

1st Cutting Forage Quality Update – May 22, 2012

This is our fourth and final week of monitoring of 1st cutting for quality in 2012. We hope this information has been of value to you.

All pure and mostly grass stands should have been harvested at this point. Grass stands are beyond the maximum desired 55% NDF for milk production and may be better harvested for lower quality dry hay. Most mixed alfalfa/grass stands should be harvested and we urge that you err on the side of harvesting early if you have any doubts. Alfalfa and mostly alfalfa stands at lower elevations should be harvested. However alfalfa higher elevations are maybe a week away from harvest. Again this is an easy check of 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. 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 the container. Best control is to harvest. It may be good to check alfalfa regrowth for feeding but this is a year we would expect weevil feeding to end soon.

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 22, 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
Otsego	Cherry Valley	County Road 32A	787					Cut				
Otsego	Cherry Valley	County Road 32	1105	27	Reed Canarygrass	56.6	5/15/12					
Otsego	Springfield	Briar Hill Road	1520	27	Orchardgrass	58.4	5/13/12	22	33.9	5/30/12	43.2	5/23/12
Schoharie	Richmondville	Warnerville Cutoff	953	31	Orchardgrass	63.2	5/8/12	27	37.4	5/23/12	47.5	5/17/12
Schoharie	Richmondville	Warnerville Cutoff	953	31	Reed Canarygrass	61.5	5/10/12	27	37.4	5/23/12	47.5	5/17/12
Schoharie	Fulton	St Rt 30/Church Street	668					Cut				
Schoharie	Fulton	Mill Valley Rd.	1032	35	Orchardgrass	67.9	5/4/12					
Schoharie	Fulton	State Route 30	685					Cut				
Schoharie	Middleburgh	Amelia Lane	631					Cut				
Schoharie	Wright	Abrams Road	1023	35	Reed Canarygrass	66.4	5/5/12	29	38.8	5/20/12	49.2	5/15/12
Schoharie	Wright	Abrams Road	1023	35	Orchardgrass	67.9	5/4/12	29	38.8	5/20/12	49.2	5/15/12
Otsego	Maryland	Rt. 7/Trump Rd.						25	36.0	5/26/12	45.8	5/19/12
Otsego	Worcester	County Rt. 40	1450					Cut				
Herkimer	Danube	Cramer Road	693					Cut				
Herkimer	German Flatts	Robinson Road	1372	27	Reed Canarygrass	56.6	5/15/12	17	30.4	6/6/12	38.8	5/28/12
Herkimer	Norway	Elm Tree Road	1123	27	Orchardgrass	58.4	5/13/12	22	33.9	5/30/12	43.2	5/23/12
Herkimer	Schulyer	Minots Corners Road	716	30	Reed Canarygrass	60.3	5/11/12	19	31.8	6/3/12	40.6	5/26/12
Herkimer	Winfield	North Winfield Road	1243	32	Orchardgrass	64.4	5/7/12	21	33.2	5/31/12	42.3	5/24/12
Otsego	Richfield	State Route 20	1712	25	Orchardgrass	56.0	5/15/12	17	30.4	6/6/12	38.8	5/28/12

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Otsego	Plainfield	County Road 18	1118	40	Orchardgrass	73.9	4/28/12	27	37.4	5/23/12	47.5	5/17/12
Herkimer	Columbia	Jordanville Road	1586	23	Orchardgrass	53.6	5/18/12	19	31.8	6/3/12	40.6	5/26/12
Otsego	Portlandville	County Road 35	1200	27	Orchardgrass	58.4	5/13/12	18	31.1	6/4/12	39.7	5/27/12
Otsego	Cooperstown	County Road 33	1532	27	Orchardgrass	58.4	5/13/12	19	31.8	6/3/12	40.6	5/26/12
Otsego	Garrettsville	State Route 51	1254					Cut				
Otsego	Otego	State Route 7	1072					Cut				
Chenango	New Berlin	County Road 18	1109					Cut				
Chenango	Sidney	State Route 8	980					Cut				
Chenango	Bainbridge	Ives Settlement Road	1400					Cut				
Chenango	Oxford	County Road 32	1030					Cut				
Chenango	Oxford	State Route 220	1509	24	Orchardgrass	54.8	5/17/12					
Chenango	South Oxford	County Road 32	956	25	Orchardgrass	56.0	5/15/12	21	33.2	5/31/12	42.3	5/24/12
Chenango	Brisban	State Route 12	919	26	Orchardgrass	57.2	5/14/12	15	29.0	6/9/12	37.1	5/30/12
Chenango	Nineveh	County Road 26	966					Cut				
Chenango	Sherburne	Furmans Mills Road	1292					Cut				
Chenango	Earlville	Williams Road	1075					Cut				
Chenango	Sherburne	West Hill Road	1364	30	Reed Canarygrass	60.3	5/11/12	24	35.3	5/27/12	44.9	5/20/12
Chenango	Smyrna	County Road 20	1122	36	Reed Canarygrass	67.7	5/4/12	26	36.7	5/24/12	46.6	5/18/12
Chenango	Sherburne	Bingham Road	1117					25	36.0	5/26/12	45.8	5/19/12
Chenango	Sherburne	County Road 24	1360	36	Orchardgrass	69.1	5/2/12	22	33.9	5/30/12	43.2	5/23/12

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Madison	Earlville	Excell Road	1332	32	Reed Canarygrass	62.7	5/9/12	24	35.3	5/27/12	44.9	5/20/12
Madison	Hubbardsville	Wickwire Road	1205					22	33.9	5/30/12	43.2	5/23/12
Chenango	Sherburne	State Route 12	1080					25	36.0	5/26/12	45.8	5/19/12
Madison	Hamilton	Eaton Street	1118	23	Reed Canarygrass	51.6	5/20/12	21	33.2	5/31/12	42.3	5/24/12
Madison	Lebanon	River Road	1114					19	31.8	6/3/12	40.6	5/26/12
Madison	Lebanon	Jantzen Road	1378	22	Reed Canarygrass	50.4	5/21/12	24	35.3	5/27/12	44.9	5/20/12
Madison	Madison	Center Road	1342	24	Reed Canarygrass	52.9	5/19/12	19	31.8	6/3/12	40.6	5/26/12
Madison	Brookfield	State Route 8	1195					23	34.6	5/28/12	44.0	5/21/12
Madison	Smithfield	Old County Road	1311					23	34.6	5/28/12	44.0	5/21/12
Madison	Sullivan	Quarry Road	602	31	Orchardgrass	63.2	5/8/12	25	36.0	5/26/12	45.8	5/19/12
Madison	Fenner	Cody Road	1522					20	32.5	6/2/12	41.4	5/25/12
Madison	Cazenovia	East Road	1421					20	32.5	6/2/12	41.4	5/25/12
Madison	DeRuyter	Crumb Hill Road	1329	24	Reed Canarygrass	52.9	5/19/12	23	34.6	5/28/12	44.0	5/21/12
Chenango	Lincklaen	Lincklaen Center Road	1268	26	Reed Canarygrass	55.3	5/16/12	22	33.9	5/30/12	43.2	5/23/12

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