

1st Cutting Forage Quality Update **Cornell Cooperative Extension** | Central New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops

Today begins our monitoring of 1st 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:

Begin cutting 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. Always check your fields to verify your heights and conditions!

This week was supposed to be a dry run for starting our monitoring next week but we have enough alfalfa growth to predict a few pure grass stands to be ready before Tuesday, May 7. That may be a little ambitious given predicted high temperatures are only in the 60s for the week but never the less felt we should report the chance exists for a few grass fields to be ready. If we by chance get 70s things will move fast. It is hard to imagine grass fields would be dry enough to run equipment on.

We need an alfalfa height of 10 inches for our prediction equations to work and 28 percent of the fields were 10 inches or taller though none were taller than 12 inches.

A number of fields were observed considerable frost heaving. Make sure to check your fields to confirm they are alive and intact.

Next report will be May 7.

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

Summary of Alfalfa Height and Prediction of % NDF - April 30, 2019

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	Afton	State Route 41	1060	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Chenango	Bainbridge	East Keech Road	1000	8	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Chenango	Bainbridge	Ives Settlement Road	1457	5	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Chenango	Greene	County Road 32	950	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/3/19	5/12/19	5/23/19
Chenango	New Berlin	State Route 8	1060	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/3/19	5/12/19	5/23/19
Chenango	Sherburne	County Road 24	1350	5	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Chenango	Sherburne	State Route 80	1190	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Chenango	Smyrna	County Road 20	1190	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Fulton	Ephratah	County Road 140	630	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Fulton	Johnstown	State Route 67	715	6	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Columbia	McKoons Road	1493	2	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Danube	State Route 5S	437	3	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Danube	Travis Road	1484	3	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Fairfield	Hardscrabble Road	740	3	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	German Flatts	Kidney Road	405	6	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	German Flatts	State Route 5S	389	7	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Stark	Jordanville Road	1420	2	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Warren	Jordanville Road	1582	3	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Winfield	Babcock Hill Road	1332	3	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Winfield	State Route 51	1195	3	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Winfield	Walts Rd	1426	6	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Madison	Fenner	Nelson Road	1500	8	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Madison	Georgetown	Rt 26	1300	8	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early

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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
Madison	Lebanon	Geer Road	1500	6	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Madison	Lincoln	Creek Road	600	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/2/19	5/11/19	5/22/19
Madison	Oneida	Middle Road	500	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Madison	Smithfield	Swamp Road	1300	4	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Madison	Stockbridge	Stockbridge Falls Road	1100	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Amsterdam	Truax Road	650	7	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Canajoharie	Maring Road	869	6	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Florida	Cemetery Street	550	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Florida	Mohr Road	820	6	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Glen	Duffel Road	276	7	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Glen	Van Epps Road	522	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/3/19	5/12/19	5/23/19
Montgomery	Minden	Airport Road	666	3	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Minden	River Road	420	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Montgomery	Minden	State Route 80	545	5	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Mohawk	Martin Road	440	8	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Mohawk	Stoners Trail Road	531	7	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Palatine	Dygert Road	600	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Montgomery	St. Johnsville	Crum Creek Road	663	5	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Cherry Valley	Dugway Road	796	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Otsego	Cherry Valley	State Route 166	1295	7	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Garratsville	State Route 51	1304	3	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Laurens	State Route 205	1121	3	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Middlefield	County Road 33	1241	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early

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Otsego	Middlefield	State Route 166	1256	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Milford	State Route 28	1208	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Otsego	Morris	County Road 10	1149	5	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Pittsfield	County Road 18	1137	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Richfield	Dugan Road	1559	3	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Schenevus	Muehl Road	1319	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Unadilla	County Road 1	1058	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Saratoga	Charlton	Jockey Street	620	7	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Saratoga	Galway	Crane Road	840	6	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Saratoga	Northumberland	Callahan Road	280	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Saratoga	Northumberland	Colebrook Road	250	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Saratoga	Saratoga	County Road 68	440	7	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Saratoga	Saratoga	County Road 71	440	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Saratoga	Stillwater	State Route 423	480	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/4/19	5/14/19	5/25/19
Schoharie	Cobleskill	Lake Road	1297	8	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Schoharie	Cobleskill	Warnerville Cutoff	944	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Schoharie	Fulton	State Route 30	702	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/3/19	5/12/19	5/23/19
Schoharie	Middleburgh	Amelia Lane	626	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/2/19	5/11/19	5/22/19
Schoharie	Wright	Abrams Road	1149	8	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early

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