

Alfalfa Report

2-14-05

Spring Plantings: It is always better to plant alfalfa in fall, rather than the following spring. Whether to plant in spring, rather than the following fall, is a different question. Some things to consider are the cost of fallowing the land until fall, whether or not another crop can be grown until fall, and how hay yield and quality compare between fall and spring plantings. Generally, spring plantings result in about half the yield of fall plantings the first year, and there is some evidence that spring plantings have reduced yield the second and third years also. The hay produced in the first year of spring planting is of lower quality and has lower value compared to fall planting due to the time of year cuttings are obtained. Another consideration is differences in stand life, and amortization of establishment costs over the life of the stand.

Insect Management: Egyptian alfalfa weevil buildup in hay fields during the early spring. Sample alfalfa fields every 2 to 4 days after weevil larvae first appear. Sample each field quadrant by taking 5 sweeps with a standard net. Count the number of weevil larvae in each 5 sweep sample and add the totals for each of the field quadrants. Divide the grand total for the field by the total number of sweeps (20). The field should be treated with an insecticide registered for weevil control when the average number of larvae reaches or exceeds 20 per sweep. If sweep counts are 10 to 15 larvae per sweep just before cutting, apply malathion under the windrows may be considered. Avaunt is a newly registered insecticide for alfalfa hay production that will control EAW.

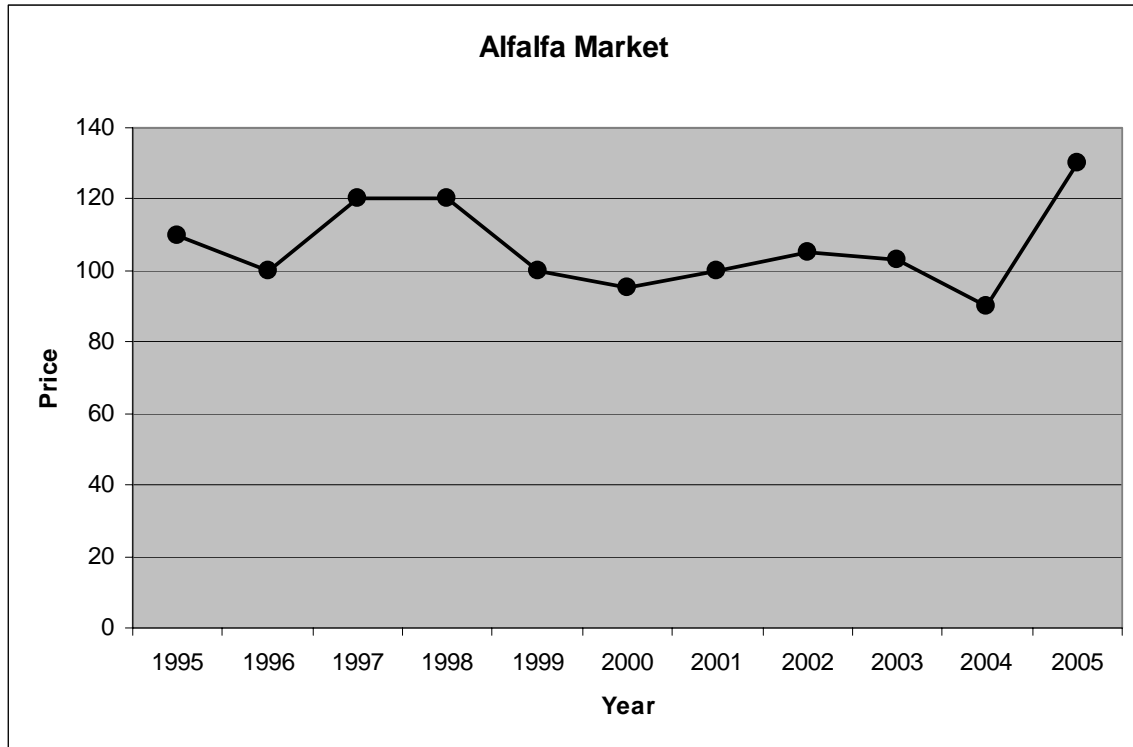
Weed Control: Now is the time to apply preemergent herbicides for the control of summer annual weeds. Remember that it is better to be a month early than a day late.

<u>Market Summary</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Offgrade</u>
Past 2 weeks	135	120	125	100-110
Last year	115	80	90	65-75

10 Year Summary

2005 - 130
2004 - 90
2003 - 103
2002 - 105
2001 - 100
2000 - 95

1999 – 100
1998 – 120
1997 – 120
1996 – 100
1995 – 110



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