

# Cooperative Extension

The University of Arizona ~ College of Agriculture and Life Sciences ~ Tucson, AZ 85721  
Yuma County Office 2200 W. 28<sup>th</sup> Street, Ste. 102 Yuma, AZ 85364 (520) 726-3904  
(520) 726-8472 FAX



## Alfalfa Report Yuma County, Arizona April 9, 2001

### Production Update:

#### Hay Preservatives (Part 2): Chemical

hay preservatives include organic acids (especially propionic acid), ammonia, and urea. Propionic acid is generally thought to be the most reliable preservative, although other compounds are also effective. Horses do not relish hay treated with propionic acid, although no evidence exists to date that this compound is harmful to them. Ammonia can be used as a preservative and is often applied in an effort to boost feed value of low quality hay. Anhydrous ammonia applied at rates greater than 3% may cause toxic compounds to form and pass into milk. Urea does not have the volatility and safety problems of ammonia and is an effective preservative.

**Insect Management:** The granulate cutworm, *Agrotis subterranea* (Fabricius), is a devastating pest of bed planted alfalfa and is also an occasional pest of flood irrigated alfalfa. The cutworm larvae often go undetected until after cutting or hay removal. When fields are watered back, there may be areas with little or no regrowth due to cutworms feeding on new shoots from alfalfa crowns. Granulate cutworm is nocturnal and will move from cracks in the soil or from under duff in the evening and climb into the alfalfa canopy to feed. Some of the cutworms feed on new shoots under the duff, holding back regrowth, depleting starch reserves in the crowns and thereby weaken the plants. Weakened plants are more susceptible to disease. Permethrin, cyfluthrin and endosulfan are insecticides that control this pest. Cutworms feeding under the duff may escape insecticide treatments.

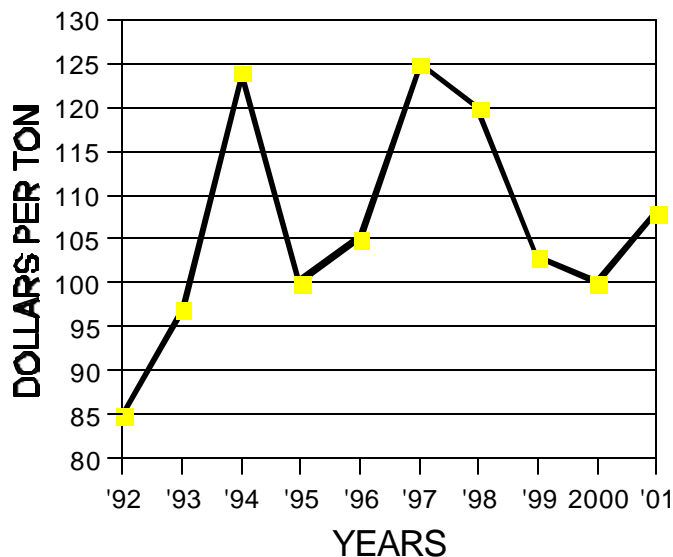
**Weed Control:** The weed species that predominate in the fields are those that are left behind by our control practices. As herbicide usage changes, the weeds change. For instance, sowthistle has become more widespread as we have changed from 2, 4-DB to Pursuit and malva and shepardspurse have disappeared. Nutsedge and bermudagrass have become more widespread and annual grasses less prevalent due to the change from Eptam to Select and Poast.

### **Market Summary:**

	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Off grade</u>
Past 2 Weeks (Mar. 26 to Apr. 8, 2001)	115	100	108	90-100
Last Year (Mar. 26 to Apr. 8, 2000)	105	90	100	70-90

### **10 Year Summary**

**(March 26, to  
April 9, 1992 - 2001)**



Barry R. Tickes  
Extension Agent, Agriculture  
Yuma County Cooperative Extension  
292c

Michael Ottman  
Extension Agronomist  
University of Arizona

Eric T. Natwick  
Farm Advisor, Entomology  
Imperial County Cooperative Extension

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