

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

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

SITE	RFV NIR	RFV PEAQ	Height	CP
Foxwarren	165	204	20	23
Laurier	185	192	21	26
McCreary	180	192	21	23
Miniota	-	-	-	-
Ninette	181	229	16	23
Oak Burn	-	-	-	-
Oak Lake	-	-	-	-
Oak River	-	-	-	-
Rosburn	220	287	9	26
Souris	171	187	22	22
Ste.Rose	-	-	-	-
<b>WESTERN AVERAGE</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>

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

- Some fields in the west are in the early bud stage, but due to excess moisture.
- Minimal moisture in certain fields is currently only in the late vegetative state.
- The RFV NIR has drastically decreased in the last 5 days due to the heat.
- There have been reports of insect activity on the top leaves of plants.

### **Watch for Alfalfa Weevil**

Although, there are no reports of alfalfa weevil damage to the crop as of May 26 forecast, is 25-40% emergence of the 1st larval stage of the weevil. Continued warm weather will only increase the emergence. The thing to watch for is that if your harvest is delayed due to a short crop you may find the weevil feeding on what little forage you have as they rapidly advance through the various larval stages.

### **Should 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.

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