



## 1<sup>st</sup> Cutting Forage Quality Update

We have begun monitoring of 1<sup>st</sup> cutting for quality this year. If you are not familiar with our procedures we use alfalfa height to predict Neutral Detergent Fiber (NDF) for alfalfa, alfalfa/grass mixed and grass stands. Alfalfa height has proven to be a reliable indicator of NDF values in the field.

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

In general we say 100% grass stands should be cut 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.

In the attached tables locations around the region are listed where we have measured alfalfa height. You can use the location and elevation as a guide to conditions that may be similar to your own.

**The 2017 haycrop is ahead of the 2016 first cutting. In 2016 on May 3 the alfalfa averaged 9 inches tall and 65 percent of the fields were 9 inches or less. For 2017 on May 2 the alfalfa averaged 13 inches tall and only 17 percent of the fields were 9 inches or less. As you can see in the tables at some locations grasses are be ready to cut. This is likely not the news anyone is looking for given the wet weather and general lack of field work. However it may help you plan the spring work better to start lining up the fields that still have the chance to make excellent quality forage. If there is a choice between planting corn or getting that first cutting in consider opting for the first cutting as warmer summer weather may catch corn up but you can't get that 1<sup>st</sup> cutting quality back and you may lose the advantage of sufficient soil moisture for a second.**

**Next report will be May 9.**

*First Cutting Project is being conducted by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Chenango, Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Otsego, Saratoga and Schoharie Counties and the Central New York Dairy and Field Crops Team*

Summary of Alfalfa Height and Prediction of % NDF - May 2, 2017

County	Town	Road Name	Elevation	Alfalfa Height Inches	Predicted Grass % NDF	Predicted 50/50 Mix % NDF	Predicted Alfalfa % NDF	Predicted Date to Cut Grass	Predicted Date to Cut Mix	Predicted Date to Cut Alfalfa
Chenango	Bainbridge	Ives Settlement Road	1457	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/4/17	5/13/17	5/24/17
Chenango	Greene	County Road 32	950	16	50.8	38.0	29.7	5/1/17	5/9/17	5/18/17
Chenango	Sherburne	County Road 24	1350	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/6/17	5/16/17	5/27/17
Chenango	Sherburne	State Route 80	1190	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/3/17	5/12/17	5/22/17
Chenango	Smyrna	County Road 14	1080	17	51.7	38.8	30.4	4/30/17	5/8/17	5/17/17
Chenango	Smyrna	County Road 20	1150	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/2/17	5/11/17	5/21/17
Fulton	Ephratah	County Road 140	633	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/2/16	5/11/16	5/21/16
Fulton	Johnstown	State Route 67	765	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/2/16	5/10/16	5/20/16
Herkimer	Colombia	Osley Road	1510	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/5/17	5/14/17	5/25/17
Herkimer	Danube	Bellinger Road	692	5	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Danube	Tibbits Road	580	16	50.8	38.0	29.7	5/1/17	5/9/17	5/18/17
Herkimer	Danube	Travis Road	1301	7	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Fairfield	Hardscrabble Road	1308	7	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	German Flatts	Kidney Road	389	16	50.8	38.0	29.7	5/1/17	5/9/17	5/18/17
Herkimer	Mohawk	Kingdom Road	1598	6	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Mohawk	Manning Road.	1638	4	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Norway	State Route 170A	1207	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Schulyer	Carder Lane	466	16	50.8	38.0	29.7	5/1/17	5/9/17	5/18/17
Herkimer	Stark	Jordanville Road	1420	6	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Warren	Jordanville Road	1546	6	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Warren	Jordanville Road	1555	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/6/17	5/16/17	5/27/17
Montgomery	Canajoharie	Maring Road	890	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/2/16	5/10/16	5/20/16
Montgomery	Florida	Cemetery Road	580	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/3/16	5/12/16	5/22/16

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Montgomery	Florida	Mohr Road	830	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/3/16	5/12/16	5/22/16
Montgomery	Glen	State Route 5S	290	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/2/16	5/11/16	5/21/16
Montgomery	Minden	Airport Road	653	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/5/16	5/14/16	5/25/16
Montgomery	Minden	River Road	417	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/3/16	5/12/16	5/22/16
Montgomery	Minden	State Route 80	610	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/3/16	5/12/16	5/22/16
Montgomery	Mohawk	Stoners Trail Road	570	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/2/16	5/11/16	5/21/16
Montgomery	Mohawk	Van Epps Road	470	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/2/16	5/11/16	5/21/16
Montgomery	Palatine	Dygart Road	584	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/3/16	5/12/16	5/22/16
Montgomery	St. Johnsville	Crum Creek Road	668	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/3/16	5/12/16	5/22/16
Otsego	Cherry Valley	Dugway Road	796	18	52.6	39.7	31.1	4/29/16	5/7/16	5/15/16
Otsego	Maryland	Muehl Road	1320	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/3/17	5/12/17	5/22/17
Otsego	Morris	State Route 51	1126	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/2/17	5/11/17	5/21/17
Otsego	New Lisbon	NY State Route 51	1255	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/2/17	5/10/17	5/20/17
Otsego	Otego	State Route 7	1070	18	52.6	39.7	31.1	4/29/17	5/7/17	5/15/17
Otsego	Otsego	County Highway 33	1238	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/2/17	5/11/17	5/21/17
Otsego	Pittsfield	Burdick Road	1136	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/4/17	5/13/17	5/24/17
Otsego	Plainfield	County Highway 18	1212	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/4/17	5/13/17	5/24/17
Otsego	Springfield	Briar Hill Road	1638	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Unadilla	County Road 1	1058	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/2/17	5/10/17	5/20/17
Saratoga	Charlton	Jockey Street	643	16	50.8	38.0	29.7	5/1/17	5/9/17	5/18/17
Saratoga	Galway	Crane Road	833	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/4/17	5/13/17	5/24/17
Saratoga	Northumberland	Callahan Road	282	17	51.7	38.8	30.4	4/30/17	5/8/17	5/17/17
Saratoga	Northumberland	State Route 32	268	19	53.4	40.6	31.8	4/28/17	5/6/17	5/14/17

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Saratoga	Saratoga	County Road 67	362	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/2/17	5/10/17	5/20/17
Saratoga	Saratoga	Southard Road	320	17	51.7	38.8	30.4	4/30/17	5/8/17	5/17/17
Saratoga	Stillwater	State Route 423	475	16	50.8	38.0	29.7	5/1/17	5/9/17	5/18/17
Schoharie	Middleburgh	State Route 30	635	19	53.4	40.6	31.8	4/28/17	5/6/17	5/14/17
Schoharie	Middleburgh	State Route 30	610	17	51.7	38.8	30.4	4/30/17	5/8/17	5/17/17
Schoharie	Richmondville	Warnerville Cutoff	925	16	50.8	38.0	29.7	5/1/17	5/9/17	5/18/17
Schoharie	Seward	Bush Street	1150	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/4/17	5/13/17	5/24/17
Schoharie	Wright	Abrams Road	1050	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/2/17	5/10/17	5/20/17

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