

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

This is our fifth and final week of monitoring 1st 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 the alfalfa height increase this week was 5 inches with an average location height of 26 inches. Normal to above average Growing Degree Days (GDDs) over the past week kept alfalfa maturing quickly.

As of this date, sixteen (25%) of the sixty-three locations have been cut. Predictions indicate that, with the exception of two locations, all pure alfalfa fields should be cut in the next week. As was indicated in our last summary note how high the %NDF is at some locations for pure or mostly grass stands. For making dairy quality feed 55% NDF should be given consideration as a cutoff point for fields that are all grass. With two exceptions the grass is below dairy quality now at all locations.

We hope that these summaries have continued to provide guidance for when to cut even if the weather hasn't been cooperating much this year.

Summary of Alfalfa Height and Prediction of % NDF – May 28, 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	26	59.5	46.6	36.7	5/18/19	5/24/19	5/30/19
Chenango	Bainbridge	East Keech Road	1000	Cut						
Chenango	Bainbridge	Ives Settlement Road	1650	21	55.1	42.3	33.2	5/22/19	5/30/19	6/6/19
Chenango	Greene	County Road 32	950	32	64.6	51.8	40.9	5/13/19	5/18/19	5/22/19
Chenango	New Berlin	State Route 8	1060	Cut						
Chenango	Sherburne	County Road 24	1350	19	53.4	40.6	31.8	5/24/19	6/1/19	6/9/19
Chenango	Sherburne	State Route 80	1190	Cut						
Chenango	Smyrna	County Road 20	1190	31	63.8	50.9	40.2	5/14/19	5/19/19	5/23/19
Fulton	Ephratah	County Road 140	633	23	56.9	44.0	34.6	5/21/19	5/27/19	6/3/19
Fulton	Johnstown	State Route 67	765	24	57.7	44.9	35.3	5/20/19	5/26/19	6/2/19
Herkimer	Columbia	McKoons Road	1493	23	56.9	44.0	34.6	5/21/19	5/27/19	6/3/19
Herkimer	Danube	State Route 5S	437	35	67.2	54.4	43.0	5/10/19	5/15/19	5/18/19
Herkimer	Danube	Travis Road	1484	21	55.1	42.3	33.2	5/22/19	5/30/19	6/6/19
Herkimer	Fairfield	Hardscrabble Road	740	25	58.6	45.8	36.0	5/19/19	5/25/19	6/1/19
Herkimer	German Flatts	Kidney Road	405	Cut						
Herkimer	German Flatts	State Route 5S	389	26	59.5	46.6	36.7	5/18/19	5/24/19	5/30/19
Herkimer	Stark	Jordanville Road	1420	25	58.6	45.8	36.0	5/19/19	5/25/19	6/1/19
Herkimer	Warren	Jordanville Road	1582	26	59.5	46.6	36.7	5/18/19	5/24/19	5/30/19
Herkimer	Winfield	Babcock Hill Road	1332	25	58.6	45.8	36.0	5/19/19	5/25/19	6/1/19
Herkimer	Winfield	State Route 51	1195	Cut						
Herkimer	Winfield	Walts Road	1426	25	58.6	45.8	36.0	5/19/19	5/25/19	6/1/19
Madison	Fenner	Nelson Road	1453	23	56.9	44.0	34.6	5/14/19	5/20/19	5/27/19
Madison	Georgetown	State Route 26	1391	31	63.3	50.5	39.9	5/7/19	5/12/19	5/17/19

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Madison	Lebanon	Geer Road	1508	19	53.4	40.6	31.8	5/17/19	5/25/19	6/2/19
Madison	Lincoln	Creek Road	666	32	64.6	51.8	40.9	5/6/19	5/11/19	5/15/19
Madison	Oneida	Middle Road	500	32	64.6	51.8	40.9	5/6/19	5/11/19	5/15/19
Madison	Smithfield	Swamp Road	1286	23	56.9	44.0	34.6	5/14/19	5/20/19	5/27/19
Madison	Stockbridge	Stockbridge Falls Road	1099	Cut						
Montgomery	Amsterdam	Truax Road	650	25	58.6	45.8	36.0	5/19/19	5/25/19	6/1/19
Montgomery	Canajoharie	Maring Road	869	24	57.7	44.9	35.3	5/20/19	5/26/19	6/2/19
Montgomery	Florida	Cemetery Street	550	27	60.3	47.5	37.4	5/17/19	5/23/19	5/29/19
Montgomery	Florida	Mohr Road	820	Cut						
Montgomery	Glen	State Route 55	290	Cut						
Montgomery	Minden	Airport Road	653	14	49.1	36.3	28.3	5/28/19	6/6/19	6/16/19
Montgomery	Minden	River Road	417	29	62.1	49.2	38.8	5/15/19	5/21/19	5/26/19
Montgomery	Minden	State Route 80	610	23	56.9	44.0	34.6	5/21/19	5/27/19	6/3/19
Montgomery	Mohawk	Stoners Trail Road	570	23	56.9	44.0	34.6	5/21/19	5/27/19	6/3/19
Montgomery	Mohawk	Van Epps Road	470	23	56.9	44.0	34.6	5/21/19	5/27/19	6/3/19
Montgomery	Palatine	Dygert Road	584	Cut						
Otsego	Cherry Valley	Dugway Road	796	29	62.1	49.2	38.8	5/15/19	5/21/19	5/26/19
Otsego	Cherry Valley	State Route 166	1295	29	62.1	49.2	38.8	5/15/19	5/21/19	5/26/19
Otsego	Garratsville	County Road 51	1304	25	58.6	45.8	36.0	5/19/19	5/25/19	6/1/19
Otsego	Laurens	State Route 205	1121	Cut						
Otsego	Middlefield	County Road 33	1241	27	60.3	47.5	37.4	5/17/19	5/23/19	5/29/19
Otsego	Middlefield	State Route 166	1256	28	61.2	48.3	38.1	5/16/19	5/22/19	5/27/19
Otsego	Milford	State Route 28	1208	34	66.4	53.5	42.3	5/11/19	5/16/19	5/19/19

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Otsego	Morris	County Road 10	1149	24	57.7	44.9	35.3	5/20/19	5/26/19	6/2/19
Otsego	Pittsfield	County Road 18	1137	Cut						
Otsego	Richfield	Dugan Road	1559	24	57.7	44.9	35.3	5/20/19	5/26/19	6/2/19
Otsego	Schenevus	Muehl Road	1319	27	60.3	47.5	37.4	5/17/19	5/23/19	5/29/19
Otsego	Unadilla	State Route 41	1058	Cut						
Saratoga	Charlton	Jockey Street	620	28	61.2	48.3	38.1	5/16/19	5/22/19	5/27/19
Saratoga	Galway	Crane Road	840	25	58.6	45.8	36.0	5/19/19	5/25/19	6/1/19
Saratoga	Northumberland	Callahan Road	280	30	62.9	50.1	39.5	5/15/19	5/20/19	5/25/19
Saratoga	Northumberland	Colebrook Road	250	Cut						
Saratoga	Saratoga	County Road 68	440	27	60.3	47.5	37.4	5/17/19	5/23/19	5/29/19
Saratoga	Saratoga	County Road 71	440	29	62.1	49.2	38.8	5/15/19	5/21/19	5/26/19
Saratoga	Stillwater	State Route 423	480	Cut						
Schoharie	Cobleskill	Lake Road	1297	Cut						
Schoharie	Cobleskill	Warnerville Cutoff	944	31	63.8	50.9	40.2	5/14/19	5/19/19	5/23/19
Schoharie	Fulton	State Route 30	702	33	65.5	52.7	41.6	5/12/19	5/17/19	5/20/19
Schoharie	Middleburgh	Amelia Lane	626	Cut						
Schoharie	Wright	Abrams Road	1149	27	60.3	47.5	37.4	5/17/19	5/23/19	5/29/19

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