

## MFGA Green Gold Report – May 28, 2020 – EASTERN

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

SITE	RFV NIR	RFV PEAQ	Height	CP
St.Pierre E	276	277	11	27
Beausjour	240	252	14	33
Ste.Anne	250	260	13	32
New Bothwell	247	260	13	30
Stony Mountain	283	252	14	35
<b>EASTERN AVERAGE</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>31</b>

It looks like most of the Eastern area experienced frost Saturday AM. Since Monday we have seen some slow growth in the alfalfa with increased height of 1-2 inches. Relative Feed Values are holding as we are likely seeing samples with a higher leaf to stem ratio. This will change once we start to see warmer temperatures and the alfalfa starts to grow.

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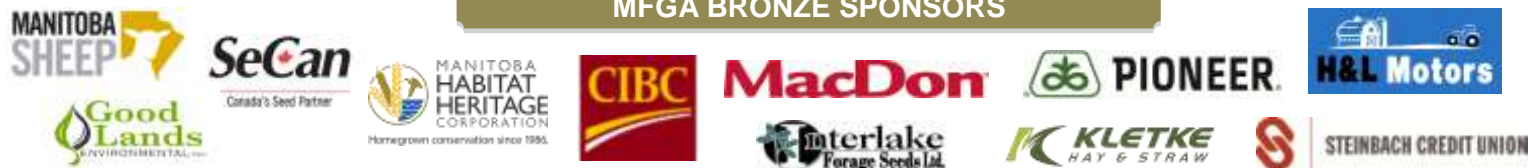
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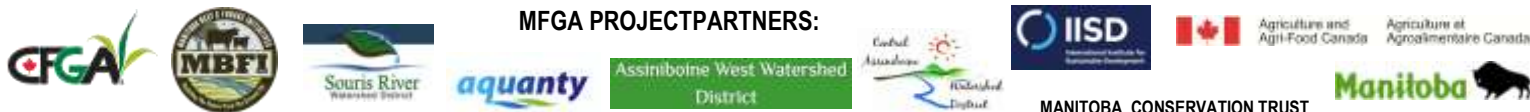
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## **Frost**

It looks like overnight temperatures recorded at the Mb Ag stations have the Eastern area as low as -2C, Central saw temperatures dip below 0C while the Western area looks to have stayed above the 0C mark.

If we were lucky enough to just go as low as -2C then alfalfa will likely look wilted this AM (Sheppard hook) but with the temperatures warming they should recover. If you are checking your fields let me know how they are faring.

## **What is PEAQ**

Over the years that I have been sending out the Green Gold reports I have had 2 columns that mention RFV (relative feed value). These are the numbers that are used to determine when to cut alfalfa to obtain the quality that you require for your livestock.

Most of you that feed or sell alfalfa understand NIR which is a laboratory estimate of RFV. What I have come to realize is that as we get more subscribers to the Green Gold reports not all of you understand PEAQ (predictive equation of alfalfa quality). Back in 1991 researchers were looking for a mathematical model to estimate fibre content of alfalfa. Among the models tested were simple equations (referred to as PEAQ) based on length of the tallest stem and stage of the most mature stem in the sample. These were considered the best compromise between accuracy and ease of use for routine estimation of alfalfa fiber composition.

Around that time Manitoba Agriculture tested out this equation and compared it to NIR results and determined that it provided a good guesstimate (my interpretation) of estimating RFV.

As with scissors-cut sampling, method used for Green Gold RFV, results are highly dependent on good sampling technique. This includes careful attention to finding and measuring the length of the tallest stem in the sample and correctly identifying what is the most advanced maturity stage present in the sample. The equation is calibrated only for pure alfalfa stands, so estimates are less reliable for weedy fields and alfalfa-grass fields. It does not work well in fields with poor stands, or in alfalfa suffering from stress. It does not provide reliable estimates of RFV in alfalfa that is very short (longest stem less than 16 inches) or very tall (longest stem more than 40 inches). Nevertheless, the 16- to 40-inch height limit represents a much broader range in growth than the normal harvest range for alfalfa.

If you would like to try out this method on your operation to see how it works click on [PEAQ](#) for information on crop stage and height tables.