



September Hay Situation and Price Update

By John McGregor, MFGA Extension Support

Frequent rains throughout most of the growing season this year has made harvesting hay a real challenge. Although some areas of the province are reporting the completion of 2nd and/or 3rd cut alfalfa, other areas are struggling to complete their first and/or second cut. With the adequate moisture and good growing conditions some producers are waiting to take their final cut of alfalfa until after the [Critical Harvest Period](#) (CHP). I surveyed the Manitoba Agriculture forage staff and some of the forage producers and industry personnel to get their impression of hay prices and the hay situation as of the beginning of September.

Hay Situation

The hay situation varies across the province with the **Southwest** reporting that the second cut of hay is progressing and that these yields look to be average. Producers in this area report that they will be looking at taking a final cut mid month. Hay supplies are reported as adequate but individuals may need to source good quality hay or supplement for those critical stages of gestation and calving. **Northwest** reports majority of first cut complete. Yields are average to above average with quality variable depending on amount of rain received in swath and how mature the forage was when cut. Second cut harvest is ongoing with good yields being reported. There are areas in the NW where wet field conditions are delaying first cut as well as the native hay harvest. Feed quality will be an issue in crops that have been rained on multiple times in the swath. The **Central** area reports good growth of forages continues. Second cut yields and quality are surpassing first cut. High humidity is an issue for drying of swaths. Many producers are wrapping bales. Greenfeed and cereals are being cut for silage with good results. First cut wild hay continues. There was lots of volume on the first cut alfalfa/grass hay crop but quality is down due to weathering. 2nd cut quality is better and yields are decent. The **Eastern** area reports that yields are average to above with some quality issues with late cut hay. Alfalfa yields are average to above. Second cut is complete and some producers have completed 3rd cut and may take a final cut late September. Producers report some difficulty putting up dry hay. The area is reporting a surplus of forage. The **Interlake** area reports that second and third growth of alfalfa is very good but that haying progress is slowed due to rain showers, high humidity and soft saturated soils. Some native and grass hay is too wet for travel. Greenfeed silage has started with yields being better than expected.

Hay Prices

Presently there is limited information on hay prices throughout the province.

Alfalfa:	5-7 cents/lb
	Dairy Quality 10 cents/lb
Alfalfa/grass:	good quality 5-7cents/lb
	Beef quality 2.5-4 cents/lb
Beef hay (grass):	2.5-5 cents/lb
Horse hay:	5-7 cents/lb
Straw:	1-2 cents/lb

Because of the variation in quality of hay this year, we are seeing quite a spread in prices at this point. Some of the higher prices reflect higher quality forage; there are some indications that there may be some demand for higher quality forages because supplies of lower quality forages and straw are adequate. The level of demand may be determined once final cut is complete and producers assess forage needs.

[Kijiji Manitoba](#) has more listings for hay for sale this month as does the [Manitoba Hay Listing](#) site

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If you are interested in assisting the Manitoba Forage and Grassland Association in providing information for our monthly Hay Situation and Price Update please contact John McGregor at john@mfga.net