



# 2026 Forage Quality Scissors Cut Results Slow Change

*Estimated days from 5/12 to reach target quality for classes of cattle*

Continued cool weather this week resulted in slow growth and development of grasses and legumes. Grass increasing only 3.5 inches (1"-6") and legumes barely grew increasing only 1.5 inches (0"-6"). Fiber content (NDF) was essentially unchanged for all forage types. Fiber Digestibility and TDN were also mostly unchanged.

	Beef				
	Dairy	Growing Calf	Growing Yearling	Lactating Cow	Mature Dry Cow
<b>Grass</b>	7-10 days	7-10 days	14+ days	14+ days	14+ days
<b>Mixed</b>	10-14 days	10-14 days	14+ days	14+ days	14+ days
<b>Legume</b>	14+ days	14+ days	14+ days	14+ days	14+ days

Grasses averaged 43%, about a week away from the 50% dairy quality target window.

Mixed stands at 35% NDF, are just over a week away target range, of 45%.

Pure legume fields at 27%NDF are more than a week away from target of 40% NDF.

**Grasses and Mixed stands are approaching the dairy quality target. Farms looking for this quality should be making sure those final repairs are done, greasing up the equipment, and making sure all supplies are on hand.**

**Beef producers can wait a couple weeks for most of their needs. Legume fields are still mostly a couple weeks away from dairy quality.**

**A few things to keep in mind:**

- **Mow Wide** - Mow into as wide a swath as possible to encourage rapid wilting. The longer it takes to dry down the more energy is lost to respiration. Achieving rapid drying helps squeeze harvests into tight windows.
- **Don't Scalp (dirt isn't forage)**- Shoot for a 4" cutting height. Keeping wilting forage off the ground helps speed drying and reduces equipment bringing up excess soil (aka ash). Regrowth will also be quicker.
- **Pay attention to forage moisture (aka Dry Matter)** – For bunkers shoot for 35% to 40% DM, and for baleage between 50% and 60%.
- **Density matters** – for bunkers, make sure you have adequate packing capacity, the faster the silage is coming in the more tons you need on the bunk. For baleage, dryer forage packs better strive to make bales as dense as possible.
- **Cover/Wrap quickly** – Get bunkers filled and covered as quickly as possible. Wrap bales within 3 or 4 hours. Oxygen is the enemy of good silage, cover it quickly and keep birds and rodents from spoiling the seal.

Stay safe and enjoy the hay harvest season.

Our next sample day will be Tuesday May 19.



Special thanks to Dairy One for providing the sample analysis



# 2026 Scissors Cut Results

Delaware County Scissors Cuts Results				May 5				May 12			
Farm	Town	Elev	Species	Ht	aNDFom	NDFD 30	TDN	Ht	aNDFom	NDFD 30	TDN
Darling	Andes	1580	Red Clover	-	-	-	-	12	29.8	85.0	70
Eisele	Andes	1590	Mixed Grasses	6	45.3	80.4	66	10	45.3	81.7	64
Darling	Andes	2200	Red Clover	-	-	-	-	6	30.2	75.5	70
Gladstone	Andes	2250	Orchardgrass	7	39.3	86.1	68	11	42.8	87.7	69
Gladstone	Andes	2250	Orchardgrass	7	44.4	86.0	65	10	42.3	87.0	68
Brannen	Bovina	1180	Mixed Grasses	6	42.3	84.8	66	9	42.4	81.0	68
Mattson	Colchester	1100	Alf(60%)/T Fesc	9/12	34.6	68.0	65	15/18	33.7	65.0	66
Grant	Davenport	1290	Alfalfa	10	24.4	68.0	68	12	22.9	57.3	70
Mushkoday	Delhi	1320	Alf(65%)/Grass	9/4	20.2	65.0	71	11/6	29.4	70.0	68
Rama	Delhi	1380	Mixed Grasses	8	41.7	78.7	68	11	43.2	81.7	68
Frisbee	Delhi	1380	Mixed Grasses	10	50.9	73.6	65	15	48.2	73.1	66
Sullivan	Delhi	1430	Clov(40%)Orch	5/8	42.7	81.9	67	12	44.2	84.2	66
Shephard	Delhi	2050	Mixed Grasses	8	43.4	80.3	65	12	47.6	73.7	64
Coombe	Fallsburg	1180	Tall Fescue	8	40.0	87.2	67	9	45.0	84.7	65
Buel	Franklin	1260	Alf (50%)/Orch	10/12	30.2	80.1	67	10/14	27.2	79.3	70
Grant	Franklin	1650	Mixed Grasses	12	40.0	87.2	69	15	45.5	80.1	67
Taggart	Franklin	1720	Orchardgrass	8	42.6	83.9	66	14	42.2	84.1	69
Buel	Gilboa	1550	Mixed Grasses	-	-	-	-	11	40.2	90.3	68
DiBenedatto	Halcott	1730	Mixed Grasses	11	43.0	80.1	64	16	44.7	74.9	68
Scobie	Hamden	1480	Orchardgrass	10	43.5	94.2	75	14	39.3	82.1	65
Miller	Hamden	1600	Alf(50%)Orch	6/8	47.2	81.2	64	6/9	43.9	81.4	67
Potter	Hamden	2100	Mixed Grasses	7	40.8	84.7	68	9	39.6	85.9	68
Potter	Hamden	2100	Alf(70%)/Grass	6/7	26.6	74.3	69	7/8	28.9	89.3	69
Hillriegel	Hardenburgh	1700	Orchardgrass	10	47.4	81.5	65	14	43.7	86.2	67
Haynes	Kortright	1870	Orchardgrass	-	-	-	-	13	42.9	88.1	66
Boest	Kortright	1948	Orchardgrass	10	46.5	80.1	64	12	43.3	85.3	68
Hager	Kortright	2000	Tall Fescue	8	38.2	85.2	69	11	37.0	93.2	69
Scott	Masonville	1620	Orchardgrass	14	42.1	83.7	69	6/18	43.6	81.7	67
Keator	Meredith	1600	Tall Fescue	9	39.8	85.5	68	12	44.5	81.9	66
Elliot	Middletown	2060	RCanary/Orch	11	45.0	79.8	66	15	36.7	81.2	69
Coombe	Neversink	1340	Mixed Grasses	10	40.9	86.1	67	12	45.2	70.8	67
Coombe	Neversink	1420	Orchardgrass	8	41.6	86.6	66	10	44.6	84.0	68
Perry	Roxbury	1720	Orchardgrass	10	45.6	81.1	64	16	48.4	80.0	62
Gockel	Roxbury	1890	Mixed Grasses	10	45.2	83.2	66	14	44.0	76.6	69
Albano	Roxbury	1950	Meadow Foxtail	8	42.6	78.9	65	11	43.3	94.2	71
Kuhn	Roxbury	1980	Meadow Foxtail	12	45.9	70.4	66	18	47.9	72.7	67
Johnson	Sidney	1070	Alfalfa	12	23.7	71.4	70	15	27.1	79.6	69
Hanselman	Stamford	1490	Alfalfa	9	27.1	60.0	67	12	27.8	63.7	68
Martin	Stamford	1560	Alf (35%)/Orch	9/13	38.5	77.5	65	10/17	42.6	79.4	63
Deysenroth	Stamford	1610	Mixed Grasses	-	-	-	-	11	43.0	82.4	68
Ryan	Stamford	1750	Orchardgrass	5	50.0	79.0	63	8	43.9	78.3	65
Melvin	Stamford	2020	Mixed Grasses	10	43.4	80.5	66	15	47.2	84.6	68
McClure	Stamford	2080	Alf(70%)/Orch	11/8	36.5	80.2	68	12/14	30.5	76.2	68
Trovato	Stamford	2200	Mixed Grasses	12	46.6	83.1	64	17	44.6	84.3	67
LaTourette	Tompkins	1220	Mixed Grasses	8	44.8	81.0	66	12	44.5	80	66
Wickham	Walton	1240	Orchardgrass	14	42.3	81.9	67	18	41.2	88	68
Marsiglio	Walton	1720	Mixed Grasses	5	43.2	83	66	6	35.7	93	68
			<b>Av Grass</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>81.8</b>	<b>66.4</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>43.0</b>	<b>82.9</b>	<b>67.2</b>
			<b>Av Mixed</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>76.0</b>	<b>67.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>35.0</b>	<b>77.8</b>	<b>67.3</b>
			<b>Av Legume</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>69.7</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>69.0</b>	<b>69.3</b>

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



**Dairy One**  
Forage Laboratory

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