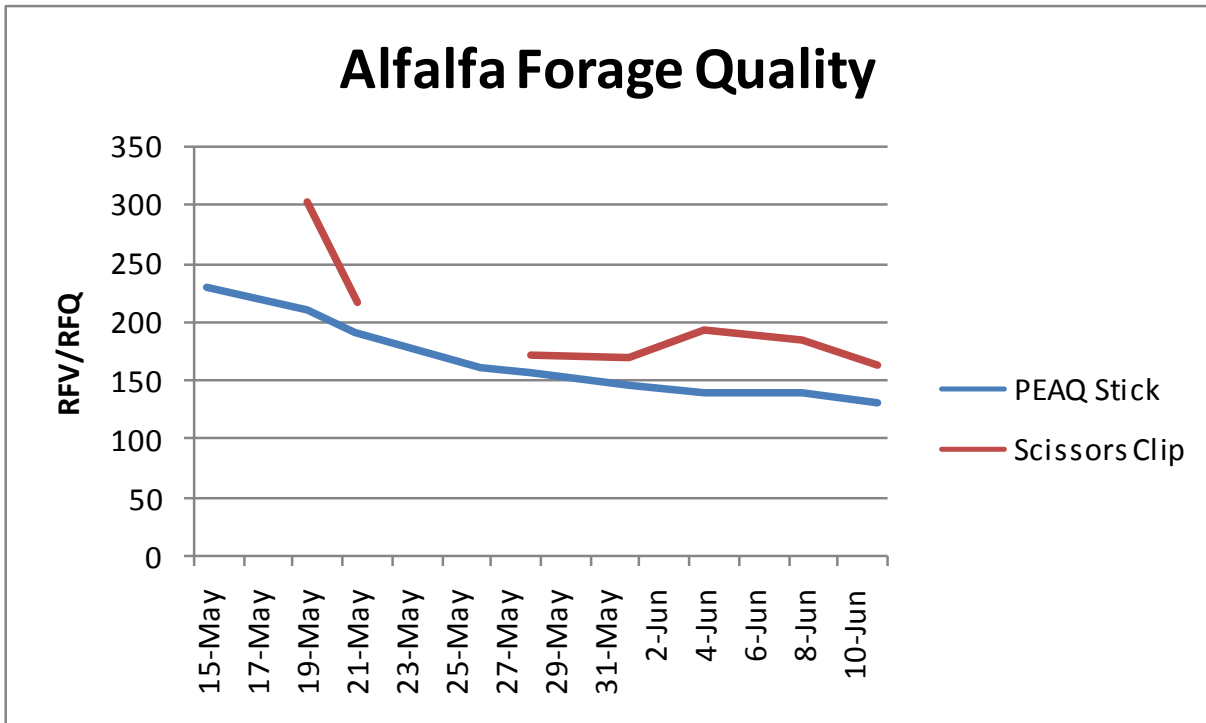


## Winnebago County Crops Quick Update

Assembled by Nick Schneider, Winnebago County Agriculture Agent

June 16, 2009

**Alfalfa Forage Quality:** May 15, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 17-18", Vegetative, 230  
May 19, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 20", Vegetative, 210,  
May 19, Scissors Clip RFV: 302  
May 21, Scissors Clip RFV: 217, CP: 25.88, NDF: 29.49  
May 21, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 24" Vegetative, 190  
May 26, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 29" Early Bud, 160, Vegetative  
May 28, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 30" Bud, 155  
May 28, Scissors Clip RFV: 172, Crude Protein: 22.75  
June 1, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 33", Bud, 145  
June 1, Scissors Clip RFV: 170, Crude Protein: 22.48  
June 4, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 35", Bud 139  
June 4, Scissor Clip RFV: 193, Crude Protein: 19.35  
June 8, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 35", Bud 139  
June 8, Scissors Clip RFV: 183.76, CP: 22.12, NDF: 33.61  
June 11, PEAQ Stick RFQ: 36", Beginning Flower: 130  
June 11, Scissors Clip, RFV: 163.30, CP: 21.96, NDF: 36.69



Alfalfa moved into the flowering stage late last week. As shown in the chart above, scissors clip measurements consistently ran 25 or more RFQ points higher than PEAQ stick estimates this year. Crude protein has remained in the high teens and low 20's % range into the second week of June. I suspect the cool, overcast conditions has helped alfalfa quality stay a little better later into first cutting than we normally anticipate. This will be the last RFQ/RFV measurement reported on first cutting. The earliest harvested first cutting fields already are 18-20" tall!

For state-wide data please go to this website: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/ag/scissorsclip/>

PEAQ Sticks can be ordered from the Midwest Forage Association for \$10 plus shipping. Download an order form at: [www.midwestforage.org/PEAQ.php](http://www.midwestforage.org/PEAQ.php)

**Wisconsin Crop Progress:** June 14 2009. Source: USDA, NASS, Wisconsin Field Office  
Full report at: <http://www.nass.usda/gov/wi/>

Soil Moisture		
	East Central Wisconsin	State Average
Very Short	0	2
Short	1	13
Adequate	83	76
Surplus	16	9

Wisconsin Weekly Weather								
City	Temperature		GDD (50 base)		Precipitation			
	Avg.	Avg. dep. from normal	March 1 to June 13	Normal	Last Week	Since June 1	June 1 dep. from normal	Year to date
Green Bay	57	-7	485	556	1.46	2.10	0.72	12.53
Madison	62	-3	655	712	1.81	1.83	0.20	18.58

Wisconsin Crop Progress					
Crop and percent of acreage	East Central		State Average		
	Central	Central	This Year	Last Year	5-Year
Corn Emerged	92	94	95	93	93
Soybeans Emerged	68	72	80	76	80
First Cutting Hay	74	64	72	26	54
Average Corn Height	6	6	7	11	11

**Observations of the week:** The insect observations I have made locally seem consistent with the state-wide DATCP surveys. A small number of adult potato leafhoppers were caught in alfalfa re-growth, but no nymphs. The population was not nearly enough to justify control. While not at the 100 aphid per sweep threshold, there are many pea aphids in alfalfa plus a few plant bugs and alfalfa weevil larvae.

**Late weed control hurts more than yield! With many corn fields now in the V-4 (Four collar leaf stage) at a height of 8 to 10 inches with weeds at about 4 inches tall, delays in post emergence weed control will contribute to increasing yield reductions. Let's go through some examples with WeedSoft yield loss estimates: Corn planted in 30" rows in mid-May, weed densities at giant foxtail=50 ft<sup>2</sup>, velvetleaf=10 ft<sup>2</sup>, common ragweed=10 ft<sup>2</sup>, common lambsquarters=10 ft<sup>2</sup>.**

**WeedSoft estimates a 20.7 bu/acre potential yield reduction at this population with no control.**

**Control this week: V4 corn, 2-4 inch weeds = 1.9 bu yield loss**

**Control next week: V6 corn, 4-8 inch weeds = 3.1 bu yield loss**

**Control in two weeks: V8 corn, 8 inch + weeds = 5.4 bu yield loss**

**But beyond the yield loss, weeds rob a considerable amount of nitrogen away from corn. Research by UW Specialists Chris Boerboom and Carrie Laboski presented across the state last winter showed in 2006, if weeds were allowed to increase from 4" to 12" before control, an additional 44 pounds of nitrogen was needed. In 2007, with the same heights, 95 more pounds of nitrogen was needed to compensate for the weeds' nitrogen use.**

**Wisconsin Pest Bulletin: Wisconsin DATCP. Volume 54, Number 8, June 12 2009**

Full report at: <http://pestbulletin.wi.gov/>

## **Alfalfa**

### **Forages & Grains**

**POTATO LEAFHOPPER** - Numbers are increasing in second growth alfalfa and vegetable crops. Counts in 8-10 inch regrowth in the southern districts ranged from 0.3-0.9 per sweep, which compares to 0-0.5 per sweep in the previous week. Although circumstances have not justified treatment in any alfalfa field surveyed thus far, numbers are approaching the economic threshold of 1.0 per sweep in 6-12 inch alfalfa and 2.0 per sweep in alfalfa taller than 12 inches. Development and reproduction are expected to accelerate with warmer temperatures predicted for next week. Nymphs could not be found in fields checked in Columbia, Dane, and Dodge counties.

**ALFALFA WEEVIL** - Larval numbers in the southern third of the state have decreased significantly due to pupation and the harvest of a high percentage of the alfalfa crop. Representative counts in regrowth alfalfa in Columbia, Dane, and Sauk counties vary from 0.1-1.2 per sweep. By contrast, infestations continue in unharvested fields in the east-central and northern areas where feeding injury exceeds 80% in some instances and as many as 5 mature larvae per sweep have been collected. The degree of damage suffered by the first crop was light in most cases, with only a few fields showing moderate to heavy leaf tip feeding.

**PEA APHID** - High populations persist in alfalfa. Adults and nymphs were swept from regrowth at the rate of 2-47 per sweep and from unharvested fields at the rate of 8-51 per sweep. Populations also have shown a minor increase in peas in the south-central counties. Should this trend continue, some treatment of peas may be needed.

**PLANT BUGS** - Mixed populations of the tarnished plant bug and alfalfa plant bug in regrowth alfalfa range from 0.1-3.5 per sweep, with an average of 0.9 per sweep. This is well below the economic threshold of 5 per sweep. Nymphs of both species are entering the last instar and some have reached maturity.

*--Krista Hamilton, DATCP Entomologist*

**WHEAT DISEASES** - A wheat disease survey of 17 fields in Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Racine, Walworth and Winnebago counties showed very few symptoms during the first week in June. Most of the surveyed fields were at the heading stage (Feekes 10.1-10.5). At these growth stages, the flag leaf and 2 leaves below were sampled to assess the incidence and severity of the major yield-reducing foliar diseases. Levels of powdery mildew, septoria leaf blotch, and leaf rust (1 pustule in 1 field) were all incidental and below established thresholds. Loose

smut was present at trace levels in only 2 fields. Fourteen of the 17 fields contained a few plants with reddish-purple discolored leaf margins, possibly symptoms of barley yellow dwarf virus or aster yellows. Growers should remain watchful for disease development in areas where wet conditions persist.

--Anette Phibbs, DATCP Plant Industry Laboratory

## Corn

**EUROPEAN CORN BORER** - The peak in moth activity should occur before June 21 in the southern counties and June 30 in the central counties. Based on the record low population of larvae documented during the abundance survey last fall (the third lowest population since surveys began in 1942), it seems probable that the first flight of corn borers will be extremely light. No larval feeding has been observed yet.

**STALK BORER** - Minor feeding injury has become visible in corn fields in the southwest, south-central, and west-central districts. In Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Iowa, Juneau, Monroe, Sauk and Vernon counties, early instar larvae ( $\frac{1}{4}$  inch) were common but not abundant on plants in the marginal 2-3 rows of fields. Numbers of affected plants were well below economically significant levels in all areas checked. The larvae of this insect complete 7-10 instars and feed for a period of 8-10 weeks.

**TRUE ARMYWORM** - Larval populations are increasing in corn, alfalfa and oats. Surveys conducted in Columbia, Dane, Juneau and Monroe counties found light leaf feeding on 1-14% of the plants in the marginal rows of corn fields, while low numbers of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch larvae were swept from scattered alfalfa fields. A strong potential exists for heavy populations to develop in lodged oats, grassy pea fields, and grassy corn fields in particular. As post-emergence herbicides begin killing the grasses in some of the late-planted weedy corn fields, armyworm larvae may concentrate on the corn plants in numbers sufficient to cause significant damage.

--Krista Hamilton, DATCP Entomologist

## Soybeans

**BEAN LEAF BEETLE** - The annual survey of 152 first growth alfalfa fields conducted from May 14-June 10 yielded just 24 overwintered adults. This figure is comparable to the 21 beetles collected at the same time last season, but is considerably lower than the numbers found during annual surveys in the years 2003-2007. Beetles were swept from 14 fields in Columbia, Fond du Lac, Grant, Jefferson, Lafayette, Rock, Trempealeau, Waukesha, Waushara and Washington counties, with no apparent pattern to their distribution. Survey results indicate that winter mortality due to severe temperatures was high. Following are the numbers of beetles collected during surveys in the previous 6 years: 2008 (21 beetles), 2007 (509 beetles), 2006 (171 beetles), 2005 (180 beetles), 2004 (180 beetles), and 2003 (101 beetles).

**SOYBEAN APHID** - No aphids were detected in any of the VE-V1 soybean fields surveyed in Dane, Columbia, Grant and Juneau counties as of June 12. The migration of aphids from buckthorn to emerging soybeans typically occurs by early to mid-June in Wisconsin.

--Krista Hamilton, DATCP Entomologist

## CORN WEED SURVEY

The annual survey of weeds in corn continued this week in Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Iowa, Jefferson, Fond du Lac, Outagamie, Sheboygan, Washington and Winnebago counties. Fourteen of the 42 sites examined at 3-day intervals since June 2 were treated with a post-emergence herbicide, and thus were removed from the sample set.

**The following paragraphs summarize the preliminary results of surveys conducted from June 5-12:**

**COMMON LAMBSQUARTERS** - Plant heights increased significantly in the past week, from an average of 2 inches from June 1-4 to an average of 4-6 inches from June 5-12. This species has been the most prevalent broadleaf weed observed in the corn fields inspected this spring. Common lambsquarters may be reducing yields in roughly 45% of the surveyed fields where densities are at or above 5 or more plants per sq. meter.

**VELVETLEAF** - Most (69%) of the sites examined contained low to moderate densities of 1-10 plants per sq. meter. Heights ranged from 2-6 inches and averaged 3 inches, with the tallest plants noted in Dane, Grant, Iowa and Sheboygan counties.

**GRASSES** - Grasses were observed at densities of 11-50 or more plants per sq. meter at 38% of sites, and averaged

4 inches tall. An exceptionally weedy field in Columbia County contained an average of 101-500 small plants per sq. meter. Yield losses due to competition from grasses are occurring in some untreated fields.

**GIANT RAGWEED** - This weed has shown little change in emergence relative to last week. Surveys found lower densities than expected, ranging from 0-5 plants per sq. meter in 12% of fields examined. The tallest plants were 14-16 inches in fields in Columbia and Dane counties.

**COMMON RAGWEED** - Seedlings averaging 2-4 inches in height were noted in fields in Columbia, Grant, Iowa, Jefferson and Sheboygan counties, but were most prevalent at sites in the east-central area. Densities were low to moderate and ranged 1-10 plants per sq. meter. In general, very little yield loss can be attributed to this weed at a majority of locations.

--Clarissa Hammond, DATCP Weed Scientist

The Soy Report, Shawn Conley UW Soybean and Small Grain Specialist and Paul Esker, UW Plant Pathologist. <http://thesoyreport.blogspot.com/>

### **Fusarium Head Blight Update - June 11**

Currently, wheat is still ranging from early heading to well past flowering growth stages around the state. We are still receiving questions regarding disease management decisions, especially if we should be concerned for Fusarium head blight. Recall the critical period for infection by the pathogen that causes FHB (*Fusarium graminearum*) is during flowering and requires warm and humid conditions (i.e., moisture). This period lasts approximately 7 days.

To look at the current risk, I examined the FHB forecast from Penn State (<http://www.wheatcab.psu.edu>) for June 11 and it shows a low risk across the state (green color = low risk; yellow = medium risk; red = high risk). Also, examining the 24-48 hour forecast risk map, Wisconsin remains at a low risk for FHB.

### **Short Wheat Does Not Necessarily Mean Reduced Straw Yield – June 10**

As most wheat across Wisconsin has headed, county agents as well as crop scouts alike are commenting on the overall "shortness" of the 2009 winter wheat crop. It has been well documented that plant height alone is a poor predictor of straw yield. However, Morrison et al. (2007) found a strong relationship among plant height, grain yield, and straw yield in high yielding wheat varieties in Northern Illinois ([Predicting Wheat Straw Yields in Northern Illinois](#)). A more critical factor for Wisconsin growers in 2009 would be their planting date. Donalson et al. (2001) found that planting date proved to be a strong driver in increasing straw yield (earlier planting date increased straw yield). In Wisconsin many acres of wheat were planted later than normal due to delayed corn and soybean harvest. Wisconsin growers also experienced significant winter-kill that thinned wheat stands. Though these thin wheat fields did compensate somewhat through increased tillering, straw yields may be reduced.