

Estimating Alfalfa RFV in the Field Using PEAQ

Step 1: Choose a representative 2-square-foot area in the field.

Step 2: Determine the most mature stem in the 2-square-foot sampling area using the criteria shown in the table at right.

Step 3: Measure the length of the tallest stem in the 2-square-foot area. Measure it from the soil surface (next to plant crown) to the tip of the stem (NOT to the tip of the highest leaf blade). Straighten the stem for an accurate measure of its length. The tallest stem may not be the most mature stem.

Step 4: Based on the most mature stem and length of the tallest stem, use the chart at the right to determine estimated RFV content of the standing alfalfa forage.

Step 5: Repeat steps 1 to 4 in four or five representative areas across the field. Sample more times for fields larger than 30 acres.

NOTE: This procedure estimates alfalfa RFV content of the standing crop. It does not account for changes in quality due to wilting, harvesting, and storage. These factors may further lower RFV content by 10 to 25 units, assuming good wilting and harvesting conditions. This procedure is most accurate for good stands of pure alfalfa with healthy growth.

Stage of Most Mature Stem			
Height of Tallest Stem (from soil surface to stem tip)	LATE VEGETATIVE	BUD STAGE	FLOWER STAGE
	Vegetative (>12") No buds visible	1 or more nodes with visible buds. No flowers visible	1 or more nodes with open flower(s)
-inches-	-----Relative Feed Value-----		
16	237	225	210
17	230	218	204
18	224	212	198
19	217	207	193
20	211	201	188
21	205	196	183
22	200	190	178
23	195	185	174
24	190	181	170
25	185	176	166
26	180	172	162
27	175	168	158
28	171	164	154
29	167	160	151
30	163	156	147
31	159	152	144
32	155	149	140
33	152	145	137
34	148	142	134
35	145	139	131
36	142	136	128
37	138	133	126
38	135	130	123
39	132	127	121
40	129	124	118
41	127	122	115
42	124	119	113