



the HAYMAKER

PROGRESS IN ALFALFA RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT

Profit From Late-Summer Seedings

Spring 2009 alfalfa seedings finished up on the low end of early acreage predictions. Milk prices remain low, fluctuating around \$10 cwt nationally. However, hay prices (especially for dairy quality hay) remain strong, and dairy market experts predict that milk prices will improve soon. Overall, these positive developments represent an opportunity for growers to establish new alfalfa acres this Summer to take advantage of improving market fundamentals. Unfortunately, many producers in the Midwest and Northeast consider Spring the best time for successful alfalfa establishment. However, late-Summer seeding of alfalfa is a viable option for producers in these regions. Remember, late-Summer seedings will produce new alfalfa supplies more quickly than waiting to seed next year; full season alfalfa yields following a Summer seeding will usually be 90%-100% of a Spring seeding made the same year. In addition, late-Summer seedings generally suffer much less weed pressure at establishment.

Below, we highlight a number of factors important to successfully establishing late-Summer alfalfa seedings in the Midwest and Northeast U.S.

Keys to Successful Late-Summer Alfalfa Seedings

- Seed in a timely fashion, at least six weeks before your first hard frost; eight weeks is better (see map with recommended late-Summer seeding dates by region). Your goal is at least 6-8" of growth on the new alfalfa seeding before the first killing frost.

The payoff from making timely late-Summer seedings is better stands, higher yields, and greater profitability.

- Choice of variety has a major impact on profitability for the life of the new alfalfa seeding. Always use seed of a high-yielding, persistent, multiple-pest-resistant variety. Remember that cheap seed often costs more in the long run in reduced yield and shorter stand life.
- Don't follow alfalfa immediately with alfalfa—autotoxic compounds from prior alfalfa will reduce productivity over the life of the new stand. Also, know the pH, fertility, and herbicide history of your field.
- Summer-seed alfalfa only when moisture is present!
- Do not use a nurse crop (e.g. oats) at seeding to control weeds. Remember that weeds are seldom a problem in Summer-seeded alfalfa, and that nurse crops compete with alfalfa for light, water, and nutrients.

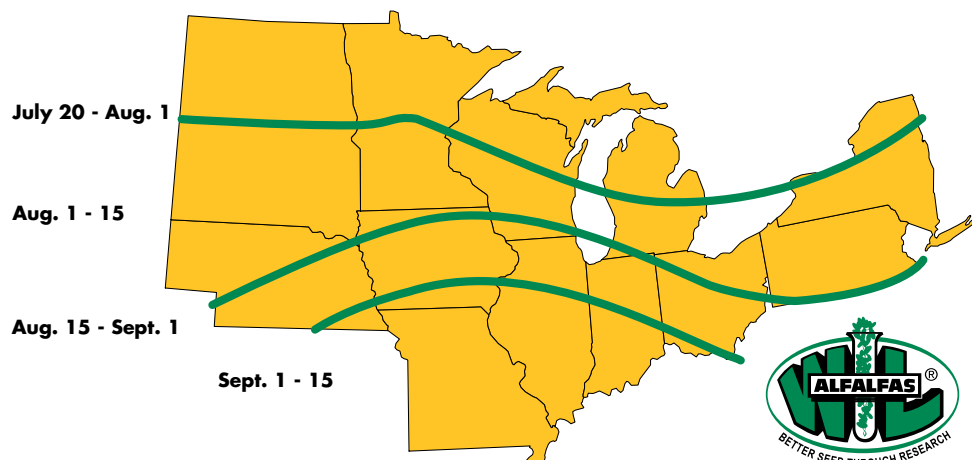


If you must use a nurse crop when seeding on highly erodible soils, seed the nurse crop at significantly lower rates (e.g. 1/4 bushel oats/acre).

- Do not harvest the new late-Summer seeding this Fall! Let the new seeding store up plenty of energy reserves to get it successfully through the Winter. Consider making your late-Summer seedings the last fields harvested the following Spring; this allows for a build-up of root reserves and a good second crop.

Following these recommendations will significantly improve your chances of success when Summer-seeding alfalfa this year. Good luck! ■

Late-Summer Alfalfa Seeding Dates



Win the 2009 Forage Superbowl With W-L Alfalfa!

The World Forage Superbowl is held every Fall in conjunction with the World Dairy Expo in Madison, WI (this year September 29-October 3). Over the past 12 years, W-L Research has provided cash awards to winning

hay producers and dairy farmers who have won with W-L alfalfa varieties. If a grower/farmer wins the 2009 Forage Superbowl with a W-L alfalfa variety, the following cash award schedule applies:

In addition to W-L's ongoing cash awards program, the Forage Superbowl has announced that for the first time, category winners will receive cash prizes (over \$17,000 in all).



Grand Champion Win = \$1,500 cash to winning grower
Division Win (Dairy Hay, Commercial Hay, Dairy Haylage, Balage) = \$1,000 cash to winning grower

Salesperson working with winning grower = \$1,000 cash to salesperson

Samples for the 2009 Forage Superbowl can be submitted anytime up to September 3, 2009. Entry forms and instructions for this year's Superbowl are available by contacting W-L Research at 800-406-7662 or info@wlresearch.com. ■

Destination Indianapolis: Alfalfa Intensive Training

The National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance has scheduled their next Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar for November 17-19, 2009 in Indianapolis, IN. Taught by a team of four nationally recognized alfalfa experts, this year's Alfalfa Intensive Training promises to provide top-notch training for seed dealers, sales staff, consultants, large producers, and anyone who might benefit from significantly improving their alfalfa knowledge.

Topics covered include:

- Alfalfa genetics, varieties, variety selection, seed production
- Growth and development, soils, fertility, nitrogen fixation, stress, overwintering
- Diseases, insects, nematodes, and pest management
- Harvest management, drying, silage and hay preservation
- Forage quality, sampling, hay testing
- Marketing, economics, buying and selling hay
- Dairy, beef, and horse nutrition

Class size is limited for this training session, so early registration is recommended. For more information and details on how to register, go to www.alfalfa.org. ■



Jeremy Hayward Named Regional Sales Manager

W-L Research announces the appointment of Jeremy R. Hayward to the position of Regional Sales Manager for the Eastern Plains and mid-South. Jeremy will work with both seed company customers and alfalfa growers, and his primary responsibilities include technical sales support and overall management of the W-L alfalfa seed business in the region.

Jeremy brings an impressive professional and educational background to W-L, having previously worked as District Sales Manager for a regional cooperative and as a regional manager for a national forage seed company. He holds a Bachelors degree in Agriculture from Missouri State University and a Masters degree in Forage Management from the University of

Arkansas. Jeremy's extensive knowledge of the alfalfa seed business and alfalfa management will provide our customers with another valuable go-to professional resource.

Join us in welcoming Jeremy Hayward to the W-L team! ■

