

Harvest Forages At The Proper Dry Matter Levels

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An area that is critical in quality feed is harvesting forages at the proper dry matter content, especially if the material is going to be ensiled. If the dry matter content is not correct for the type of storage structure used and results in improper fermentation, then depressed dry matter intakes and lower milk production may occur. In a year of high feed costs and questionable milk prices, you can't afford to put up poor quality forage.

The dry matter content of a forage dictates the ability of the crop to undergo proper fermentation for optimal use of nutrients coming out of a silage storage structure. Proper dry matter content is extremely important for balage in order for it to undergo normal fermentation and minimize the chance of mold formation or a clo-

stridial type of fermentation. Table 1 lists some suggested methods for making hay-crop silage.

In addition to harvesting quality forage, purchasing forage may offer some advantages in reducing overall feed costs and should not be overlooked as an option. Using the Penn State Dairy Forages Template, a break-even price for purchasing forages can be used based on the price of corn, 48% soybean meal, and legume hay. If corn is \$4.60/bu, 48% soybean meal is \$316/ton, and legume hay is \$113/ton, the break-even costs for some forages are as follows:

An example of how the following information can be used is if first cutting legume hay, bud is available for \$110/ton, then it is a good buy based on the current prices of corn, soybean meal, and legume hay. However, if the price is over \$123/ton, then that hay would not be considered a good buy.

This template is available from Penn State and most local cooperative extension offices at no charge. Break-even prices are also available on many other forages. The template can be customized according to prices in your local area. This program is available for IBM computers that have Excel or Lotus. If interested in getting copy, send a 3.5" disk to "Forage Template" c/o Virginia Ishler, 324 Henning Building, University Park, PA 16875.

Feed ingredient	Price/ton
First cuttings	
Legume hay, pre bud	\$142.99
Legume hay, bud	\$123.57
Legume hay, bloom	\$94.20
Mixed mostly grass hay, pre head	\$115.63
Mixed mostly grass hay, early head	\$87.77
Mixed mostly grass hay, full head	\$55.35
Mixed mostly legume hay, pre bud	\$136.22
Mixed mostly legume hay, bud	\$112.78
Mixed mostly legume hay, bloom	\$83.52

Table 1. Recommended methods for making hay-crop silage.

Wilt to a 40 to 70% moisture content

- For oxygen-limiting tower silos, preferably wilt to 40 to 50% moisture
- For conventional tower silos, preferably wilt to 50 to 60% moisture
- For horizontal silos, including plastic tubes, preferably wilt to 55 to 65% moisture.
- For balage, preferably wilt to 50 to 60% moisture

BRATTLEBORO, Vt. — For the second year in succession the Ayrshire breed and its members have benefited from the generosity of Dr. Hanson, a Colorado member committed to the Ayrshire breed.

Ardrossan Trident Lucy - #1012772, has been donated by Hanson to the national sale to be held July 13 in Mansfield, Ohio.

The proceeds are contributed to a fund utilized for projects directed to genetic improvement of the breed. As many as 30 Ayrshire enthusiasts contributed last year to help the fund swell to \$4,500. It is anticipated the same enthusiasm will prevail as Dr. Hanson's donation crosses the auction block July 13.

Breeders are reminded it's possible to make tax deductible contributions to the fund—a commitment that could help increase the pace for Ayrshire genetic process.

Dr. Hanson owns one of the

most productive registered Ayrshire herds in the United States and recently added the famed Ardrossan herd following the death of owner Hope Scott of Villanova.

Hanson Offers Ardrossan Lucy

ELIMSPORT (Lycoming Co.)

— The multicounty Penn State extension unit in the central Susquehanna Valley will sponsor its second pasture and grazing meeting of 1996 on Friday, May 24 at 10 a.m. at the Enos Beiler farm near Elimsport.

This is a dairy farm that utilized grazing as a major part of the feeding program. It is the first farm on the right along Route 44 north of

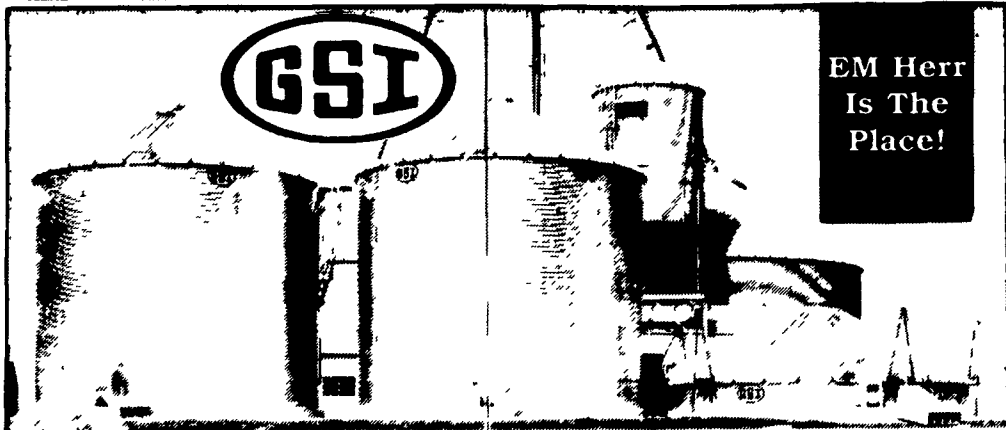
Elimsport.

For more information on this and future meetings, call Dave Hartman at the Columbia County Extension Office at (717) 784-6660, Phil Durst at the Montour County Extension Office at (800) 326-7410, or Tom Murphy at the Lycoming County Extension office at (717) 327-2350.

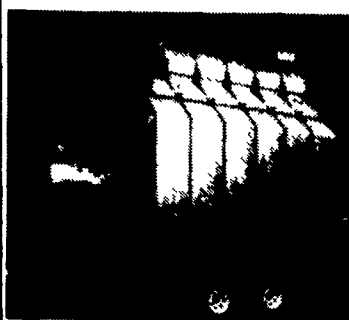
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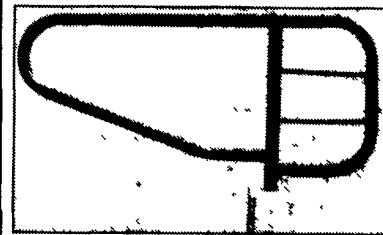
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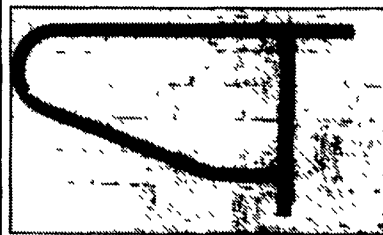
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