



Hay Prices for New Mexico

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County/Region	Contact	Premium Hay (\$/ton)	Top Quality Hay (\$/ton)	Other Hay (\$/ton)
Chaves	Sandra Barraza, County Agent	\$185-210	\$175-180	\$155-175, Dry Cow-Good Dry Cow; \$7.50-\$7.75, small bales
Dona Ana/Socorro	Various Sources	\$190	\$175 and up	\$220, horse hay; \$7.00, small bales
Eddy	Woods Houghton, County Agent	\$220, last year stored \$240, first cutting	\$185-200, last year store hay	\$225-255, horse hay small bales
Lea	Wayne Cox, County Agent	\$190 and up	\$175-180	<\$175
Roosevelt	Patrick Kircher, County Agent	\$200-225 FOB	\$180-200 FOB	<\$180
San Juan	Gary Hathorn, County Agent	\$210	\$180	\$150
SE Colorado	USDA-CO	\$150-185	\$120-130	\$100, Utility-Fair
SW Colorado	USDA-CO	\$150-160	\$130-140	\$110-120, Fair

Roundup Ready Alfalfa Update #2

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The August 16, 2007, Alfalfa Market News (http://www.nmhay.com/market_news.htm) included new requirements for equipment and hay for those growing Roundup Ready alfalfa (RRA). As stated in that article, anyone having anything to do with alfalfa, whether Roundup Ready or not, as a grower, custom harvester, transporter, seller, or end user should be aware of the current status of RRA and its effects on everyone having anything to do with alfalfa. Things have changed slightly for the better with a Supplemental Administrative Order issued by APHIS on December 18 2007. This article provides the revised guidelines for hay production including a comparison with the previous guidelines (see the website for guidelines regarding seed harvesting operations, which did not change). Other legal information about RRA can be found at (<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/biotechnology/alfalfa.shtml>).

First, pollinators still cannot be released into an RRA fields grown for forage (hay or silage). Second, forage harvesting equipment (hay or silage) can be dedicated to the harvest of RRA only and so labeled with no cleaning requirement, also as in the past. Otherwise, equipment to be used in RRA and non-RRA fields must be properly cleaned before being used for non-RRA. There is a change here, in that, you do not have to clean the equipment before it leaves the field. You can take it to a more convenient place on the same farm, like the shop, to do the cleaning before it is used for hay to be sold as non-RRA, which will be discussed more later.

With the original order, when using square balers of any size, the first three bales dropped in the non-RRA field were considered to be contaminated and must either be stored with RRA or destroyed. Now the three bale rule applies only to

small square balers. If your large square baler has a bale ejector, you can eject any complete bale and only the first bale made in the non-RRA field has to be stored as RRA. If your baler is not equipped with a bale ejector, two bales have to be moved (instead of the three previously required).

Round balers are considered internally clean after the last bale, however partial, is tied and ejected in the RRA field to clear the bale chamber. The part about partial bales was not specified previously, but usually there is a way to trigger the tying/wrapping mechanism so a partial bale can be ejected, leaving the baler clean on the inside. For all forage equipment, including the flatbeds of trucks, trailers, wagons, and stacking equipment, in addition to harvesting equipment (e.g., swathers, rakes and other windrow manipulators, balers choppers), cleaning involves sweeping, blowing with forced air, or washing external parts. This did not change.

An alternative to the cleanout procedure for harvesting equipment is to declare and handle all alfalfa on the farm, including non-RRA, as RRA and label your equipment as dedicated to RRA production. If you plan to feed all your own hay, this is probably your best option because there has never been a concern about food safety due to the Roundup Ready genetic modification. Should you decide to harvest some of your hay as non-RRA, you will have to do the clean up at that time.

Storage requirements have been eased somewhat as well. Previously, RRA hay or silage stored anywhere other than at the field where it was grown had to be separated from non-RRA forage and labeled. Bales of RRA that left the farm where they were grown were to be individually tagged with the wording, "Roundup Ready Alfalfa," and could be used for animal feed only (this last part still applies). You no longer need to tag each bale, unless you want to. You only need to tag the lot with a sign at least 8 1/2" x 11" in size marked "Roundup Ready Alfalfa." Additionally, RRA and non-RRA can be commingled and sold if the entire lot is labeled as containing RRA hay and buyers are notified to that effect. The labeling requirement reflects this as well. Hay sold as non-RRA hay must still be segregated and all hay lots containing RRA, commingled or not, must be labeled. The end user may still commingle RRA and non-RRA, if desired. Again, if the hay is fed on the farm where it was grown, there is no concern about commingling.

RRA hay having viable seed must be covered with a secure tarp during transport. Sweepings from equipment used for hauling RRA hay must be left at the final destination of unloading. When transporting hay off the farm or away from a seller's location, a bill of lading must accompany it with the following information: RRA designation, name address, and signature of seller and buyer; name and address of hauler, lot number, bale count, weight, scale and ticket number, and shipment date. The vehicle also must be placarded with a sign at least 8 1/2" x 11" in size with the words, "Roundup Ready Alfalfa." In lieu of placarding the vehicle, you can tag each bale (some choice!).

Hopefully, this will be cleared up by late summer planting time in 2009. In the meantime, it appears as though the court and APHIS continue trying to make it as painless as possible for all involved. I am proud to have participated in development of the Supplemental Administrative Order because I believe it to be an improvement that will make living through the current crises surrounding RRA more palatable.

The prohibition on planting RRA also may still affect seed availability for a couple of years (<http://hayandforage.com/ehayarchive/order-alfalfa-seed/>). Consequently, for planting in 2008 and 2009, you should order seed early, preferably in the spring to be delivered just in time for late summer and early fall plantings (you should be doing this anyway). Additionally, don't hoard seed by buying your seed for 2009 in 2008. There are several good reasons for not hoarding seed that were covered in the previous article, which may be found online at the first website given.

When it comes to the current status Roundup Ready alfalfa and its affect on all alfalfa, the more you know, the better. Be sure to review the web pages cited here for yourself so you'll know what your rights and responsibilities are regarding Roundup Ready alfalfa, as a grower, possible harvester, possible hauler, or possible user. For questions about alfalfa establishment or management, including the Roundup Ready injunction, call your County Cooperative Extension Service Office.

******* UPCOMING EVENTS *******

- Dairy Producers of New Mexico Convention, Ruidoso, NM, June 20-21, 2008. www.nmdairy.org

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