

MFGA Green Gold Report – May 25, 2020 – WESTERN / CENTRAL

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

SITE	RFV NIR	RFV PEAQ	Height	CP
Elm Creek	276	287	11	29
Austin	208	244	15	31
Gladstone	251	252	14	34
PLP Southport				
PLP South	262	252	14	31
CENTRAL AVERAGE	249	259	14	31
Miniota N	262	268	12	31
Dauphin				
Hartney				
Fork River	336	287	10	34
Sifton				
Souris	250	252	14	28
Brookdale/MBFI				
WESTERN AVERAGE	283	269	12	31

Many areas received close to one inch of rain this past week. Combined with the warm weather we are seeing some good growth in the alfalfa.

[ACCESS ALL MFGA GREEN GOLD REPORTS](#)

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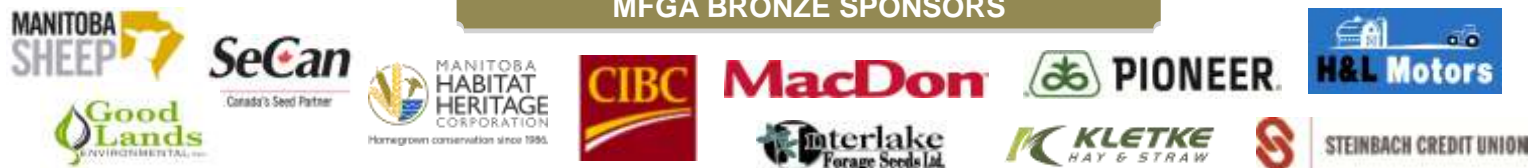
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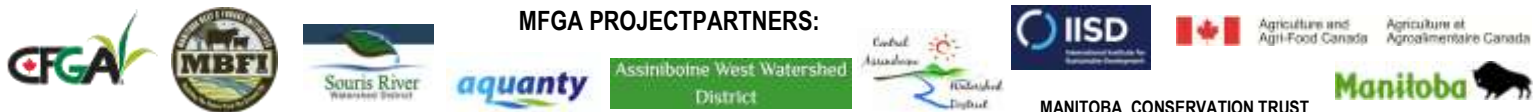
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What I am hearing

With the recent rains and warm temperatures throughout the West/Central area forages are starting to take-off and are growing rapidly.

What is Relative Feed Value?

Over the years we often get the question about RFV. Relative Feed Value is an excellent measure of alfalfa quality because it reflects the digestibility (% ADF) and the intake potential (% NDF) of alfalfa. The guideline was 20-30-40. That was based on forage testing 30% ADF (acid detergent fiber) and 40% NDF (neutral detergent fiber) would be 150 RFV with 20% 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 ADF and NDF (lower Relative Feed Value). 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 Relative Feed Value does not include the protein percent of the alfalfa!! Astute dairy producers who purchase alfalfa not only utilize the chemical analysis and relative feed value, they also buy small quantities and feed some of it free choice to see if the cows readily consume it before purchasing larger quantities.

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

Is 150 RFV Good Enough Today?

Relative Feed Values we developed some 30 years ago. Today we have herds producing 50% more milk per cow per year than 30 years ago. Relative Feed Value was changed to Relative Forage Quality or RFQ. The question in 2017 is: [Is 150 RFV high enough for high producing dairy cows today?](#) (Click on this link to learn more)