

## Green Gold Report – May 30, 2016 – CENTRAL

Hay Day was estimated for today but cool, wet conditions have slowed the drop in RFV.

SITE	RFV NIR	RFV PEAQ	Height	CP
Newton	167	188	23	24
Plum Coulee	211	190	15	27
Mather	229	197	20	30
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>27</b>

From the last report we have seen the alfalfa in the area added between 3-4 inches. The crop hasn't advanced that far with most in the early and late bud stage. RFV from Mather site is up considerably from the 26<sup>th</sup> report which is unusual. Removing this from the equation brings the RFV average at 189 which is a drop of 3 pts/day. Looking at the forecast this week it looks like we will continue with rain and cooler temperatures which may continue in slowing the drop in RFV

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## **Temperature**

With the rain, the cool temperatures this week may be a bonus. Temperature is the driving force behind most physiological processes that occur in a plant. These include photosynthesis, respiration, translocation of nutrients, carbon partitioning and cell wall formation. It stands to reason that changing temperature will have a dramatic impact on what goes on inside the plant. We see these effects each and every year when comparing alfalfa regrowth and forage quality in summer to that of regrowth and quality in the fall. Alfalfa can actually increase in quality over time in the fall as a result of cooler growing temperatures.



1 Late veg stage V Wiebe

## **Rain on Alfalfa**

With haying not that far away the 5mm rain recently has some thinking about waiting. There are many studies on this and they have determined that a one inch rain 24 hours after being cut can cause losses of up to 22% in dry matter. Whereas a 1.6 inch rain over several days caused a loss of 44%.

The loss is due to leaching of nutrients like the carbohydrates and plant respiration which occurs until the plant reaches 30-40% moisture and each time it gets rained on. It is interesting that the studies show that hay that is almost dry enough to be baled will lose more dry matter when rained on than hay that has just been cut.

Crude protein doesn't seem to be affected by rain but digestibility is lower due to the leaching of the carbohydrates and the ADF and NDF will increase.

Grass hay often will not experience the same degree of loss as alfalfa hay. The majority of yield loss in alfalfa hay is due to leaf loss. Grass leaves are not as easily lost. For more information on this click on [RAIN](#)

## **Aphids**

Found a few of these in the field and got a report from the Western area about them. These are likely pea aphids. It is quite common to have pea aphids in alfalfa, and low levels are probably of more benefit than harm by attracting natural enemies into the alfalfa.

Economic thresholds for aphids are quite high and really only applicable when the crop is also drought stressed.

