Indicators point to hay supply deficits in Iowa

Stephen K. Barnhart

Iowa State University, sbarnhar@iastate.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cropnews

Part of the Agricultural Science Commons, Agriculture Commons, and the Agronomy and Crop Sciences Commons

Recommended Citation

http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/cropnews/1019

The Iowa State University Digital Repository provides access to Integrated Crop Management News for historical purposes only. Users are hereby notified that the content may be inaccurate, out of date, incomplete and/or may not meet the needs and requirements of the user. Users should make their own assessment of the information and whether it is suitable for their intended purpose. For current information on integrated crop management from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, please visit https://crops.extension.iastate.edu/.
Indicators point to hay supply deficits in Iowa

Abstract
Livestock producers are encouraged to regularly assess their forage inventories. This year there are several indicators that point to localized or even statewide hay deficits.

Keywords
Agronomy

Disciplines
Agricultural Science | Agriculture | Agronomy and Crop Sciences
Indicators point to hay supply deficits in Iowa

by Stephen K. Barnhart, Department of Agronomy

Livestock producers are encouraged to regularly assess their forage inventories. This year there are several indicators that point to localized or even statewide hay deficits.

Higher grain prices and the early-season freeze have contributed to decreased alfalfa, mixed alfalfa and grass, and other 'hay' acreage. (Natural Resources Conservation Service)

The early summer USDA crop acreage estimates indicate that 2007 alfalfa, mixed alfalfa and grass, and "other hay" acreage is down 8 to 9 percent from that of a year ago. Higher grain prices and the early-season freeze have contributed to this decreased acreage. In addition, the early April freeze led to 20 to 50 percent lower first-cutting yields across much of the state. Potato leaf-hopper populations are high already and may contribute further to reduced summer production in alfalfa-based hay fields.

Some ways to possibly make up some of the deficits could be considered:

- Some producers will be harvesting oat or other cereal grain crops for hay and silage to make up some of their deficits.
- Producers with alfalfa-based hay fields are encouraged to scout for and manage potato leafhopper populations for the remainder of the summer, to maximize the yield potential.
There are still a couple weeks to consider planting a warm-season, annual grass crop for "emergency forage." While there is still time to produce a productive crop before fall frost, there is a risk that there will be insufficient soil moisture and timely rainfall to establish and produce a productive crop over the next few months.

- There may be an opportunity to harvest hay from CRP acres.
- Corn silage or soybeans harvested during early pod fill also are possible but often less viable forage choices.

Stephen K. Barnhart is a professor of agronomy with extension, teaching, and research responsibilities in forage production and management.

This article originally appeared on page 221 of the IC-498(18) -- July 9, 2007 issue.