

MFGA Green Gold Report – June 1, 2022 – WESTERN

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

SITE	RFV NIR	RFV PEAQ	Height	CP
Cartwright	231	244	15	32
Inglis	-	-	-	-
Laurier	231	268	12	30
McCreary	233	277	11	31
Miniota	-	-	-	-
Oak River	222	268	12	30
Ochre River	-	-	-	-
Souris	-	222	17	-
WESTERN AVERAGE	229	256	13	31

. Some sections of western Manitoba are developing into the early bud stage with the cooler weather.

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Early Bud Stage.

The MFGA Green Gold Program uses Predictive Equations for Alfalfa Quality (PEAQ) protocol for measuring alfalfa. The PEAQ considers the early bud stage to have 1 to 2 nodes and having visible buds. These buds may be hidden by leaves so it's important to check for the presence of buds by pinching the stem tip with your fingers. Presence of a small, hard "ball" means that a bud is present.

What is Relative Feed Value?

Over the years we often get the question about Relative Feed Value (RFV). RFV is an excellent measure of alfalfa quality because it reflects the digestibility - Acid Detergent Fiber (%ADF) - and the intake potential - Neutral Detergent Fiber (% NDF) - of alfalfa. The guideline is 20-30-40, based on forage testing 30 percent ADF and 40 percent NDF would be 150 RFV with 20 percent crude protein. Producers use it when buying alfalfa and on the alfalfa they grow to determine quality. Obviously the more mature the alfalfa at harvest the higher the percent of ADF and NDF (lower RFV). However, rain damaged hay will also be higher in ADF and NDF because the soluble sugars and carbohydrates can be leached out. Rain damaged hay is also less palatable. Notice that RFV does not include the protein percent of the alfalfa! Astute dairy producers who purchase alfalfa not only utilize the chemical analysis and RFV, they also buy small quantities and feed it to the cows voluntarily to see if they readily consume it before deciding to purchase larger quantities.

Although the MFGA Green Gold Program targets a RFV of 150 as the optimum stage to put up alfalfa, many producers want higher quality hay for their livestock or the hay market. Through our program you can follow the decline in RFV and time your harvest based on the quality.

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