



Easy accessibility, good ventilation, and a closeness to hay markets are key to the success of the Holloway Brothers Farm. From left, Richard and son Rick Holloway.

## Good Haymaking Requires Drying, Storing, And 'Patience'

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ularly, according to Henry. The horse markets are a "tremendous user of feed," he said.

Landscapers use straw for sedimentation control, which keeps the straw market steady.

The farm makes silage bales, which are baled at 50 percent total moisture and wrapped in plastic. Dry hay is cut, tedded, and a drying agent and preservative are applied before rectangular baling.

In a good year, within two days, the dry hay can be readily baled. Last year, however, with a persistent drought, some hay was baled in only a day.

The farm follows a soybean/corn/hay/corn rotation.

A no-till grain drill is used at planting. Alfalfa is fertilized and limed according to soil test results after first and third cuttings. Leafhopper pressure is also closely monitored and sprayed as needed.

At harvest, the keys are weather and "patience," noted Richard. "You think it's ready and it's not."

Critical are the drying times and to be "ready to cut when it's ready," he said.

In a good year, five cuttings are possible. In 1999's drought, the farm continued the scheduled 28-30 day cuttings, though hay was at times uneven and sparse.

The past year was the first year the Holloways ever collected on crop insurance. Corn yields were only about 70-75

bushels per acre. Silage was shorter, but the farm had some to sell.

In all, there are 250 acres in hay at the Holloway farm, of which 75 percent is alfalfa. Half the hay goes to horse farms, a quarter is sold as haylage to Amish farms, and the rest is kept for the cow/calf herd they raise at the farm.

In addition, the Holloways maintain about 120 acres in pasture (on 20-acre lots) and rent additional acres. Cattle are pastured on a rotational system.

The Holloways are converting new pastures, mostly in bluegrass, to an orchardgrass/clover mixture.

The Holloways maintain about 100 beef cows and calves, which they sell to a local freezer and freezer beef market supplier and at Lancaster County auctions.



Rick Holloway at the stack wagon, which can load many bales at once to be delivered to the storage area and shipped.

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