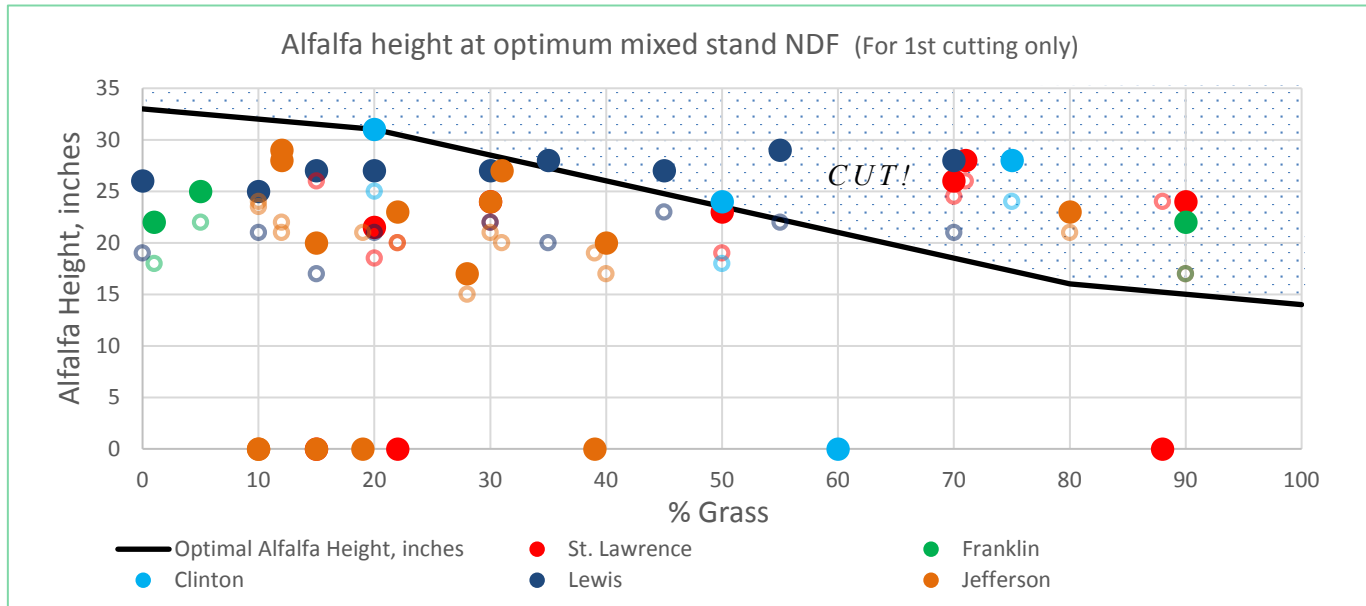


# North Country 1st Cutting Alfalfa-Grass Quality Monitor

**June 3, 2019 FINAL 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 Alyssa Couse, Jake Ledoux, Joe Lawrence, Jessica Prosper, Sara Bull, Jonathan Krauss, 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 growth slowed this week, growing about 4.3" on average. Most fields with 25% grass or more are at or beyond peak quality and are ready to harvest. Orchardgrass, Tall Fescue and Reed Canarygrass are fully flowered in many fields. Just 25% of fields monitored in this program have been mowed.
- Opportunities to make dry hay have been largely nonexistent so far this spring with only a day or two between persistent rains. Haylage and balage harvest has progressed slightly better, albeit very slowly, because fewer dry days are needed.
- Nitrogen should have already been applied to grass fields (if less than 50% legume and no manure history) by now. At this point, wait until after first cutting to apply N. Fields with more than 50% legume and/or with a recent full rate manure history do not need additional N.

# North Country 1st Cutting Alfalfa-Grass 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	18-Jun
St. Lawrence	Depeyster	320	Adjidaumo	71		8	12	19	26	28		
St. Lawrence	DeKalb	420	Heuvelton	88		5.5	10	16	24	- cut -		
St. Lawrence	Hermon	509	Wegatchie	90		4.5	8	12	17	24		
St. Lawrence	Morristown	329	Raquette	22		6.5	12	15	20	- cut -		
St. Lawrence	Lisbon	371	Hogansburg	70		7	11	14	24.5	26		
St. Lawrence	Waddington	302	Swanton	15		7	12	16	26	- cut -		
St. Lawrence	Madrid	350	Croghan	30			8	13.5	22	24		
St. Lawrence	Lawrence	487	Depeyster	50		6.5	9	13	19	23		
St. Lawrence	Hopkinton	730	Kalurah	20		6	8	12.5	18.5	21.5		
Franklin	Moira	475	Brayton	5		6	10	18	22	25		
Franklin	Malone	1200	Westbury	90		4.5	7	12	17	22		
Franklin	Chateaugay	1160	Emperville	1			8	11	18	22		
Clinton	Mooers	225'	Hailesboro	60		6	10	16	- cut -	- cut -		
Clinton	Beekmantown	375	Hailesboro	20		7	11	18	25	31		
Clinton	AuSable	405'	Appleton	75		6	9	18	24	28		
Clinton	AuSable	380'	Appleton	50		5	8	15	18	24		
Lewis	Croghan	1013'	Adams	10		6.5	9.5	19	21	25		
Lewis	West Turin	1230	Amenia	0		7	9	14	19	26		
Lewis	Turin	840	Dunkirk	55		10	13	18	22	29		
Lewis	Martinsburg1	1080	Galway	70		9	12	17	21	28		
Lewis	Martinsburg2	1255	Herkimer	35		8	12	16	20	28		
Lewis	Denmark 1	940	Galway/Nellis	45		7	7.5	15	23	27		
Lewis	Denmark 2	1005	Nellis	30		6	8.5	14	22	27		
Lewis	Lowville 1	977	Nellis	20		6.5	10	15	21	27		
Lewis	Lowville 2	1070	Amenia	15		5.5	8.5	14	17	27		
Jefferson	Hounsfield	1035	Galway	10		8.5	13	17	24	- cut -		
Jefferson	Adams	440	Madrid	30		7	11	16.5	21	24		
Jefferson	Ellisburg	330	Bombay	15		6.5	9.5	18.5	20	20		
Jefferson	Ellisburg	420	Collamer	31		6	9	18.5	20	27		
Jefferson	Ellisburg	0	0	10		7	11	16	23.5	- cut -		
Jefferson	Rodman	276	Benson	19		6	10.5	16.5	21	- cut -		
Jefferson	Rodman	276	Niagara	12		8	8	18	21	29		
Jefferson	Rodman	550	Galway	12		8	11	18	22	28		
Jefferson	Clayton	310	RhineBeck	22		5	8	9	20	23		
Jefferson	Evans Mills	490	Farmington	15		7	10	- cut -	- cut -	- cut -		
Jefferson	Evans Mills 2	450	Farmington	80		7	11	13	21	23		
Jefferson	Philadelphia	500	Rhinebeck	40		7	9	11	17	20		
Jefferson	Watertown	490	Collamer	39		7	10.5	12	19	- cut -		
Jefferson	Evans Mills N	390	Covington	28		4	6	10	15	17		