



MSU Agriculture Innovation Day

Focus on Forages and the Future

ALFALFA MANAGEMENT CALENDAR for MICHIGAN

Date	Regions of Michigan			
	Southern Counties (Kalamazoo-Washtenaw)	Central Counties (Ottawa-Huron)	North Central Counties (Missaukee-Ogemaw)	Tip of the Mitt & U.P. (Alpena-Menominee)
1-Apr				
8-Apr	apply spring fertilizer as soon as can get on field	apply spring fertilizer as soon as can get on field	apply spring fertilizer as soon as can get on field	apply spring fertilizer as soon as can get on field
15-Apr				
22-Apr				
29-Apr				
6-May	begin scouting weevils ²			
13-May		begin scouting weevils ²		
20-May	FIRST CUT ¹		begin scouting weevils ²	begin scouting weevils ²
27-May		FIRST CUT ¹		
3-Jun	begin scouting leafhopper ²	begin scouting leafhopper ²	FIRST CUT ¹	FIRST CUT ¹
10-Jun				
17-Jun	SECOND CUT	begin scouting leafhopper ²	begin scouting leafhopper ²	
24-Jun	apply fungicide ³	SECOND CUT	begin scouting leafhopper ²	begin scouting leafhopper ²
1-Jul		apply fungicide ³	SECOND CUT	
8-Jul				
15-Jul	THIRD CUT		apply fungicide ³	
22-Jul	apply fungicide ³	THIRD CUT		SECOND CUT date varies by weather and soil type
29-Jul		apply fungicide ³		
5-Aug		apply fungicide ³		
12-Aug	FOURTH CUT		THIRD CUT date varies by weather and soil type	
19-Aug	apply fungicide ³	FOURTH CUT		
26-Aug				Avoid cutting when temperatures support fall regrowth apply fall fertilizer
2-Sep				
9-Sep	FIFTH CUT		Avoid cutting when temperatures support fall regrowth	
16-Sep	Avoid cutting when temperatures support fall regrowth	Avoid cutting when temperatures support fall regrowth	apply fall fertilizer	
23-Sep				
30-Sep				
7-Oct				apply fall fertilizer
14-Oct	apply fall fertilizer	apply fall fertilizer	FOURTH CUT?	
21-Oct				
28-Oct	SIXTH CUT?	FIFTH CUT?		
4-Nov				
11-Nov				
18-Nov				

¹ See MSU Enviroweather (<https://enviroweather.msu.edu/>) for a Growing Degree Day (GDD) calculator to help pinpoint timing of first cut.

² See MSU Enviroweather (<https://enviroweather.msu.edu/>) for alfalfa weevil and potato leafhopper prediction tools.

³ Fungicide application according to label instructions can sometimes help retain leaves in summer harvests when conditions are damp.

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Variability in soil types and the influence of the Great Lakes on local weather and climate make blanket alfalfa management recommendations for Michigan challenging. This calendar is intended as a rough guide to typical dates for management of established alfalfa stands across the different regions of Michigan. Adjustments should be made for your local conditions as needed.



College of Agriculture
and Natural Resources
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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