



## MFGA Green Gold Report – May 29, 2023 – EASTERN REGION

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

SITE	RFV NIR	RFV PEAQ	Height	CP
Beausejour	-	-	-	-
Blumnort	187	216	18	23
Grunthal	157	184	24	23
Kleefeld	-	-	-	-
Landmark	-	187	22	-
Whitemouth	191	188	23	25
<b>EASTERN AVERAGE</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>

[ACCESS ALL MFGA GREEN GOLD REPORTS](#)

CONTACT: Terra Bergen, MFGA Green Gold Coordinator, e: <mailto:terra@mfga.net>, t: [@mbforages](https://twitter.com/mbforages)

**MFGA PLATINUM SPONSORS**



**MFGA GOLD SPONSORS**



**MFGA SILVER SPONSORS**



**MFGA BRONZE SPONSORS**





### **What we are seeing:**

- The RFV NIR decreased 44 points in 5 days.
- Plants have increased their height by 2-3 inches.
- The eastern section is in the late bud stages with some flowers to show.
- There has been no reported insect activity on the plants.

### **Maturity**

Maturity of the forage is one of the most important factors when considering forage quality. Plants continuously change in quality as they mature. As the plant reaches full maturity, crude protein and digestibility will decrease, reducing the overall quality of the forage. If forages reach full maturity, additional yield will be gained, but higher amounts of forage will have to be fed to meet the same quality. Knowing when to harvest will help producers improve forage quality and digestibility and therefore improve profitability. The ideal stage for harvesting would be the late boot stage for grasses and small grains, late bud for alfalfa, and late boot and soft dough for wheat.

### **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 is Optimum Alfalfa Harvest Date?**

Optimum Alfalfa Harvest Date is the estimated day that alfalfa will reach a Relative Feed Value (RFV) of 170. Experience has shown that approximately 20 points are lost during the haying process and the time taken to get the entire crop cut, cured, and baled. Silage shortens this process and therefore the quality can be higher. Grass/alfalfa mixes can and do reduce the RFV by 20-30 points depending on the % of the blend. Nutritionists like to target hay in the 135-150 RFV towards Dairy cows in the 1st trimester and towards dairy calves. The hay at 125-140 RFV is fed to the dairy cows in the last 200 days and heifers 12-18 months of age. Hay at 115-130 RFV makes excellent feed for beef cows and for heifers 12-18 months old while hay at 100-115 RFV is good for dry cows and heifers between 18 and 24 months.

### **Producer Support Always Welcome**

If you are finding the information in MFGA's Green Gold reports useful you can help MFGA continue to provide information like this by becoming an MFGA Supporter. Support opportunities start at just **\$50 per year** - **visit our [MFGA Supporters](#) page and join us!**