

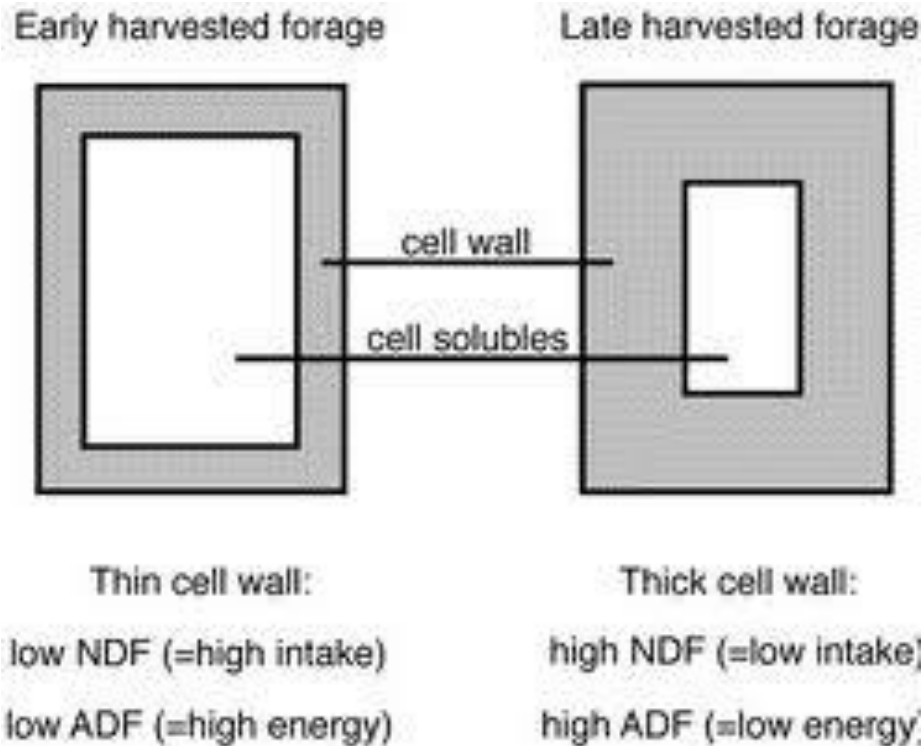
Forage Harvest Management

When do you cut?



By Mir M. Seyedbagheri
UI Elmore County Extension

Forage Harvest Management



Of all the quality factors the producer can control, timing of cutting is the most important.

Perfect Cutting Stage

Important tool in achieving high quality, high yields, and stand persistence.

It also can be effective in reducing the impact of weed, insect, and disease pests.





Stage 0 : Early Vegetation



Stage 1 : Mid Vegetation



Stage 2 : Late Vegetation



Stage 3 : Early Bud



Stage 4 : Late Bud

Table 1. Forage quality with plant height and maturity

Height of tallest stem	Maturity of stem		
	LV ¹	LB	LF
inches	-----relative feed value-----		
20	213	191	171
25	191	172	155
30	173	156	141
35	156	142	129
40	142	130	118

¹ LV = Late vegetative, LB = Late bud, LF = Late flower

Forage Quality Stick

Information on the stick is based on a forage quality prediction method developed in Wisconsin, called Predictive Equations for Alfalfa Quality (PEAQ), and on data from 356 alfalfa samples gathered in California and Idaho.



Grower Gini Vanderpool (in hat) and Kathy Roy, Canyon County extension educator, use the UC Intermountain Alfalfa Quality Prediction Stick on the V. M. Diamond Ranch near Caldwell where Angus cattle are raised and premium-quality alfalfa hay is grown.



Predictive Equations for Alfalfa Quality (PEAQ Stick)

These easy-to-follow steps are printed on each stick:

Step 1: Select an average 2-sq-ft area to sample.

Step 2: Determine the growth stage (vegetative, bud or bloom) of the most mature stem.

Step 3: Find the single tallest stem.

Measure from the soil surface to the stem tip using the correct side of the stick (vegetative, bud or bloom). Read the scale to predict ADF.

Step 4: Repeat steps 1-3 in at least five representative areas and average the results.



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587-2136 Ext-509

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By Dan Ogle, Glenn Shewmaker and Ken Sanders

<http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/forage/Proceedings/2006%20PDF/Ogle%20Improved%20Grasses.pdf>

Predicting Alfalfa Hay Quality in Southern Idaho

by Robert Vodraska and Mir M. Seyedbagheri

<http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/edcomm/pdf/CIS/CIS1052.pdf>

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