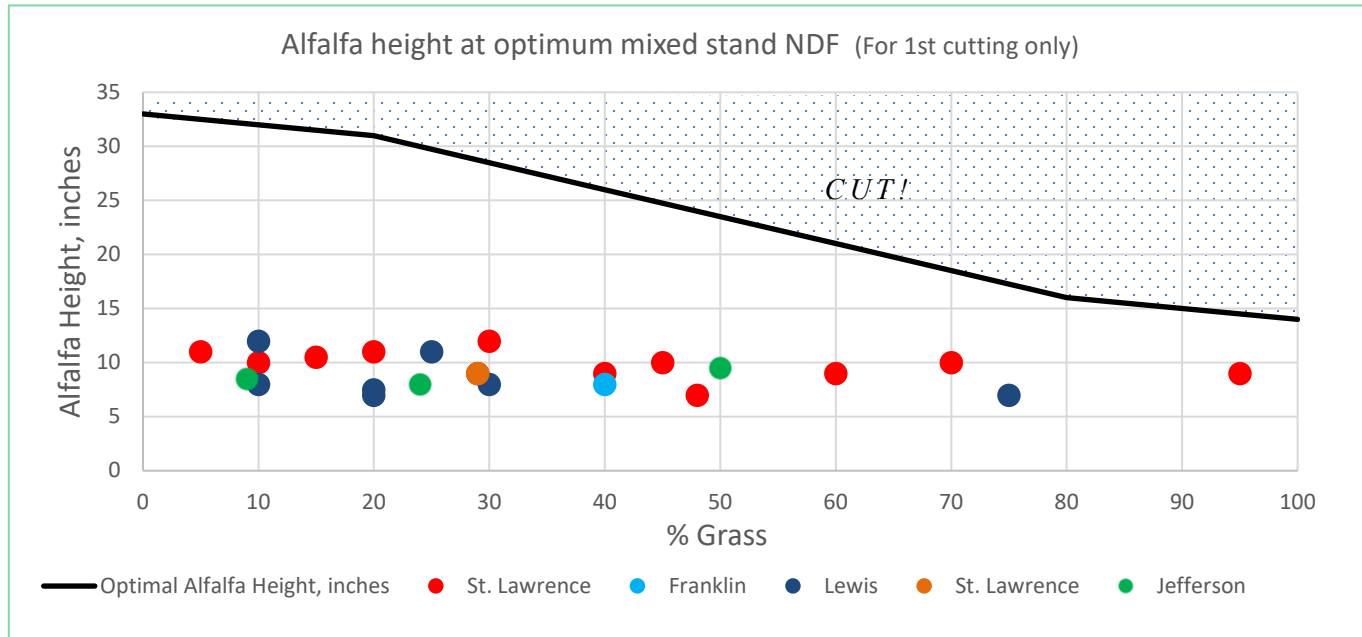


2023 North Country 1st Cutting Alfalfa-Grass Progress Report



Wk of May 1, 2023

Check individual fields!

Notice the differences among these monitored fields. (Open circles show previous week's height for comparison.)

It is important to get out and measure alfalfa heights in your own fields to help judge rate of growth and maturity for best timing of 1st cutting.

Refer to table on page 2 for detailed information on each site.

Fields on the graph with 0" alfalfa height have been mowed.

The *North Country 1st Cutting Alfalfa-Grass Progress Report* is a Cornell Cooperative Extension project. Data collection by L Ferlito, M Hunter, A Jantzi, M Spence, J Lawrence, K. Gugin, M. Jordan, A Wilder, J Tucker, K Sample, E Bever, J Krauss, and K O'Neil.

Goal % NDF - NDF (Neutral Detergent Fiber) content is the best predictor of forage quality for lactating dairy cows. NDF content of standing first cutting alfalfa and grasses is easily predicted by alfalfa height. The relationship between NDF content in an alfalfa-grass mix and alfalfa height only works for first cutting. Second and 3rd cuttings should simply be taken according to the calendar - at 28 to 35 day intervals.

100% Grass - Goal NDF (on a dry matter basis) is 50% (target range 48-55). Tallest alfalfa height will be 14-16 inches.

100% Alfalfa - Goal NDF is 40% (target range 39-43). Tallest alfalfa height will be 28-30 inches.

Mixed stand - for a 50:50 alfalfa:grass stand, the goal NDF is 43%. Tallest alfalfa height will be 22-23 inches.

Begin harvest early enough so that most of your crop is harvested within the "ideal" range. Typically NDF increases about 0.5 to 0.7/day for alfalfa and about 0.8 to 1.2/day for grass. Expect the lower end of that range in cooler weather and the higher end in warm.

Weekly Tips and Observations

- Alfalfa and grass growth appears to be right on schedule, or just a little bit ahead in some NNY locations.. Our warm week in April may have pushed some fields ahead, but the cool weather since then has us right on normal pace with an average of 9.5" this first week of May.
- Check where the grass head is inside the stem of cool season grasses. Most are near the soil surface this week. Mowing early risks missing the seed head.
- GDD₄₁ are very close to the 15-year average across the NNY region, ranging from about 200 to 260 since April 1.
- Winter damage to alfalfa, from ice sheeting, lack of snow cover or severely cold temperatures appears to be minimal or nonexistent this spring.
- Evidence of recent N fertilizer applications was observed in several grassier fields. Now is a great time to get 30-50 lbs of N on established fields with <25% alfalfa. Nitrogen is NOT recommended for any field with 25% legume or more as this will favor the grass at the expense of legume in the stand, so there is no economical advantage.

2023 North Country 1st Cutting Alfalfa-Grass Progress Report

County	Town/Field	Elevation (feet)	Soil		Alfalfa Height, inches						
			Type	% Grass	1-May	8-May	15-May	22-May	30-May	5-Jun	12-Jun
St. Lawrence	Dekalb	450	Depeyster	60		9					
St. Lawrence	Depeyster	350	Malone	30		12					
St. Lawrence	Oswegatchie	300	Muskellunge	5		11					
St. Lawrence	Lisbon	330	Hogansburg	15		10.5					
St. Lawrence	Madrid	340	Hogansburg	40		9					
St. Lawrence	Madrid	330	Grenville	95		9					
St. Lawrence	Lawrence	540	Kalurah	20		11					
St. Lawrence	Hopkinton	820	Kalurah	70		10					
St. Lawrence	Parishville	660	Hailesboro	10		10					
St. Lawrence	Canton	550	Pyrities	29		9					
St. Lawrence	Canton	520	Hailesboro	45		10					
St. Lawrence	Canton	530	Depeyster	48		7					
Franklin	Moira	450	Kars	40		8					
Clinton	AuSable	460	Appleton	25		12					
Clinton	AuSable	280	Waddington	65		11					
Clinton	Chazy	185	Malone	60		8.5					
Lewis	Lowville	980	Nellis	20		7					
Lewis	New Breman	740	Adams	30		8					
Lewis	Denmark	862	Galway	20		7.5					
Lewis	West Turin	1310	Herkimer	10		8					
Lewis	Turin	1205	Howard	75		7					
Lewis	Constableville	1200	Herkimer	25		11					
Lewis	Lyons Falls	830	Kars	10		12					
Jefferson	Rodman	860	Galway	9		8.5					
Jefferson	Adams	410	Collamer	24		8					
Jefferson	Ellisburg	305	Hamlin	50		9.5					
						9.4					