

1st Cutting Forage Quality Update – May 15, 2012

This is our third week of monitoring of 1st cutting for quality in 2012. Grass maturity has increased unbelievably since last week. Orchardgrass is heading out at a much shorter height than we would have anticipated. With that tested NDF values are higher than we would have predicted. All pure and mostly grass stands should be harvested at this point. There may be some grass stands at lower elevations that are beyond the maximum desired 55% NDF for milk production and may be better harvested for lower quality dry hay. Mixed alfalfa/grass at mid to lower elevations should be harvested and we urge that you err on the side of harvesting early if you have any doubts. Begin harvesting alfalfa and mostly alfalfa stands over the next few days at lower elevations. Again this is an easy check for alfalfa height before you start.

Another reason to harvest mixed stands in particular is that we are beginning to see considerable alfalfa weevil damage in these stands. Although there is some damage in more pure stands the greater damage seems to come with the more limited number of alfalfa plants for the weevil to feed on in mixed stands. The warm weather of March has moved the development of these insects along as they are also affected by growing degree days (GDD) and there were enough GDDs between late March and the present for them to develop and cause injury. You will notice feeding on upper leaves and you may notice there are only the veins of the leaves left; the leaves appear skeletonized. Best control is to harvest. Break off a few stems and beat them lightly against the sides of a container and the small green larvae with a white stripe and black head will drop to the bottom of a container. It may be good to check alfalfa regrowth for weevil feeding.

As always use information in the attached table as a guide to know when to harvest by checking your fields! Next and last report will be May 22!

Here are numbers that are helpful when using alfalfa and grass height as an indicator of NDF content:

Begin cutting 100% grass stands when nearby alfalfa is 14 inches tall to achieve the desired 50% NDF.

Begin cutting 50/50 mixed alfalfa and grass stands when nearby alfalfa is 22 inches tall for the desired 44% NDF.

Begin cutting 100% alfalfa stands when alfalfa is 28 inches tall for the desired 40% NDF.

The desired NDF for all grass fields is 50%, 50/50 mixed alfalfa and grass fields is 44%, and pure alfalfa stands is 40%. Predicted days to cut are based on daily NDF increases for grasses of 1% point, 50/50 mixed stands of .8% points and alfalfa of .5% point. Typically NDF increases about 0.8 to 1.2/day for grasses expecting the lower end of that range in cooler weather and the higher end in warm. Alfalfa NDF increases about 0.4 to 0.7/day again figuring the lower end of that range with cool temperatures and the higher in warm. Predictions are adjusted for the coming week's weather and right now we are assuming normal growth.

Summary of Alfalfa Height and Prediction of % NDF - May 15, 2012

County	Town	Road Name	Elevation	Grass Height Inches	Grass Species	Predicted Grass %NDF	Predicted Date to Cut Grass	Alfalfa Height Inches	Predicted Alfalfa % NDF	Predicted Date to Cut Alfalfa	Predicted 50/50 Mix % NDF	Predicted Date to Cut Mix
Chenango	Bainbridge	Ives Settlement Road	1400					11	Too Early			
Chenango	Brisban	State Route 12	919	21	Orchardgrass	51.2	5/13/12	12	Too Early			
Chenango	Earlville	Williams Road	1075					19	31.8	5/27/12	40.6	5/19/12
Chenango	New Berlin	County Road 18	1109	19	Reed Canarygrass	48.9	5/16/12	17	30.4	5/30/12	38.8	5/21/12
Chenango	Nineveh	County Road 26	966	20	Orchardgrass	50.1	5/14/12	13	27.6	6/4/12	35.4	5/25/12
Chenango	Oxford	County Road 32	1030	20	Orchardgrass	50.1	5/14/12	12	Too Early			
Chenango	Oxford	State Route 220	1509	19	Orchardgrass	48.9	5/16/12					
Chenango	Sherburne	Furmans Mills Road	1292	27	Orchardgrass	58.4	5/6/12	16	29.7	5/31/12	38.0	5/22/12
Chenango	Sherburne	West Hill Road	1364	24	Reed Canarygrass	54.8	5/10/12	18	31.1	5/28/12	39.7	5/20/12
Chenango	Sherburne	Bingham Road	1117					18	31.1	5/28/12	39.7	5/20/12
Chenango	Sherburne	County Road 24	1360	24	Orchardgrass	54.8	5/10/12	16	29.7	5/31/12	38.0	5/22/12
Chenango	Sherburne	State Route 12	1080					21	33.2	5/24/12	42.3	5/17/12
Chenango	Sidney	State Route 8	980	18	Orchardgrass	47.7	5/17/12	17	30.4	5/30/12	38.8	5/21/12
Chenango	Smyrna	Lincklaen Center Road	1268					13	27.6	6/4/12	35.4	5/25/12
Chenango	Smyrna	County Road 20	1122	30	Reed Canarygrass	62.0	5/3/12	22	33.9	5/23/12	43.2	5/16/12
Chenango	South Oxford	County Road 32	956	21	Orchardgrass	51.2	5/13/12	15	29.0	6/2/12	37.1	5/23/12
Herkimer	Columbia	Jordanville Road	1586	20	Orchardgrass	50.1	5/14/12	12	Too Early			
Herkimer	Danube	Cramer Road	693	27	Orchardgrass	58.4	5/6/12	22	33.9	5/23/12	43.2	5/16/12
Herkimer	German Flatts	Robinson Road	1372	16	Reed Canarygrass	45.3	5/19/12	16	29.7	5/31/12	38.0	5/22/12

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County	Town	Road Name	Elevation	Grass Height Inches	Grass Species	Predicted Grass %NDF	Predicted Date to Cut Grass	Alfalfa Height Inches	Predicted Alfalfa % NDF	Predicted Date to Cut Alfalfa	Predicted 50/50 Mix % NDF	Predicted Date to Cut Mix
Herkimer	Norway	Elm Tree Road	1123	20	Orchardgrass	50.1	5/14/12	15	29.0	6/2/12	37.1	5/23/12
Herkimer	Schulyer	Minots Corners Road	716	23	Orchardgrass	53.6	5/11/12	17	30.4	5/30/12	38.8	5/21/12
Herkimer	Winfield	North Winfield Road	1243	21	Orchardgrass	51.2	5/13/12	15	29.0	6/2/12	37.1	5/23/12
Madison	Brookfield	State Route 8	1195					18	31.1	5/28/12	39.7	5/20/12
Madison	Cazenovia	East Road	1421					15	29.0	6/2/12	37.1	5/23/12
Madison	DeRuyter	Crumb Hill Road	1329					18	31.1	5/28/12	39.7	5/20/12
Madison	Earlville	Excell Road	1332	23	Reed Canarygrass	53.6	5/11/12	17	30.4	5/30/12	38.8	5/21/12
Madison	Fenner	Cody Road	1522					16	29.7	5/31/12	38.0	5/22/12
Madison	Georgetown	State Route 26	1387	19	Reed Canarygrass	46.7	5/18/12	14	28.3	6/3/12	36.3	5/24/12
Madison	Hamilton	Eaton Street	1118	14	Reed Canarygrass	40.5	5/24/12	15	29.0	6/2/12	37.1	5/23/12
Madison	Hubbardsville	Wickwire Road	1205					15	29.0	6/2/12	37.1	5/23/12
Madison	Lebanon	River Road	1114					13	27.6	6/4/12	35.4	5/25/12
Madison	Lebanon	Jantzen Road	1378					17	30.4	5/30/12	38.8	5/21/12
Madison	Madison	Center Road	1342	15	Reed Canarygrass	41.7	5/23/12	14	28.3	6/3/12	36.3	5/24/12
Madison	Smithfield	Gill Road	1311					16	29.7	5/31/12	38.0	5/22/12
Madison	Sullivan	Quarry Road	602	25	Reed Canarygrass	54.1	5/10/12	23	34.6	5/21/12	44.0	5/14/12
Otsego	Cherry Valley	County Road 32A	787	Cut	Orchardgrass			Cut				
Otsego	Cherry Valley	County Road 32	1105	19	Reed Canarygrass	48.9	5/16/12					
Otsego	Cooperstown	County Road 33	1532	19	Orchardgrass	48.9	5/16/12	13	27.6	6/4/12	35.4	5/25/12
Otsego	Garrettsville	State Route 51	1254	19	Orchardgrass	48.9	5/16/12	14	28.3	6/3/12	36.3	5/24/12

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Otsego	Maryland	St Rt. 7/Trump Road	1288					20	32.5	5/26/12	41.4	5/18/12
Otsego	Otego	State Route 7	1072	Cut	Orchardgrass							
Otsego	Plainfield	County Road 18	1118	26	Orchardgrass	57.2	5/7/12	21	33.2	5/24/12	42.3	5/17/12
Otsego	Portlandville	County Road 35	1200	19	Orchardgrass	48.9	5/16/12	13	27.6	6/4/12	35.4	5/25/12
Otsego	Richfield	State Route 20	1712	14	Orchardgrass	42.9	5/22/12	12	Too Early			
Otsego	Springfield	Briar Hill Road	1520	18	Orchardgrass	47.7	5/17/12	15	29.0	6/2/12	37.1	5/23/12
Otsego	Worcester	County Road 40	1450	Cut	Orchardgrass			Cut				
Schoharie	Fulton	St Rt 30/Church Street	668	28	Orchardgrass	59.6	5/5/12	26	36.7	5/17/12	46.6	5/11/12
Schoharie	Fulton	Mill Valley Road	1032	28	Orchardgrass	59.6	5/5/12					
Schoharie	Fulton	State Route 30	685	Cut	Orchardgrass			Cut				
Schoharie	Middleburgh	Amelia Lane	631	Cut	Orchardgrass			Cut				
Schoharie	Richmondville	Warnerville Cutoff	953	23	Orchardgrass	53.6	5/11/12	22	33.9	5/23/12	43.2	5/16/12
Schoharie	Richmondville	Warnerville Cutoff	953	23	Reed Canarygrass	53.6	5/11/12	22	33.9	5/23/12	43.2	5/16/12
Schoharie	Wright	Abrams Road	1023	28	Reed Canarygrass	59.6	5/5/12	24	35.3	5/20/12	44.9	5/13/12
Schoharie	Wright	Abrams Road	1023	29	Orchardgrass	60.8	5/4/12	24	35.3	5/20/12	44.9	5/13/12

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