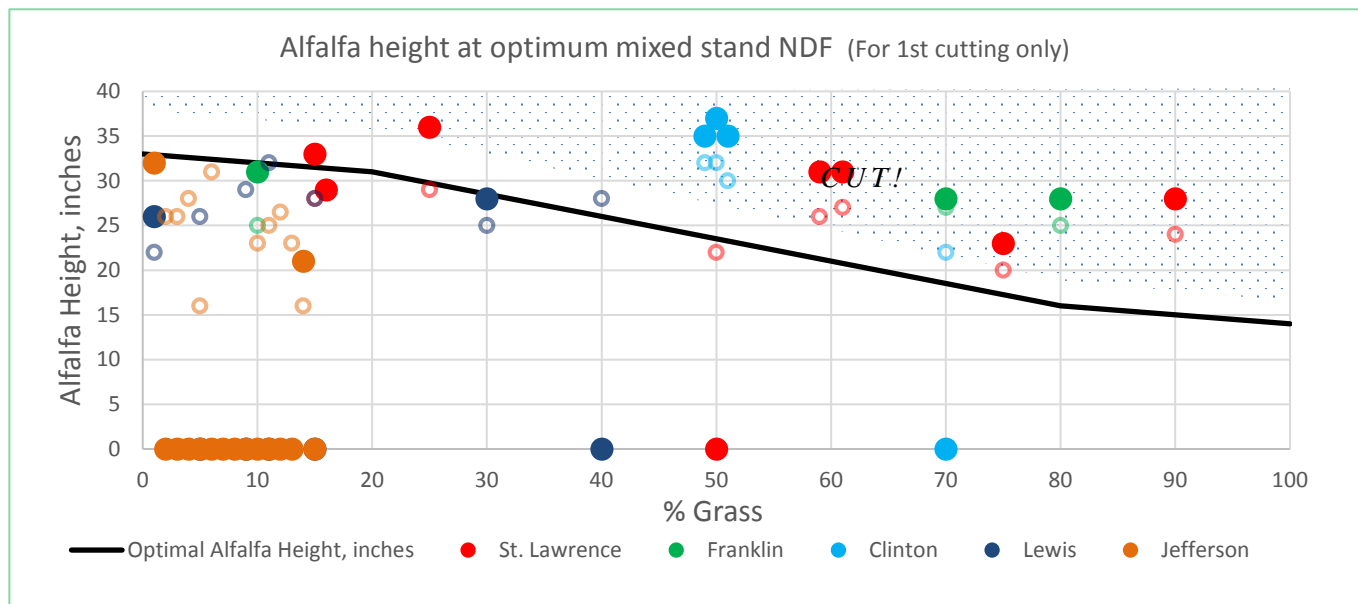


# 2017 North Country 1st Cutting Alfalfa Quality Monitor

## June 6, 2017 REPORT



### 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.

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

The North Country 1st Cutting Forage Quality Monitoring Program is made possible by Cornell Cooperative Extension. Data collection by Ron Kuck, Alyssa Couse, Melissa Spence, Joe Lawrence, Harry Fefee, Sara Bull, Eric Bever, Bill Bullock and Kitty 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 responded to a bit of sun and warmth this past week, but rain and wet conditions were still the dominant effects. Many fields in Jefferson and Lewis Counties were mowed during the brief window of dry weather late last week. Remaining alfalfa fields were mostly lodged with recent rains and wind. All grasses are now headed and have declined in quality. Fields with 20% grass or more are now beyond ideal NDF according to the graph above (above the line). Again, once fields are past their prime, send them to the bottom of the mowing order and prioritize fields where quality is still high. Using this approach, at least some high quality forage will be harvested. Increased prevalence of dandelions in many fields may indicate loss of alfalfa and/or grass plants from the 2016 drought.
- Opportunities to make dry hay have been virtually nonexistent so far this spring. The forecast for the coming week holds promise, however. Grass fields and winter cereals are likely low quality feed at this point. Be sure to mow at a height of no less than 4" above soil surface and below grass heads.
- Scout grass hay fields for armyworm as many small infestations have been reported. This timing is early enough that we will potentially have additional generations of this pest this season.

## 2017 North Country 1st Cutting Alfalfa Quality Monitor

County	Town/Field	Elevation (feet)	Soil Type	% Grass	Grass Species	Alfalfa Height, inches					
						2-May	9-May	16-May	23-May	30-May	6-Jun
St. Lawrence	DeKalb	450'	Heuvelton	59	Tall Fescue	9	11	15	20	26	31
St. Lawrence	Depeyster	364'	Kalurah	90	Timothy	7	10	14	18	24	28
St. Lawrence	Depeyster	340'	Adjidaumo	50	Reed Canarygrass	7	10	12	16	22	- mowed -
St. Lawrence	Hopkinton	710'	Pyrites	25	Tall Fescue	5	13	16.5	26	29	36
St. Lawrence	Madrid	340'	Hogansburg	16	Reed Canarygrass	9	11	16	21	29	29
St. Lawrence	Parishville	750'	Roundabout	15		8	11	15	19.5	28	33
St. Lawrence	Stockholm	560'	Coveytown	75	Reed Canarygrass	6	8	9	13	20	23
St. Lawrence	Waddington	260'	Croghan	61		7	11	14	19	27	31
Franklin	Bangor	760'	Moira	70		8.5	11	13	18	27	28
Franklin	Moira	450'	Croghan	10	Tall Fescue	8	12	16	21	25	31
Franklin	Moira	460'	Rhinebeck	80		8.5	12	13	17	25	28
Clinton	Mooers	225'	Hailesboro	70		7	12	13	20	22	- mowed -
Clinton	Plattsburgh	375'	Hailesboro	50		12	14	20	26	32	37
Clinton	Peru	420'	Appleton	49	Reed Canarygrass	12	14	20	25	32	35
Clinton	Peru	480'	Hogansburg	51	Reed Canarygrass	12	14	17	25	30	35
Lewis	Leyden	1254	Nellis	40	Orchardgrass	10	12	17	24	28	- mowed -
Lewis	Turin	840	Kars	11	Orchardgrass	11	14	16	24	32	- mowed -
Lewis	Martinsburg1	1095	Herkimer	9	Tall Fescue	11	12	18	26	29	- mowed -
Lewis	Martinsburg2	1255	Herkimer	5	Reed Canarygrass	9	10	15	22	26	- mowed -
Lewis	Lowville	733	Duane	1	-	10	11	13	18	22	26
Lewis	Denmark1	1010	Plainfield	30	Reed Canarygrass	9	10.5	14	18	25	28
Lewis	Denmark2	915	Nellis	15	Tall Fescue	9.5	11.5	15	22	28	- mowed -
Jefferson	Ellisburg E	440	Madrid	11	TBA	11	12	18	20	32	32
Jefferson	Ellisburg W	330	Collamer	10	TBA	11	13	19	21	26	- mowed -
Jefferson	Ellisburg N	420	Galway	9	TBA	11	12	16	22	26	- mowed -
Jefferson	Henderson	260	Rhinebeck	50	TBA	10	13	18	24	28	- mowed -
Jefferson	Hounsfield W	276	Niagara	50	TBA	8	10	14	15	16	- mowed -
Jefferson	Hounsfield N	482	Galway	12	TBA	11	14	17	23	31	- mowed -
Jefferson	Adams	350	Collamer	50	TBA	12	16	21	24	- mowed -	- mowed -
Jefferson	Rodman	550	Galway	8	TBA			16	24	- mowed -	- mowed -
Jefferson	Carthage	710	Elmridge	5	TBA	10	10.5	14.5	19	- mowed -	- mowed -
Jefferson	Clayton	253	Rhinebeck	TBD	TBA	7.5	9.5	13	16.5	23	- mowed -
Jefferson	Evans Mills	470	Farmington	50	TBA	10	10.5	13.5	17.5	25	- mowed -
Jefferson	Evans Mills	470	Farmington	13	TBA	9.5	11.5	17	23	26.5	- mowed -
Jefferson	Evans Mills N	400	Covington	20	TBA	9	14.5	18	22.5	23	- mowed -
Jefferson	Philidelphia	520	Rhinebeck	7	TBA	6	8	9.5	14	16	21
Jefferson	Watertown	510	Collamer	40	TBA	9.5	12	14	- mowed -	- mowed -	- mowed -