

Alfalfa Report

3-14-05

Weed Control: Sandbur and sprangletop are notorious for surviving through the winter and regrowing from established plants. These weeds will not be controlled with preemergence herbicides and are difficult to control with postemergence herbicides such as Poast or Select/Prism.

Insect Management: Several species of Empoasea leafhoppers occur in alfalfa. Adult leafhoppers are about 1/8" long, bright green, wedge-shaped bodies. Nymphs have green wedge-shaped bodies and run rapidly forward, backward, or from side to side when disturbed. In the low desert, damage may occur from May through September. Symptoms include a yellow, wedge-shaped area at the tip of the leaf and stunting. With the first sign of injury, sample the field with a standard sweep net taking 10 sweeps in 4 to 6 areas over the entire field and count the adults and nymphs. When an alfalfa field is 2 or more weeks from harvest, treat if counts reach 5 leafhoppers per sweep. If alfalfa is within 10 days to 2 weeks of harvest, treat at 10 per sweep. If alfalfa is to be harvested in a few days, early cutting will control leafhoppers. Leafhopper infestations may be confined to the first 50 to 100 feet of the field margin. If this is the case, treat only the field edges where high leafhopper counts of treatable magnitude are found.

Summer Slump: "Summer slump" is well-known by alfalfa growers as the decrease in yields that normally occurs each summer in Arizona. Yield decline with later harvests in the season occurs in most alfalfa-growing regions of the world. Factors responsible for summer decline may include temperature, day length, water stress, aging, and depletion of food reserves in the plant. The rate of maturation of the crop is probably a primary factor responsible for summer decline. In other words, the crop flowers so fast that time is not available to accumulate yields similar to the spring. Summer slump can not be avoided in Arizona, but maintaining adequate soil moisture levels can slow yield decline. Also, increasing the cutting interval for one harvest during the late summer is recommended to promote the health of the stand during this stressful time of year.

<u>Market Summary</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Offgrade</u>
Past 2 weeks	140	120	130	90-100
Last year	120	95	110	85-95

10 Year Summary

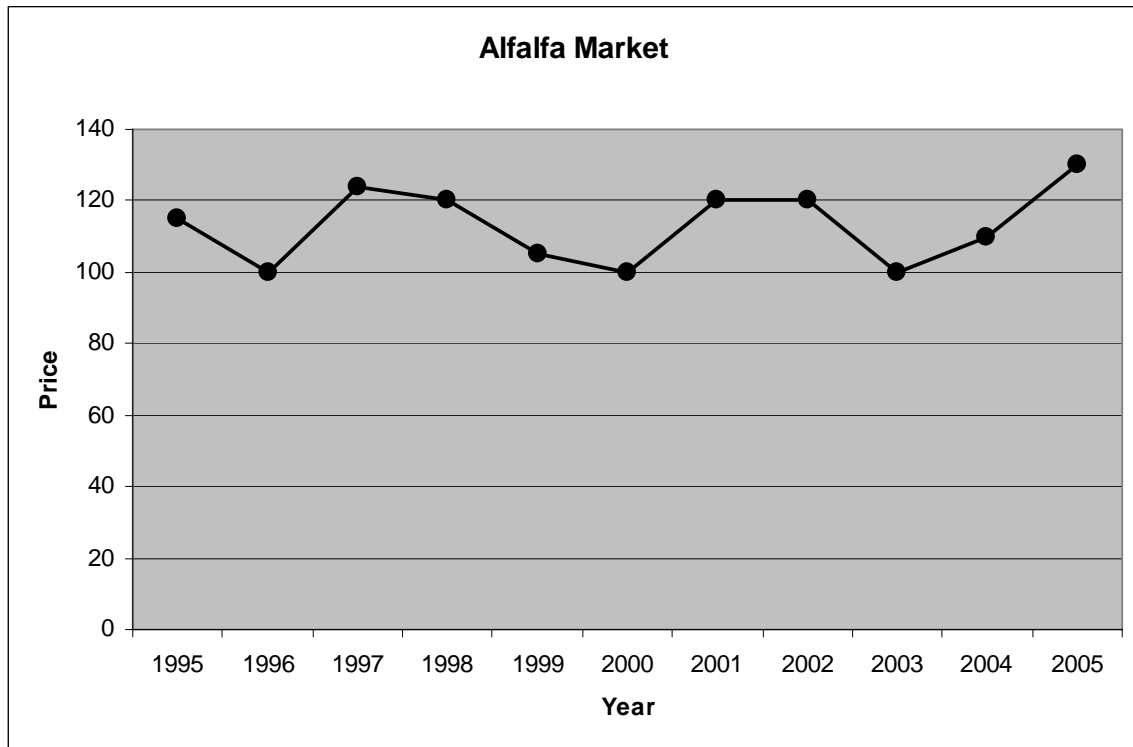
2005 - 130

2004 - 110

2003 - 100

2002 - 120

2001 – 120
2000 – 100
1999 – 105
1998 – 120
1997 – 124
1996 – 100
1995 – 115



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