



2025 Forage Quality Scissors Cut Results Early Start

Welcome to the first Forage Quality Scissors Cut report for 2025. The CCE and WAC Team sampled 48 sites in Delaware County and the NYC Watershed on May 6. Grass is growing like gangbusters and is several inches taller than the twenty-year average.

The chart of grass height over the years shows what most of already know, no two springs are alike, and if there is a trend, I think it is toward more variability. The key to successfully managing through the chaos, is having everything prepared and being nimble and ready to act when the conditions are right.

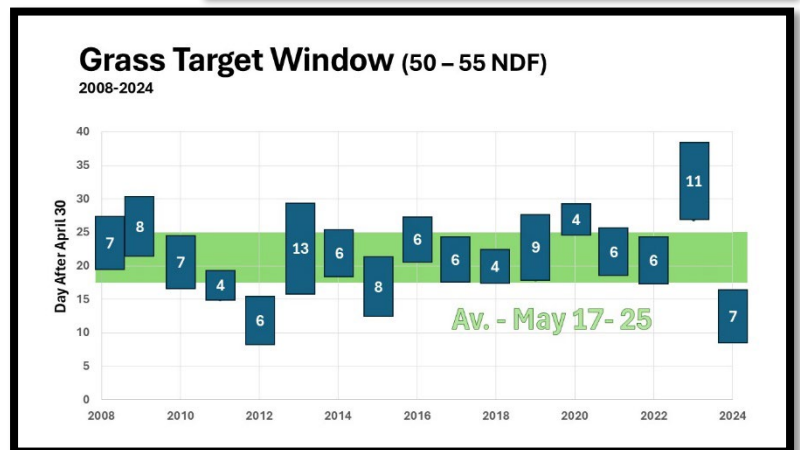
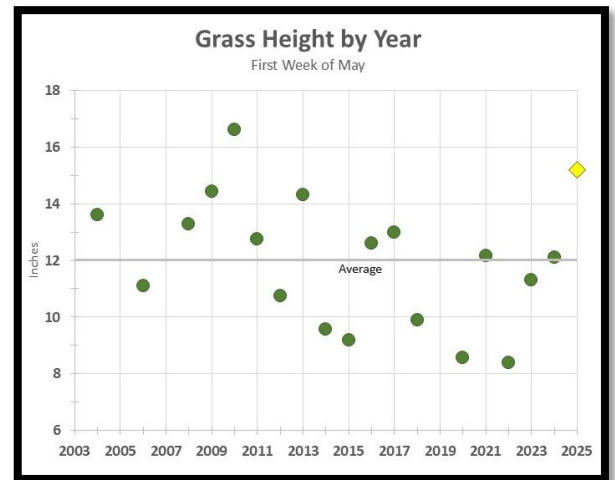
This week grass fields tested at the highest NDF (Neutral Detergent Fiber) we've seen for the first week of May. Early May fiber samples can sometimes be misleading, but **even if fields test slightly lower next week, most grass fields will be in the target range for harvest.**

Looking at our scissors cut records from 2008-2024, the average target harvest window for grasses has been May 17-25. The duration of the harvest window has also been as short as 4 days and as long as 13 days. Samples this week suggest an early, and potentially short, target window this year.

We will sample each Tuesday in May, send the samples to Dairy One lab for NIR analysis, and plan to send results on Thursdays. Our next sample day will be May 13, 2025.

A note on early harvest of grasses. As grasses grow and start the heading process, the growing point is at the top of the stem as it elongates. If plants are cut before the growing point is above the cutting height, the cut plant will continue to push the seed head up, resulting in regrowth that looks like all heads. When this happens, the grass will eventually fill in, but quality will be reduced. This is something to consider if you are cutting very early. You can split a few grass stems and see the length of the developing stem, if the growing point is lower than cutting height you may want to wait a day or two to avoid rapid heading of the regrowth.

The forecast for May is for above normal precipitation and normal temperatures, looks like a challenging planting and harvest season ahead.



Dairy One

Forage Laboratory

Special thanks to Dairy One for providing the sample analysis



2025 Scissors Cut Results

Delaware County Scissors Cuts Results				May 6, 2025			
Farm	Town	Elev	Species	Ht	aNDFom	NDFD 24	TDN
Darling	Andes	1580	Clov(40%)/Grass	8/11	43.4	64	66
Eisele	Andes	1590	Orchardgrass	12	55.2	69	59
Gladstone	Andes	1960	RClov(35%)/Orch	8/17	57.1	68	59
Darling	Andes	2200	Red Clover	10	29	52	68
Evans	Andes	2250	Mixed Grasses	10	49.7	68	63
Rossley	Bovina	1680	Mixed Grasses	10	49.2	68	61
Brannen	Bovina	1840	Mixed Grasses	11	51.8	70	62
Mattson	Colchester	1100	Alf(80%)/Tfesc	18/18	40.1	51	61
Cerosaletti	Davenport	1290	Alfalfa	13	26.2	61	65
Mushkoday	Delhi	1320	Alfalfa	16	22.1	57	67
Frisbee	Delhi	1380	Mixed Grasses	16	54.4	64	61
Rama	Delhi	1380	Mixed Grasses	17	49.7	66	66
Sullivan	Delhi	1430	Orchardgrass	18	54.7	71	59
Shephard	Delhi	2050	Mixed Grasses	20	55.1	66	61
Buel	Franklin	1260	Alf(50%)/Orch	13/20	44.6	66	63
Grant	Franklin	1650	Mixed Grasses	20	54.3	72	62
Taggart	Franklin	1720	Mixed Grasses	18	49.1	75	64
DiBenedetto	Halcott	1730	Orchardgrass	16	55.6	72	61
Scobie	Hamden	1480	Mixed Grasses	10	47.8	67	63
Potter	Hamden	2100	Mixed Grasses	9	53.2	72	62
Hillriegel	Hardenburgh	1700	Orchardgrass	15	51.4	69	59
Haynes	Kortright	1870	Orchardgrass	19	54.6	71	57
Boest	Kortright	1948	Orchardgrass	14	48.2	73	66
Hager Farm	Kortright	2000	Tall Fescue	13	41.9	80	70
Scott	Masonville	1620	Reed Canary	17	52.3	70	64
Keator	Meredith	1600	Tall Fescue	13	52.3	66	63
Jurgens	Meredith	2020	Mixed Grasses	14	55	74	58
Cieri	Meredith	2300	Orchardgrass	14	45.4	71	66
Gray	Middletown	2020	Reed Canary	14	50.2	74	60
Elliot	Middletown	2060	RCanary/Orch	16	50.8	71	62
Coombe	Neversink	1030	Orchardgrass	13	48.5	71	64
Coombe	Neversink	1340	Tall Fescue	12	50.2	71	63
Coombe	Neversink	1420	Mixed Grasses	11	42	76	68
Perry	Roxbury	1720	Orchardgrass	14	52.6	69	64
Gockel	Roxbury	1890	Orchardgrass	14	56.3	72	60
Albano	Roxbury	1950	Mixed Grasses	13	47.8	75	66
Kuhn	Roxbury	1980	Meadow Foxtail	18	52.6	58	68
Johnson	Sidney	1030	Alfalfa	18	32.6	55	63
Johnson	Sidney	1070	Orchardgrass	20	53.3	72	64
Hanselman	Stamford	1490	Alfalfa	15	27.2	60	67
Martin	Stamford	1560	Alf(35%)/Orch	14/19	52.5	73	59
Deysenroth	Stamford	1610	Mixed Grasses	19	46.7	72	60
Melvin	Stamford	2020	Clover/Orch	8/18	54.6	68	58
McClure	Stamford	2080	Alfalfa/Orch	14/19	37.7	62	63
Trovato	Stamford	2200	Mixed Grasses	8/19	56.7	74	58
LaTourette	Tompkins	1220	Mixed Grasses	16	57.2	70	61
Wickham	Walton	1240	Orchardgrass	20	54.2	74	61
Marsiglio	Walton	1720	Orchardgrass	8	42.3	71	66
Av Grass				15.2	51.5	70.6	62.5
Av Mixed				-	45.7	65.1	61.4
Av Alfalfa				15.3	27.4	57.0	66.0



Precision Feed Management

Watershed Agricultural Council
Cornell Cooperative Extension Delaware County



Dairy One

Forage Laboratory

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providing the sample analysis

NDF Goals for Dairy Cattle Forage

Grass hay and silage	48 – 55%
MMG hay & silage	40 – 50%
MML hay & silage	38 – 45%
Legume hay & silage	36 – 42%

TDN Goals for Beef Cattle Forage

Growing Calf (2lb ADG)	70 - 72
Growing Yearling (2lb ADG)	64 - 66
Lactating Beef Cow	60 - 64
Mature Dry Cow	52 - 55