



December Hay Situation and Price Update

By John McGregor, MFGA Extension Support

As we move into December the hay situation across the province continues to be tight. The Manitoba Ag and Resource Development [Crop Report Nov 12th](#) summarized the provinces forage situation as:

Southwest - Hot, dry weather in late June thru early September with season precipitation below normal to normal, produced lower than average forage yields. In September and October the rains put the region well above average precipitation (~130% of average). The wet fall weather halted all field operations with many fields of greenfeed and hay left lying and spoiling in swaths.

Northwest - Areas to the East were able to harvest 20 to 30 per cent second cut. Winter hay stocks are at 30 per cent adequate; greenfeed and feed grain at 50 per cent adequate and straw 40 per cent adequate. Corn silage harvest was continuing with much of it being too dry now with yields of 13-20 t/ac. Areas to the West report winter feed supplies, adequate for straw and feed grains. Greenfeed yields were average; producers that rely on alfalfa/grass hay based rations will need to source additional feed due to lower first cut hay yields and a minimal second cut taken. Corn silage harvest in this area was completed in October with average yields being reported.

Central - Hay supplies are tight, but quality good for what was harvested during the summer. Livestock producers are having trouble being able to bale additional feed. Some wheat fields are being harvested as cattle feed/straw. Greenfeed is showing signs of nitrates because of either dry growing conditions or frost stress.

Eastern - Forage yields were 50 to 60 per cent of normal with some areas reporting as low as 25 per cent of normal. Alfalfa hay yields were 60 to 75 per cent of normal and second cut in areas that got rain yields of 80 to 90 per cent of normal with other areas at 50 to 60 per cent of normal. Towards the end of October and early November better weather allowed for 75 per cent completion of the corn silage harvest with a significant amount of corn silage that is still in standing water.

Interlake - Hay yields are significantly lower than average. Poorer stands of oats, wheat and barley were taken for greenfeed. Corn silage harvest was delayed, and some poor grain cornfields were converted to silage. Other silage fields ended up being harvested as grain on frozen ground due to crop drydown and inaccessible fields. Considerable

acres of native hay were cut and baled due to tame hay shortages. There will be more feeding of alternative feeds this winter than in recent years, due to feed shortages.

Note: Since the November report the **SW** reports that there is still a lot of standing corn that has the possibility of being grazed and or harvested. Some hay and greenfeed has lain in swaths since the rains in September. Because it is too wet for hay and too dry for silage we will likely see a lot of spoilage over the winter. In the **Interlake** most of the corn silage has been harvested with moisture over 50 per cent allowed for it to be silage or in some cases baled. Hay is essentially unavailable, and producers are resorting to December baled corn stover as a last resort. Producers who baled cereal windrows which were sprouted and laid for weeks are now finding many of those bales are heating and molding. Those who wrapped the soaked cereal bales are finding rock solid bales which are hard to tear apart. In the **Eastern** area the corn silage harvest was about 75 per cent complete, with the crop too dry to silage dairy farmers have resorted to taking cobbage. Its moisture content is higher and is helping offset the grain requirements of the ration. Producers are still trying to rake frozen swaths of hay cut before the rains and get them baled. Very little hay was cut after the rains as rutting of hay fields is the major concern. Grain corn coming off this week and corn stover is being baled off those fields.

Hay Prices

There continues to be some resistance to the higher prices for forages throughout the province even for dairy quality forage. Sellers are thinking that they will need to drop prices or look at moving hay into the US market. Others are reporting slight decreases in prices likely due to producers having acquired enough supplies to see them into the early winter feeding period.

Alfalfa:	10-12 cents/lb
	Dairy Quality 12-17 cents/lb (17 is export market)
Alfalfa/grass:	good quality 7-10 cents/lb
	Beef quality 6-10 cents/lb
Beef hay (grass):	3-8 cents/lb
Native hay:	4-6 cents/lb
Horse hay:	10-15 cents/lb (bale size affects price)
Greenfeed:	6-8 cents/lb
Straw:	3-6 cents/lb
Haylage:	6 cents/lb wet 8.5 cents/lb DM

Producers wanting to make use of the [Manitoba Hay Listing](#) service should call Manitoba Agriculture toll-free at 1-84-GROW-MB-AG (1-844-769-6224) and the department will call them back within 30 minutes to capture information.

For more information on Hay Listing Services and Related Information visit the MFGA [Hay Relief](#) website.

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

[Kijiji Manitoba](#) has a number of hay for sale listings this month. The [Manitoba Hay Listing](#) site has a number of listing for both hay and straw but limited information on price.

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