

2017 Alfalfa Quality Watch



Quality Information from 5/18/17

It has been a long time since we have seen alfalfa winter kill and injury this severe. Losses are especially bad on heavy soil types, but also seem on soils with better drainage throughout Eastern WI. Uneven growth is very evident in fields with alfalfa winter injury. That makes monitoring for quality a bit more challenging. None-the-less PEAQ measurements and scissor cutting values will provide good guidance for harvesting high quality forage.

Dairy producers and nutritionists are frequently targeting RFQs greater than 150. Develop your feeding strategy with your nutritionist to ensure rations have the correct proportions of protein, energy and fiber.

PEAQ - RFVs are about 15 - 20 RFV points higher than forage coming out of storage due to respiration and dry matter (leaf) losses. Keep in mind the quality vs. yield trade-off when harvesting alfalfa.

You can monitor the quality of individual alfalfa fields on your farm with a yardstick and the PEAQ Chart.

Please find the PEAQ chart form the link below.

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/forage/files/2014/01/PEAQTable.pdf>

On average we lose approximately 3-5 RFV points per day depending on temperatures.

Scissor cutting samples will be taken on Monday, May 22nd.

Thanks to our sponsors: Adell Coop, Kettle Lakes Coop and the Sheboygan County Forage Council Board: Nathan Casper, Matt Gartman, Brad Laack, Cody Mullikin, Matthew Ramel, Jory Stapel and Tom Wilterdink.

Take time to be safe.

Location	Sample Date	PEAQ RFV	Plant Ht (inches)	Growth Stage
Batavia	5/18/17	195	23	Vegetative
Glenbeulah	5/18/17	211	20	Vegetative
Cedar Grove	5/18/17	230 - 195	17 - 23	Vegetative
Hingham - East	5/18/17	200	22	Vegetative
Hingham - West	5/18/17	195	23	Vegetative
Town of Wilson	5/18/17	230	17	Vegetative
Town of Mosel	5/18/17	237	16	Vegetative
