

Forage Production Situation - Iowa 2008

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The two most common forage harvest systems in Iowa are a 4-summer cut at an early maturity for high quality for dairy cattle; and a 3-summer cut at a later maturity and lower feed quality for beef cattle. Both systems may include a 'fall cut' if growth is sufficient and weather cooperates. In 2008 only a limited amount of 'dairy quality' forage was harvested before the 3 to 5 week rain pattern of May and June. Thus most 1st crop hay was harvested at a mature, low feed quality stage, with following 2nd, 3rd and sometimes 4th harvests also delayed past normal harvest times. Rain delays and drying problems led to a significant amount of the later cuttings being of lower than desired quality as well. Supplies of medium to low quality hay are generally adequate. Localized shortages exist, primarily in the flooded areas of the state. Supplies of high quality hay are limited.

Higher than normal and more frequent than normal rainfall damaged some new forage plantings, and flood waters damaged some pastures and hay meadows. Many of the pastures recovered well, some re-seeding has been done in the autumn. Pasture condition is generally good across the state.

		<u>Alfalfa & Alf / Grass</u>	<u>'Other Hay'*</u>	<u>All Hay</u>	<u>Corn Silage</u>
Acres	2004	1.3 M	300,000	1.6 M	230,000
	2005	1.25 M	350,000	1.6 M	230,000
	2006	1.18 M	320,000	1.5 M	220,000
	2007	1.14 M	340,000	1.48 M	300,000
	2008	1.1M	350,000	1.45 M	?
Yield /Ac (Tons)	2004	4.2	2.6		19.5
	2005	4.2	2.1		19.5
	2006	3.9	2.2		18.5
	2007	4.2	2.3		19.5
	2008	4.2	2.15		?
Annual Production (Tons)	2004	5.5 M	780,000	6.24 M	
	2005	5.1 M	730,000	5.86 M	
	2006	4.6 M	704,000	5.31 M	
	2007	4.8 M	782,000	5.58 M	
	2008	4.6 M	875,000	5.50 M	

* 'Other hay' includes clover, grass and cereal grain hay

	<u>'Hay Stocks'</u> (Tons)		<u>Pasture 'Condition'</u>	<u>'Hay Market - supply & \$\$\$'</u>		
	<u>May 1</u>	<u>Dec 1</u>		<u>Med / Low Quality</u>		<u>Dairy Quality Price /T</u>
2004	605,000	4.37 M	G/ Ex	Good supply	Short	\$90-140
2005	1.25 M	4.2 M	G F/P SE & SC	Good supply	Short	\$90-140
2006	1.0 M	3.9 M	F/G dry mid- summer WC SC	Good supply	Short	\$115-160
2007	684,000	3.5 M	G	Good supply	Short	\$150-200+
2008	640,000	-	G / Ex	Good supply	Short	\$150-200+