



Saskatchewan Hay & Pasture Report

October is a month when producers are finishing up fall tasks and looking ahead to the winter months. Currently, Saskatchewan Agriculture reports that over 90% of the crop is harvested provincially. Livestock producers are planning for winter feeding and this is a good time to consider feed testing to help make a plan for winter rations. Saskatchewan Agriculture and the Beef Cattle Research Council have numerous resources to help you plan for sampling feed and to create a ration.

This will be the last Hay & Pasture Report for 2023, but you can look forward to a new season of Reports beginning in the spring of 2024. Our monthly Forage & Livestock eNews will continue to keep you up to date on Saskatchewan's forage news throughout the winter.

[Visit the SFC Website](#)

Saskatchewan Agriculture Crop Report

Excerpts from the Report for the period September 19-25, 2023

Many producers have wrapped up harvest with 91 per cent of the provincial crop is in the bin, ahead of the five and 10-year averages of 73 per cent.

With the limited moisture this year, many livestock producers are experiencing moderate water shortages for their animals. Some producers in the southwest and west-central regions are experiencing water supply shortages. There are also concerns about livestock water quality. Producers are welcome to bring livestock water samples to a regional office and work with a specialist to determine how to address water quality concerns.

Crop damage this past week is due to grasshoppers and dry conditions, with some reports of wind damaging standing crops. With many producers wrapping up harvest this week, they are now working their fields and applying post-harvest herbicides. Livestock producers continue to haul water and feed for their animals while preparing for winter.

Producers are reminded to take safety precautions in all the work they do. The Farm Stress Line is available to provide support to producers toll free at 1-800-667-4442. The public is reminded to take extra caution, time and space when encountering machinery on the roads.

[Read the full Crop Report here](#)

Watch for the SFC's Forage Price Discovery Report coming this fall!

This semi-annual report provides an in-depth look at forage pricing and quality in Saskatchewan and neighbouring jurisdictions; a recap of provincial growing conditions, transport cost and more.



Reports on hay and pasture conditions from neighbouring provinces

Excerpt from Manitoba Crop Report, September 26, 2023

Forages

- Corn silage harvest is well underway throughout the province, with some areas complete. Yields are variable depending on rainfall amounts throughout the growing season. Corn silage yields are ranging from 13 to 15 tonnes/acre.
- Straw is being baled for bedding and for cattle feed.
- Beef producers continue to chip away at second cut from fields that are predominantly grass and are cutting hay in sloughs in some areas.
- Some producers are considering taking second cut on alfalfa fields. This is because we are three weeks past the critical harvest date of September 1st, the alfalfa's root reserves should be well charged, and minimal regrowth is expected.
- Forage growth on hay & pasture is mostly finished due to dry conditions and nearing the end of the growing season.
- Light frost in parts of the region in the Northwest region have producers concerned over nitrates in their annual crop silage and greenfeed still standing, and are advised to feed test their annual crops for nitrates prior to feeding.

Livestock

- Pasture conditions are variable. On pastures that don't have sufficient forage, cattle are being supplemented or moved to fall grazing areas.
- A handful of producers are beginning to move cattle onto fenced hayfields or harvested cropland to graze available regrowth and/or stubble.
- Water supplies are adequate but at lower levels, sources will require recharging prior to the next grazing season.
- Water levels in dugouts are low. This is of particular concern on pastures located in areas that have consistently missed out on rain.
- Grass conditions on pasture are dwindling as we progress further into the fall and plant growth naturally slows. The status of individual pastures continues to be highly dependent on moisture levels, grazing management strategy, and soil type.
- Some producers are hauling cows home and taking calves to the auction marts.

[Read the full crop report here](#)

Excerpt from Alberta Crop Report Crop Conditions as of September 26, 2023

Harvest continued across the province during the last week with limited disruptions. Harvest progress of major crops is reported at 79 per cent complete across the province, a 14 per cent increase since the last report. Harvest is reported as mostly complete in the South region, as well as in some areas of the Central region. The harvest of spring cereals is reported as nearing completion with reports indicating spring wheat at 89 per cent, barley at 91 per cent and oats at 73 per cent. While reports suggest that cooler evening temperatures may be slowing canola maturation in some areas, canola harvest advanced

23 per cent this week to 62 per cent harvested. An additional 23 per cent of the provincial canola crop is reported as drying in the swath.

While the seasonal trend toward cooler and drier weather is assisting harvest, it has also continued to impact soil moisture reserves over the last week with an overall decrease of three per cent in the provincial good-to-excellent surface moisture ratings and a two per cent decrease in the provincial sub-surface soil moisture ratings when compared to the last report. The percentage of surface soil moisture rated good-to-excellent (sub-surface in brackets) for the province this week is 30 per cent (31 per cent). Regional good-to-excellent surface soil moisture ratings this week are six per cent (seven per cent) in the South, 18 per cent (19 per cent) for Central, 47 per cent (45 per cent) for the North East, 71 per cent (73 per cent) for the North West and 62 per cent (63 per cent) for the Peace.

The seasonal shift to cooler and drier weather continues to impact pasture growth as most regions reported decreased percentages of pasture rated as good-to-excellent compared to last week, with the Peace region being the notable exception. The regional percentage of pasture rated as good-to-excellent (change from last week in brackets) is 19 per cent (down one per cent) for the province. Regional reporting of good-to-excellent pasture is at five per cent (down one per cent) for the South, 16 per cent (down less than one per cent) for Central, 29 per cent (down three per cent) for the North East, 37 per cent (down one per cent) for the North West and 52 per cent (up one per cent) for the Peace.

[Read the full report here](#)

Dormant Seeding Perennial Forages

by: Keana Boere, AAg, Agri-Environmental Specialist, Outlook
September, 2023

Fall dormant seeding perennial forages can be a successful alternative to spring or summer seeding. Spring is generally the recommended time to seed perennial forages as moisture is often most abundant at that time. However, fall seeding can be done to lessen the seeding workload in the spring and wet areas that typically flood in the spring can be accessed to seed in the fall.

Timing is critical when fall seeding. If conditions are too warm, seeds may begin to germinate which can result in seed mortality. If conditions are warm enough for shoots and seedling to grow, the winter temperatures will kill the seedlings. These losses combined may result in poor forage stand establishment in the spring.

Recommended timing for fall dormant seeding is late fall, between October 15 and freeze up. The goal is for the forage seed to sit dormant over winter and not germinate until the following spring. Soil temperatures need to be below 2 C to prevent seed germination. A rule of thumb is to wait until air temperatures are 5 C or less before fall seeding.

There is a chance for seed or seedling mortality when fall dormant seeding forages, so it is recommended to increase seeding rates by 20 to 30 per cent compared to seeding rates that would be used in the spring. Forage seed is an investment, so giving the seed the best chance of survival is important.

[Read more](#)

Grazing Cattle on Cropland Can be Mutually Beneficial



by: Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC), September 12, 2023

When we hear stories of farms from previous generations, mixed operations are often the tradition, where people grew crops and had some cattle and other livestock as well. With economies of scale and farm size increasing, farms have generally become more specialized. However, recent rises in input costs and climate crises such as drought have many producers rethinking integrated farming operations.

This may mean owning both cattle and cropland, but it could also mean working with neighbours. In some situations, beef producers have been working with their cropping neighbours to develop mutually

beneficial deals where both parties can benefit from having cattle on cropland.

Integrating cattle and cropland is not new, but there are many questions about how it can work on our current landscapes. Researchers at the University of Manitoba have teamed up in search of answers. Dr. Yvonne Lawley, associate professor in the Department of Plant Science, and Dr. Emma McGeough, associate professor in the Department of Animal Science, have been working together on projects involving cover crops, polycrop blends, "shoulder season" grazing and extended grazing.

[Click here to read the full article](#)



Register today for the Saskatchewan Forage Advisory Meeting!

Date: November 9, 2023

Location: Saskatoon

This meeting is held annually with representatives from government, industry, producer groups and researchers to share information and to identify issues of concern regarding forage production and utilization. There is no charge to attend but please pre-register so we can plan for lunch.

[Click here to register now](#)

Hay pricing information

Saskatchewan Hay Market Report

The Saskatchewan Forage Council found the following September average forage asking prices for Saskatchewan (based on Kijiji, Facebook and other online advertisements):

Grass hay: \$188/tonne based on 299 tonnes on offer
Alfalfa hay: \$217/tonne based on 290 tonnes on offer
Alfalfa/grass hay: \$181/tonne based on 1513 tonnes on offer
Greenfeed: \$176/tonne based on 876 tonnes on offer
Clover: \$111/tonne (based on only two offers)
Cereal straw: \$99/tonne based on 560 tonnes on offer
Pulse straw: \$115/tonne (based on only two offers)

As compared to August, asking prices for forages have softened slightly, and there are fewer offers in most categories of forages. The number and tonnage of greenfeed and cereal straw offers increased in September as more annual crops were harvested or salvaged.

The table below illustrates asking prices for neighbouring provinces discovered by the Saskatchewan Forage Council in late summer and early fall of 2023.

Alberta and Manitoba average hay asking prices August-September 2023

Type of Hay	Alberta average (\$/Tonne)	Manitoba average (\$/Tonne)
Grass Hay	\$298	\$113
Alfalfa	\$340	\$208
Alfalfa-Grass Hay	\$315	\$147
Greenfeed	\$277	\$117
Straw	\$99	\$71

USDA Market News Service Hay Report

September 29, 2023

Wyoming Hay Report: Compared to last week, all reported hay sales sold steady. Demand was light to moderate. The best demand has been on small square bales in the western area of the state. Some producers are starting on beat harvest and when that is completed, they will turn back to selling hay to

local customers. Some producers have finished mowing 4th cutting alfalfa in the east and second or third mowed and getting ready to bale in the west. Most hay producers will proceed until a killing frost is showing up on the 10-day weather outlook.

South Dakota Hay Report: Compared to last week: Alfalfa hay steady. Moderate demand from local hay buyers, best demand from out of state dairies in need of high testing alfalfa. Good demand for grass hay as calves will be arriving in feedyard pens and need high quality, long stemmed hay to get them coming to the bunk. Soybean harvest is ongoing, in between rain showers. Very warm temps through the weekend into midweek will help to make great progress with harvest.

Montana Hay Report: Compared to last week: Hay sold generally steady. Hay sales were light this week as most producers are busy with harvest. Demand for hay remains light for local hay and mostly moderate for hay to ship out of the state. Rain or the forecast of rain continues to make putting up hay difficult as many struggle to find a big enough window to cut and dry hay. Heavy supplies of rained on or mature hay remain on the market. Demand for dairy quality, high test hay is mostly good. Limited sales sold to eastern dairies this week. Demand for straw is moderate. Heavy straw supplies are weighing on the market as a new tillage technique has pushed more producers to put up bails instead of spreading straw. According to the drought monitor 37.28% of the state is in Moderate drought or worse, down 1.84% from last week. 23.21% of the state is in Severe drought or worse, down 1.77% from last week. 9.51% of the state is in Extreme drought or worse, unchanged from last week. 0% of the state is in Exceptional drought, unchanged from last week.

View the hay reports, hay prices and hay quality designations at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/market-news/hay-reports>

[Click here to view the table of hay prices for September 29, 2023 for Wyoming, South Dakota and Montana.](#)

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Saskatchewan Forage Council | PO Box 71, Dilke, S0G 1C0 Canada

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