

MFGA Green Gold Report – June 8, 2020 – EASTERN

2020 Reports for Optimum Alfalfa Harvest Date cover Eastern, Central and Western Manitoba.

SITE	RFV NIR	RFV PEAQ	Height	CP
St.Pierre E	214	235	15	23
Beausjour	185	210	19	27
Ste.Anne	195	216	18	26
New Bothwell	193	208	18	25
Stony Mountain	172	193	22	26
EASTERN AVERAGE	192	212	18	25

Fields in the East are now in the early and late bud stage. I did see some flowers but not in the sample area and too few to consider rating the field as early flower. The alfalfa continues to add about ½ inch of new growth /day which given the warm temperatures is a little slower than normal. Rain this week may help accelerate growth. RFV's continue to drop at about 5pt/day and we see that as we approach the 22inch height that we are close to a RFV of 170 which could translate into 150 RFV hay.

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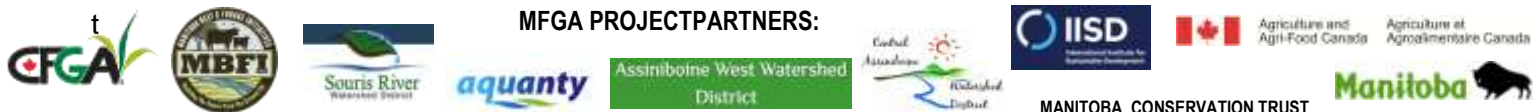
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What I am Seeing

Fields in the East are now in the early and late bud stage. I did see some flowers but not in the sample area and too few to consider rating the field as early flower. I am seeing increase leaf feeding and in some cases harvest might have to be considered to help limit the damage. Fields with alfalfa/grass mixtures are starting to head.

Alfalfa Flowering



Once alfalfa starts to flower it usually indicates that it is time to cut your hay no matter what type of livestock you are feeding. Alfalfa beyond full bloom doesn't generally increase your tonnage of harvested material and as it matures it loses lower leaves rapidly decreasing its feed value.



1 Alfalfa late bud

Normally fields that are cut in early June, with rains and warm weather start to initiate new growth at the crown. What you should be planning for is that in 28-35 days you should be looking at taking your second cut. With haying in this area starting around the 8th to 10th of June you might expect second cut to start around July 22nd.

This will enable you to look at 3 cuts before the critical fall period and a 4th cut sometime in late September early October.

Should I let the alfalfa blossom at least once during the summer?

If your goal is to keep the alfalfa in rotation as long as possible, then the plants should have the opportunity to reach one-tenth blossom at least once during the growing season. This is the point when the plants reach a full level of carbohydrate reserves in the roots.

Many times if the alfalfa stand has been damaged during winter and it has been slow to respond to warm weather, it is a good idea to let the plants build their root carbohydrate levels and reach one-tenth blossom at least once during the growing season. The best cutting to do this would be either second or third rather than first cutting when we have the highest yield.



What Happens to Forage Quality If I Cut Later?

If you wait until your hay is more mature before cutting it, you will get higher yields. However, the material will be much lower quality.

Forage Quality of Alfalfa and Brome Hay Cut at Different Stages of Maturity			
Species	Stage of Maturity	% Crude Protein	% TDN
Alfalfa	Bud	21.5	63
	Early Bloom	18.4	59
	Mid-Bloom	15.9	55
	Full-Bloom	13.5	51
Brome	Early Boot	15.0	63
	Early Heading	10.5	58
	Early Milk	8.0	54
	Mature	6.0	48

Adapted from: NDSU. Minimizing Hay Losses and Waste. AS 1190. March 2000.