

## 1<sup>st</sup> Cutting Forage Quality Update **Cornell Cooperative Extension** | Central New York Dairy, Livestock and Field Crops

This is our second week of monitoring 1<sup>st</sup> cutting for quality in 2019. If you are not familiar with our procedures we use alfalfa height to predict Neutral Detergent Fiber (NDF) for alfalfa, alfalfa/grass mixed and grass stands. Alfalfa height has proven to be a reliable indicator of NDF values in the field.

Here are numbers that are helpful when using alfalfa and grass height as an indicator of NDF content. In general:

Begin cutting 100% grass stands should be cut when nearby alfalfa is 14 inches tall to achieve the desired 50% NDF.

Begin cutting 50/50 mixed alfalfa and grass stands when nearby alfalfa is 22 inches tall for the desired 44% NDF.

Begin cutting 100% alfalfa stands when alfalfa is 28 inches tall for the desired 40% NDF.

The desired NDF for all grass fields is 50%, 50/50 mixed alfalfa and grass fields is 44%, and pure alfalfa stands is 40%. Predicted days to cut are based on daily NDF increases for grasses of 1% point, 50/50 mixed stands of .8% points and alfalfa of .5% point. Typically, NDF increases about 0.8 to 1.2/day for grasses expecting the lower end of that range in cooler weather and the higher end in warm. Alfalfa NDF increases about 0.4 to 0.7/day again figuring the lower end of that range with cool temperatures and the higher in warm. Predictions are adjusted for the coming week's weather and right now we are assuming normal growth.

In the attached tables locations around the region are listed where we have measured alfalfa height. You can use the location and elevation as a guide to conditions that may be similar to your own. Always check your fields to verify your heights and conditions!

**On average alfalfa height increased 5 inches over the last week going from 7 to 12 inches. Our measurements would indicate that all grass fields could be cut at 35% of the locations today and that within the week with warm temperatures all 100% grass fields would be ready to be cut. There is a dose of reality here in that at most locations weather has been wet enough that mowing isn't about to begin and in some instances the grasses don't seem to be keeping up with the alfalfa so use this summary as a guide to check your fields. Usually when alfalfa is 14-15 inches tall orchardgrass will be 20-22 inches in height and ready to be cut. There were some exceptions today so monitor your fields.**

**If weather becomes more favorable remember to prioritize harvesting those fields left that are that still dairy quality. This may be a year of cutting first and planting corn second, having separate crews working on both and or having some custom work done.**

**Our predictions would indicate there are four locations where 50/50 mixed stands could be ready by or on our next cutting date, May 14.**

Summary of Alfalfa Height and Prediction of % NDF – May 7, 2019

County	Town	Road Name	Elevation	Alfalfa Height Inches	Predicted Grass % NDF	Predicted 50/50 Mix % NDF	Predicted Alfalfa % NDF	Predicted Date to Cut Grass	Predicted Date to Cut Mix	Predicted Date to Cut Alfalfa
Chenango	Afton	State Route 41	1060	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/26/19
Chenango	Bainbridge	East Keech Road	1000	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/8/19	5/17/19	5/27/19
Chenango	Bainbridge	Ives Settlement Road	1650	7	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Chenango	Greene	County Road 32	950	16	50.8	38.0	29.7	5/6/19	5/14/19	5/23/19
Chenango	New Berlin	State Route 8	1060	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/26/19
Chenango	Sherburne	County Road 24	1350	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Chenango	Sherburne	State Route 80	1190	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/9/19	5/18/19	5/29/19
Chenango	Smyrna	County Road 20	1190	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/8/19	5/17/19	5/27/19
Fulton	Ephratah	County Road 140	630	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/11/19	5/21/19	6/1/19
Fulton	Johnstown	State Route 67	715	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Columbia	McKoons Road	1493	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Danube	State Route 5S	437	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/8/19	5/17/19	5/27/19
Herkimer	Danube	Travis Road	1484	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Fairfield	Hardscrabble Road	740	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/8/19	5/17/19	5/27/19
Herkimer	German Flatts	Kidney Road	405	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/9/19	5/18/19	5/29/19
Herkimer	German Flatts	State Route 5S	389	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/9/19	5/18/19	5/29/19
Herkimer	Stark	Jordanville Road	1420	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Warren	Jordanville Road	1582	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/11/19	5/21/19	6/1/19
Herkimer	Winfield	Babcock Hill Rd	1332	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Herkimer	Winfield	State Route 51	1195	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/10/19	5/19/19	5/30/19
Herkimer	Winfield	Walts Road	1426	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/10/19	5/19/19	5/30/19
Madison	Fenner	Nelson Road	1453	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/11/19	5/21/19	6/1/19
Madison	Georgetown	Rt 26	1391	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/26/19

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Madison	Lebanon	Geer Road	1508	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/10/19	5/19/19	5/30/19
Madison	Lincoln	Creek Road	666	19	53.4	40.6	31.8	5/3/19	5/11/19	5/19/19
Madison	Oneida	Middle Road	500	18	52.6	39.7	31.1	5/4/19	5/12/19	5/20/19
Madison	Smithfield	Swamp Road	1286	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/10/19	5/19/19	5/30/19
Madison	Stockbridge	Stockbridge Falls Road	1099	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/26/19
Montgomery	Amsterdam	Truax Road	650	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/11/19	5/21/19	6/1/19
Montgomery	Canajoharie	Maring Road	869	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/9/19	5/18/19	5/29/19
Montgomery	Florida	Cemetery Street	550	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/8/19	5/17/19	5/27/19
Montgomery	Florida	Mohr Road	820	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/11/19	5/21/19	6/1/19
Montgomery	Glen	Duffel Road	276	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/11/19	5/21/19	6/1/19
Montgomery	Glen	Van Epps Road	522	14	48.7	35.8	28.0	5/8/19	5/17/19	5/27/19
Montgomery	Minden	Airport Road	666	8	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Minden	River Road	420	15	49.5	36.7	28.7	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/25/19
Montgomery	Minden	State Route 80	545	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Montgomery	Mohawk	Martin Road	440	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/10/19	5/19/19	5/30/19
Montgomery	Mohawk	Stoners Trail Road	531	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/9/19	5/18/19	5/29/19
Montgomery	Palatine	Dygart Road	600	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/10/19	5/19/19	5/30/19
Montgomery	St. Johnsville	Crum Creek Road	663	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/11/19	5/21/19	6/1/19
Otsego	Cherry Valley	Dugway Road	796	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/26/19
Otsego	Cherry Valley	State Route 166	1295	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/8/19	5/17/19	5/27/19
Otsego	Garratsville	State Route 51	1304	9	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early	Too Early
Otsego	Laurens	State Route 205	1121	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/11/19	5/21/19	6/1/19
Otsego	Middlefield	County Road 33	1241	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/7/19	5/15/19	5/25/19

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Otsego	Middlefield	State Route 166	1256	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/26/19
Otsego	Milford	State Route 28	1208	16	50.8	38.0	29.7	5/6/19	5/14/19	5/23/19
Otsego	Morris	County Road 10	1149	11	46.5	33.7	26.2	5/10/19	5/19/19	5/30/19
Otsego	Pittsfield	County Road 18	1137	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/26/19
Otsego	Richfield	Dugan Road	1559	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/11/19	5/21/19	6/1/19
Otsego	Schenevus	Muehl Road	1319	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/26/19
Otsego	Unadilla	State Route 41	1058	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/7/19	5/15/19	5/25/19
Saratoga	Charlton	Jockey Street	620	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/9/19	5/18/19	5/29/19
Saratoga	Galway	Crane Road	840	10	45.6	32.8	25.5	5/11/19	5/21/19	6/1/19
Saratoga	Northumberland	Callahan Road	280	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/26/19
Saratoga	Northumberland	Colebrook Road	250	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/7/19	5/15/19	5/25/19
Saratoga	Saratoga	County Road 68	440	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/9/19	5/18/19	5/29/19
Saratoga	Saratoga	County Road 71	440	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/7/19	5/15/19	5/25/19
Saratoga	Stillwater	State Route 423	480	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/7/19	5/16/19	5/26/19
Schoharie	Cobleskill	Lake Road	1297	12	47.4	34.5	26.9	5/9/19	5/18/19	5/29/19
Schoharie	Cobleskill	Warnerville Cutoff	944	15	50.0	37.1	29.0	5/7/19	5/15/19	5/25/19
Schoharie	Fulton	State Route 30	702	18	52.6	39.7	31.1	5/4/19	5/12/19	5/20/19
Schoharie	Middleburgh	Amelia Lane	626	19	53.4	40.6	31.8	5/3/19	5/11/19	5/19/19
Schoharie	Wright	Abrams Road	1149	13	48.2	35.4	27.6	5/8/19	5/17/19	5/27/19

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