

Cooperative Extension

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Alfalfa Report Yuma County, Arizona January 14, 2002

Production Update:

Banking water: Many growers apply more water than alfalfa needs during the winter in order to have “water in the bank” during the summer. This practice does have some merit on deep soils if irrigation water is in short supply during the summer. Subsoil moisture can contribute to yield and stand survival when alfalfa is stressed for water. Alfalfa is a deep-rooted crop and can take up water from depths of 8 feet or more. Subsoil moisture at a depth of 20 to 30 feet has been reported to contribute to alfalfa survival in drought years under dryland conditions.

Insect Management: Growers occasionally ask about the cause of puckered green leaves in their alfalfa. Puckered, green leaves are symptoms of thrips feeding. Thrips are tiny insects that feed on the surface of young leaves and bud tissue. The injury to the leaves is minor and quickly scars over. The scarred tissue does not grow as quickly as undamaged leaf tissue causing the leaves to pucker and curl. Thrips may be an important alternative food source for predaceous insects that help control more serious alfalfa insect pests. Presently there is no information on the economic importance of thrips in alfalfa and no control actions are recommended.

Weed Control: Sencor can be applied after sheeping and will control many broadleaf and grassy weeds. Applications can be sprayed on when a minimum of crop foliage is present or impregnated onto solid fertilizer. If applying with fertilizer, a minimum of 200 lbs/acre should be used to achieve adequate coverage.

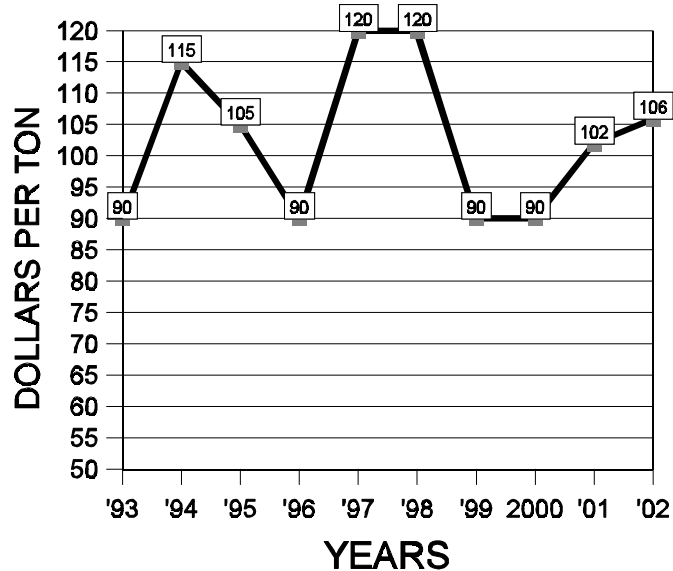
Market Summary:

Past 2 Weeks (Jan 1, 2002 - Jan 13, 2002)
Last Year (Jan 1, 2001 - Jan 13, 2001)

High	Low	Average	Off grade
115	100	106	90-100
105	95	102	70-90

10 Year Summary

(January 1, to
January 13, 1993 - 2002)



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