures, alfalfa, wheat and everything else in its path. Some concern for farmers trying to plant edible beans as ground condition is wet and many are pushing the insurance deadline. Cooler temperatures than normal have prevailed in most reporting areas and has slowed the growth of most forages. Some reports it might be end of June before first cutting of alfalfa is ready in the western areas of Wyoming. 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: Hay prices remained steady with few sales. Cooler temperatures and several inches of rain did not improve ground conditions and transportation of hay. Very good demand for all types of hay and bedding. Corn planted in South Dakota at 60% with 13% emerged as of Monday; compared to 76% planted and 30% emerged on the 5 year average. Soybeans planted in South Dakota at 21% with 2% emerged as of Monday; compared to 39% planted and 6% emerged on the 5 year average. Pasture and range condition reported on Monday 21% Excellent, 51% Good, and 25% Fair. Moderately warmer temperatures and more rain expected this weekend and next weekend. All hay and straw sold by the ton FOB, unless otherwise noted. Read the report [here](#).

Montana Hay Report Compared to last week: Alfalfa hay in rounds sold generally steady. Hay sales were light this week. Many ranchers have turned out for the summer which has further lightened demand for hay. Supplies of hay in rounds remains moderate to heavy, squares supplies are very light. All prices are dollars per ton and FOB unless otherwise noted. View the report [here](#).

USDA Hay Prices for May 24, 2019

	Wyoming	South Dakota	Montana
Alfalfa			
Supreme	-	-	200-250**
Premium		200-210	200**
Good	150-160*	180-190	90-100*
Fair		150-160 140-165*	75-100* 125-145**
Utility	-	-	70-80*
Grass			
Good	-	140-150*	110*
Fair	-	-	75-85*
Utility	-	-	65-70*
Alfalfa/Grass			
Premium		-	-
Good		150-175*	-
Fair	-	-	75-90*
Utility	-	-	-
Straw	-	135-150 110*	40-45 40-45*

*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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Gold



Silver



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Bronze





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