



## Hay Situation and Price Update October

*By John McGregor, MFGA Extension Support*

I surveyed the MAFRD 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 end of October. A point of interest is that the 2<sup>nd</sup> cut in Alberta may be better than expected, putting pressure on hay prices here in MB. There also seem to be good hay supplies in Wisconsin which is a typical hay market for MB.

The hay situation varies throughout the province with the **Southwest** having had hot dry weather early in the year but with most areas receiving timely rains starting in July, hay fields and pastures benefited. Feed supplies are now considered adequate to good in most areas. Some areas report that feed quality is less than average and supplementation to improve feed quality will be required. Certain producers were able to take a late 3<sup>rd</sup> cut of alfalfa and late cut hay is of very good quality. Greenfeed and silage crops have average to above average yield and quality; in some cases making up the difference for poor hay crops. Straw supplies are adequate.

The **Northwest** reported that hay supplies are adequate. Second cut hay and meadows in native hay have been taken in some areas of the North Parkland due to lack of frost. Southern areas of the Northwest are reporting a good quality 3<sup>rd</sup> cut of alfalfa. Corn silage was delayed in some areas possibly affecting fermentation and sacrificing quality. With the warmer weather many producers still have cattle on pastures and/or grazing annual crop re-growth, allowing for extended grazing, saving hay supplies. Some producers are looking at feeding grain and straw to supplement forage supplies.

**Central** Hay fields are in fair to good condition. Alfalfa hay saw average yields of 1.25, 0.6 and 0.4 tonnes/acre for the 3 cuts of alfalfa. Brome/alfalfa hay averaged 1.5 and 0.6 t/ac for the 2 cuts of grass/alfalfa. Tame hay is averaging 1.25 t/ac. Wild hay had an average first cut yield of 0.8 - 1.0 t/ac. Greenfeed averaged 2 t/ac. There is an adequate to good supply of almost all classes of feed, including straw, for most of the region. Some shortages will be seen, including around Lake Manitoba due to continuing wet conditions. Quality of feed is good, with some issues due to maturity and rain during harvest periods. Some cattle were moved to harvested cropland; others will be moved to second or third cut hay fields for fall grazing. Late fall corn grazing should start mid to late November, to be supplemented with hay. Pastures in the south and west areas of the region are rated as fair to poor due to dry conditions; northwest area pastures are rated as good.

The **Eastern** area reports Alfalfa hay saw average yields of 2 t/ac for first cut, 2 t/ac for second cut and 1 t/ac for third cut. Brome/alfalfa hay had average yields of 2.25 t/ac for first cut and 1.75 t/ac for second cut. Other tame hay had an average first cut yield of 1.75 t/ac. Wild hay had an average first cut yield of 1 t/ac. Greenfeed had an average yield of 2.5 t/ac. Currently, hay supplies are rated at 15% surplus and 85% adequate. Straw, greenfeed and feed grain supplies are all rated as adequate. Overall, winter feed supplies in most areas are good with producers having a surplus of hay. With the rains this past summer, hay quality is reported down 3-6 TDN pts for fields where cutting was delayed. Most cattle are still out on pasture, and some producers have moved calves home or to market

**Interlake** is reporting some corn silage has yet to be harvested; second and third cut alfalfa is virtually complete. Cattle are being moved home or to market from summer pastures. There is hay being shipped into the region, so the NW Interlake is slightly short of feed as a whole. The NE Interlake reports a slight surplus.

## Hay Prices

**The Western portion** reports that hay prices were high but seem to be settling down. Alfalfa is trading in the 6-10 cents/lb range with Dairy quality at the upper end, 9-10 cents/lb, Alfalfa/Grass at 4-6 cents/lb and beef hay is priced at 3-4.5 cents/lb depending on quality. Straw at 4 cents/lb. There are reports of horse hay in the 7.5-10 cents/lb range. **The Interlake** reports alfalfa at 6 cents/lb, alfalfa/grass ranging from 4-5 cents/lb and native hay at 3 cents/lb. Timothy straw is 2.3 cents/lb. The **Eastern** area is reporting dairy quality hay at 8-10 cents/lb, alfalfa/grass hay at 5-8 cents/lb, and beef hay at 3-5 cents. **The Central portion** reports dairy quality hay at 8-10 cents/lb, alfalfa/grass at 5-6 cents/lb, beef hay at 4-6 cents/lb and straw in the 2-3 cent/lb range.

**Kijiji Manitoba** <http://www.kijiji.ca/b-manitoba/hay-for-sale/k0l9006> has more listings for hay for sale this month as does the **Manitoba Hay Listing** site:

<http://web31.gov.mb.ca/HayListCIntExtrnl/>

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