



MFGA Green Gold Report – June 7, 2021 – CENTRAL

Reports for Optimum Alfalfa Harvest Date cover Manitoba’s Central, Western, Eastern and Interlake areas.

SITE	RFV NIR	RFV PEAQ	Height	CP
Austin	147	197	20	21
Gladstone	173	197	20	22
Horndean	180	229	16	23
MacGregor	152	235	15	25
Manitou – Central	-	-	-	-
Manitou – South of Town	150	216	18	22
St. Leon	-	-	-	-
Treherne	165	204	20	24
CENTRAL AVERAGE	161	213	18	23

The heat from last week have increased the amount of height on the alfalfa. Insect damage is starting to show on leaves. Couple of the mature plants are starting to bloom. The RFV has dropped by 56 pts or 11.2 pts/day in 5 days. The Optimum Alfalfa Harvest Date have been or around June 7.

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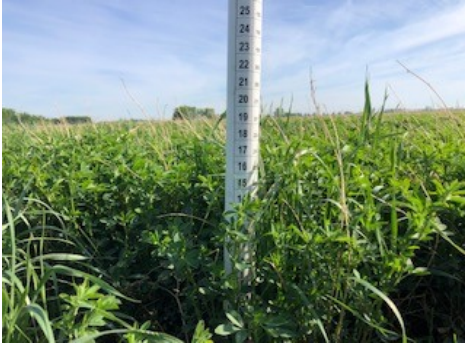


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Growth has increased slightly in the past 5 days. There was light damage on the edges of the leaves. Early buds have developed in certain areas. The crop is shorter with the lack of moisture and the RFV's are dropping.

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. 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.

A Steep Decline Nutritionists like to target hay in the 135-150 RFV towards Dairy cows in the 1st trimester and towards dairy calves. The RFV hay from 125-140 is fed to the dairy cows in the last 200 days and heifers 12-18 months of age. Hay at 115-130 makes excellent Beef cow and heifer 12-18 month old feed and any from 100-115 is good for the Dry cow and heifer between 18 and 24 month. Though first-cutting offers the opportunity for harvesting the highest digestible fiber of the growing season, forage quality declines at a faster rate for first-cut compared to subsequent cuttings. This presents the possibility of also harvesting large quantities of very poor, low digestible forage once flowering stages are reached. Hence, a timely first-cut is essential if high forage quality is the primary objective. To achieve a target forage quality, the spring harvest window is often narrower compared to subsequent growth cycles. This downhill ride in declining forage quality is accelerated by warm temperatures. It also becomes more dramatic if grass is present in the stand. First-cut timing sets the pace for the rest of the growing season. In other words, the first-cut harvest date may dictate how many future cuttings will be taken, the interval between those cuttings, and/or how late into the fall the last cutting will be harvested. First-cutting is the only one of the year when there is no number of days since the previous harvest. The decision options are wide open, but the consequences of the decision impact the rest of the season. Forage quality and yield considerations aside, an earlier initial harvest date often provides for a better utilization of available soil moisture for the second-cutting and expands harvest options for the remainder of the season. An early-cut decision may also be more detrimental to a stand that was stressed the previous year or during the winter.

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