



## Roundup Ready Alfalfa's Digestibility

Recently, I was asked if the new RR alfalfa was going to be a lower digestible alfalfa that would affect a dairy's performance. After searching several different sources and talking with several individuals for answers, there is no immediate answer available for that question. These are a whole new line of alfalfas and since the technology is just being released there is no forage data to be found. However, based on Byron Seed's belief of producing high quality forage the RR alfalfa may have an affect on the forage quality you harvest.

In my past newsletters, I heavily rely on forage samples to show the importance of grass in an alfalfa field. Grass adds yield, digestibility, weed suppression, and quicker drying times. If you decide to plant RR alfalfa and actively use the technology you have eliminated the option of mixing grass into your alfalfa. Without the grass in your alfalfa field, I feel you will significantly lower the digestibility of your hay, but it has to be your decision based on your farm's management which way you would like to proceed. If you decide to use glyphosate herbicide in the seedling year on alfalfa to control your weed infestations and when you feel the weeds are under control, grass can be interseeded into the alfalfa in the fall of the year. However, there are other herbicides that can be applied to non RR alfalfa that has equal to greater effect on weeds than glyphosate, and is safer on grasses.

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## Other Herbicide Options

**Sencor** - Alfalfa and grass have to be dormant at application. Apply less than 1 pound per acre to be safe on grass and alfalfa.

**2-4-D-B** – Make sure the alfalfa is at the 3<sup>rd</sup> trifoliolate and under no stress. Apply no more than 1 quart in a growing season. This is safe on grass.

**Pursuit** – Safe on alfalfa and clover at an application rate of 3-6 ounces per acre. Apply no more than 6 ounces per year per acre on alfalfa and clover. This is not safe on grass.

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## Other Management Options

Select an alfalfa with a quick regrowth to form a canopy quickly after cutting to suppress weeds. These alfalfas should have a fall dormancy rating of 5.

Seeding grass with alfalfa fills in void areas to help suppress weeds.

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## Raise Your Cutter Bar

Just a quick reminder to cut alfalfa fields with grass in them at the 3 to 4 inch level. This will allow quicker grass regrowth and make sure the grass is there the next year. Unlike alfalfa, that stores its energy reserves in the root, the grass stores them in the bottom portion of the plant. The following link is to a video clip at the University Of Kentucky.

[www.ca.uky.edu/pss/smith,ray](http://www.ca.uky.edu/pss/smith,ray) Click on UK Orchard Grass Grazing Time Lapse Video 1.

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## PreSidedress Nitrogen Test - PSNT

Utilization is a key component of profitably no matter what type of operation you want to look at. Now more than ever we should be very conscious if we are over spending in certain areas. The one area I feel that needs to be addressed is nitrogen application. When livestock manure is used in any type of farming operation credits need to be taken, to make sure we are not putting something on we do not need. I contacted Kevin Otte at Menke Consulting about the PSNT. Below are Kevin's comments.

*"The ideal time to collect samples is when the corn is 1 foot tall, but in most cases that is not feasible to the farmer and us. Thus, the best time for us and to get the results back to the farmer in a timely manner, is to sample when the corn is 4 to 8 inches tall. Typically this ensures that the weather (soil temperature and rainfall) has been favorable for crop growth to that height and provides for better available nitrogen results. The earlier the samples are collected the more variables can come into play prior to sidedressing and the likelihood of lower test results. The PSNT results are very accurate as they indicate the available nitrogen present at that particular time when the sample was collected. It does not predict nitrogen availability through the growing season. For guys that use manure, any source, utilizing the PSNT is money well spent. If anything, credit some nitrogen from the manure application."* – Kevin Otte – Menke Consulting

**Contact Information**

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**Benco Poly Film**

*April Prices*

- Tyrite 440/4000 \$28.25
- Tyrite 170/7200 \$24.50
- Flavor Seal 30" Bale Wrap \$72.00
- Tama Net Wrap 48" x 9840' \$220.00

**Plastar Silage Bags**

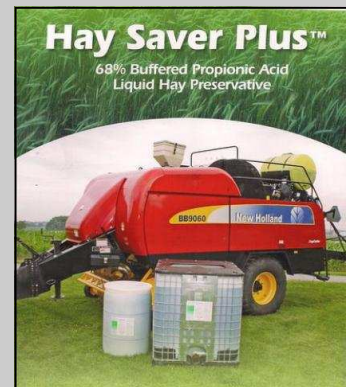
- 9' x 250' \$480.00
- 10' x 250' \$550.00
- 9' x 300' \$570.00
- 10' x 300' \$635.00

**60ft Wide Bunker Covers**

\$2.08/ft up to 200ft  
 Lengths Available to 1000 ft

**Hay Saver 68% Acid - \$1.05/lb**

2400# Tote  
 480# Barrel



*Price subject to change*