

## Green Gold Report – June 5, 2017 – EASTERN

Hay Day was June 4<sup>th</sup>. Most fields are still above 150 RFV.

SITE	RFV NIR	RFV PEAQ	Height	CP
Grunthal	151	169	26	24
Ile de Chene	158	192	21	22
Landmark	168	178	24	22
New Bothwell	167	192	21	23
Steinbach	139	169	26	19
Stonewall	184	173	25	26
<b>EASTERN AVERAGE</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>

All fields in the Eastern area have moved into the late bud stage. Warm weather over the weekend has added about 3 inches to most of the fields and the RFV has dropped 30 pts or 7 pts/day.

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For more info: John McGregor, MFGA Green Gold Coordinator

e: [john@mfga.net](mailto:john@mfga.net), w: [www.mfga.net](http://www.mfga.net) or follow us on [Twitter!](#)



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## What I am Seeing

With the record high temperatures over the weekend we saw the alfalfa jump a little quicker than expected. RFVs which were dropping at 5 pts/day went to 7 pts, the alfalfa that was in the late veg and early flower stage on Thursday moved into the late bud stage.

The picture to the left is of an alfalfa plant that is in the late bud but as you can see with a little more heat it will be flowering.

By Monday morning many producers were cutting their hay or planned on cutting late that day or Tuesday



## **Should I let the alfalfa blossom at least once during the summer?**

If your goal is to keep the alfalfa in rotation as long as possible, then the plants should have the opportunity to reach one-tenth blossom at least once during the growing season. This is the point when the plants reach a full level of carbohydrate reserves in the roots.

Many times if the alfalfa stand has been damaged during winter and it has been slow to respond to warm weather, it is a good idea to let the plants build their root carbohydrate levels and reach one-tenth blossom at least once during the growing season. The best cutting to do this would be either second or third rather than first cutting when we have the highest yield.

## Hay in a Day

The drying rate of hay crops is influenced the most by sunlight reaching the forages, which in turn increases the swath temperature and reduces humidity. A full width swath increases the drying surface of the swath by 2.8 times. In many trials, it has been shown that moisture reductions from 85% to 60% can be reached in as little as 5 to 7 hours, hence the term “Haylage in a Day”. The bottom line is that the forage produced with minimal respiration results in higher nutrient content of the forage.



**1 note the wide swath that this producer from Steinbach using**

## Rained-on Hay.

Rained-on hay causes many problems. It lowers the hay's feed value and, if baled or stacked too wet, can cause mold or heat damage. Sometimes a bigger problem, though, is the long-term damage to re-growing plants. Driving over the field repeatedly, trying to turn hay to hasten drying will injure regrowth and can cause soil compaction, especially if the ground is wet and soft. But, not driving on the field may result in an even bigger problem with the windrows. If they lay there too long, the plants underneath will be smothered. This not only lowers yield, it creates a terrible weed problem as grasses and broadleaves infest the killed strips. These weeds will contaminate all future cuttings. In addition, if rained-on hay windrows are left in the field until next cutting, they frequently will plug the mower, slow harvest, and provide lesser quality hay.

The best option is to remove wet hay any way you can. Bale it, chop it, and even blow it back on the ground as mulch. You may need to damage plants by driving on them to turn hay to speed drying and get sunlight to plants underneath. This may contribute to a short-term loss of young plants, but will prevent wet windrows from ruining the rest of your haying year.

While there's no immediate payback to managing severely rained-on hay, ignoring it will be even more costly in the long run.