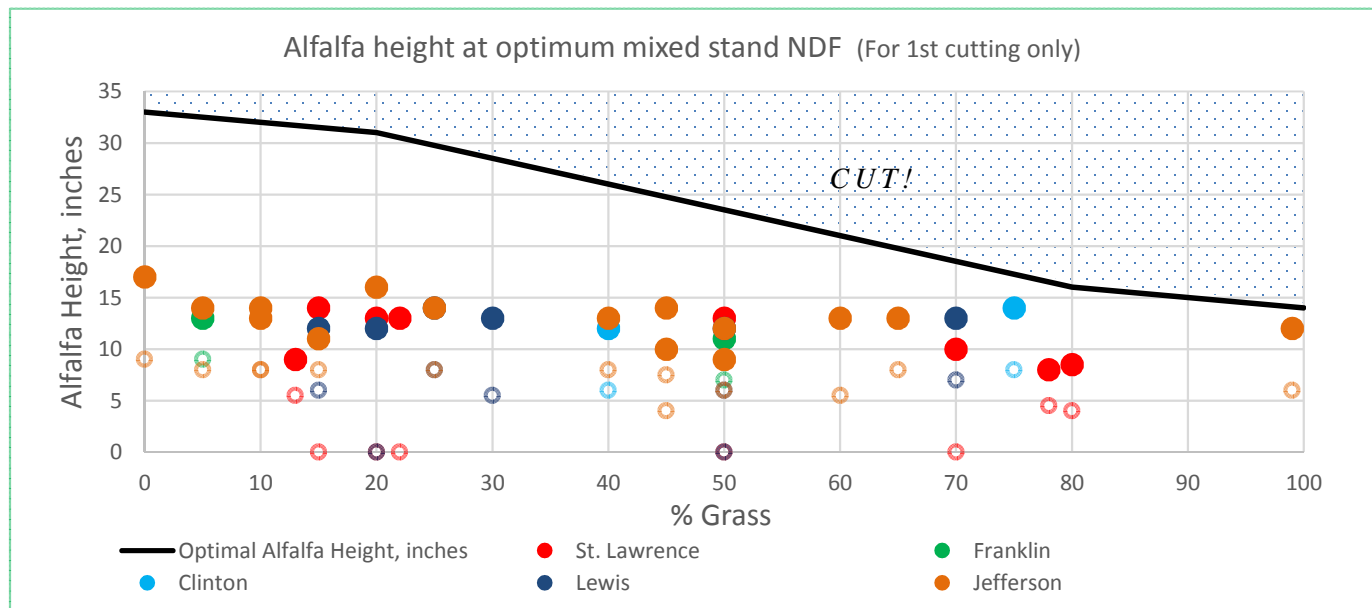


2018 North Country 1st Cutting Alfalfa Quality Monitor

May 14, 2018 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, Jessica Prosper, 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 has responded to our warm temperatures and rain this past week. Grasses have made good progress over the past week or 10 days as well. Early heading grasses are already beginning to flower. 100% Grass fields are very near peak quality. Check each of your grass fields to assess maturity - it will vary from field to field and from grass species to species.
- It's too late to fertilize grass hay fields with N for first cutting, but some of the later fields to green up will still respond to some. Fertilize with N for 2nd cutting immediately after 1st cutting. Once grasses have reached later phases of vegetative growth, they will not respond to N well and the investment in fertility will not yield a good return.
- Alfalfa snout beetle adults continue to emerge and walk to new destinations. Reports have been fielded in St. Lawrence, Franklin and Clinton Counties this week. They prefer to walk N/NE/NW and will walk a long way to find a suitable host plant on which to feed and lay eggs. No insecticide is effective against ASB but a pair of biocontrol nematodes, now commercially available in NNY, work very well. ASB pose no threat to houses, humans or lawns.

2018 North Country 1st Cutting Alfalfa Quality Monitor

County	Town/Field	Elevation (feet)	Soil Type	% Grass	Grass Species	Alfalfa Height, inches					
						7-May	14-May	21-May	28-May	4-Jun	11-Jun
St. Lawrence	Depeyster	320	Adjidaumo	13	Reed Canarygrass	5.5	9				
St. Lawrence	DeKalb	420	Heuvelton	78		4.5	8				
St. Lawrence	Hermon	509	Wegatchie	80		4	8.5				
St. Lawrence	Morristown	329	Raquette	22	Orchardgrass		13				
St. Lawrence	Lisbon	371	Hogansburg	70	Perennial Ryegrass		10				
St. Lawrence	Waddington	302	Hogansburg	15	Reed Canarygrass		14				
St. Lawrence	Lawrence	487	Depeyster	50			13				
St. Lawrence	Parishville	730	Roundabout	20			13				
Franklin	Moira	450	Croghan	50		7	11				
Franklin	Malone	707	Adams	5		9	13				
Clinton	Mooers	225'	Hailesboro	40		6	12				
Clinton	Beekmantown	375'	Hailesboro	75		8	14				
Lewis	Leyden	1254	Nellis	50	Orchardgrass	6	12				
Lewis	Turin	840	Dunkirk	25	Tall Fescue	8	14				
Lewis	Martinsburg1	1080	Galway	70	Tall Fescue	7	13				
Lewis	Martinsburg2	1255	Herkimer	20	Reed Canarygrass		12				
Lewis	Denmark1	900	Nellis	30	Reed Canarygrass	5.5	13				
Lewis	Denmark2	954	Nellis	15	Tall Fescue	6	12				
Jefferson	Champion	1035	Galway	50	Tall Fescue		9				
Jefferson	Ellisburg	440	Madrid	50		6	12				
Jefferson	Ellisburg	330	Collamer	25		8	14				
Jefferson	Ellisburg	420	Collamer	10		8	13				
Jefferson	Hounsfield	276	Benson	65		8	13				
Jefferson	Hounsfield	276	Niagara	99		6	12				
Jefferson	Hounsfield	482	Galway	10		8	14				
Jefferson	Rodman	550	Galway	0		9	17				
Jefferson	Carthage	700	Elmridge	5		8	14				