

Green Gold Report – June 5, 2017 – INTERLAKE

Here is your June 5th report from the Interlake area.

SITE	RFV NIR	RFV PEAQ	Height	CP
Arborg	221	210	19	26
Eriksdale	196	204	20	24
Oakpoint	196	243	14	23
INTERLAKE AVERAGE	204	219	18	24

RFV in the Interlake had been dropping fairly quickly at the end of May but as you can see in the results from June 5th the decline in RFVs has slowed and in one field increased. This make estimating Hay Day difficult.

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What I am hearing

With the rapid growth in the alfalfa since May 29th there is the possibility that because the alfalfa was very slow to start in the spring that what we are seeing with the warm weather of late is a growth sprout that is putting out more leaves than stem and this is giving us a higher RFV. Fields are reported in the early bud stage.

Looking at the other reports across the province alfalfa that was 18-20 inches was in the 200 RFV range. If conditions go to normal you may expect RFVs to start dropping at 5-7 pts/day

Early Bud Stage

Below is a shot of alfalfa in the early bud stage. For the Green Gold program and PEAQ early bud is considered as 1 to 2 nodes having visible buds. Buds may be hidden by leaves. To check for presence of buds pinch stem tip with fingers. Presence of a small, hard "ball" means that a bud is present.



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.