

Where to Send Samples?

Valley Ag Supply! We have an on-site NFTA certified hay testing lab! Just stop on in,



or send your bagged, probed samples in the mail for only \$14.00+ tax!

We Have Hay Probes!

We have probes available for \$69.99.



...and Free Sample Bags!

Just ask us!

★ Very Important! ★

Send your samples in **ASAP** after you take them! The longer you leave them sit, the more inaccurate the sample is. If you aren't able to send them in right away, go ahead and put them in the freezer until you are ready!

How Do I Get My Results?

We can fax, email, call you, or send the results in the mail at no additional charge! Just let us know which works for you!

VALLEY AG SUPPLY

509 Washington St.
Gayville, SD 57031

Phone: 605.267.3100
Fax: 605.267.3098
E-mail: valleyhaylab@iw.net

Information taken from "Hay Sampling-It's Important" by Dan Putnam University of California Davis and Mike Collins University of Kentucky, and "Sampling hay, silage, and total mixed rations for analysis" by Dan Undersander, Randy Shaver, Jim Linn, Pat Hoffman, and Paul Peterson.

Hay Sampling



605.267.3100

Why is Hay Sampling Important?

Sampling hay and forage is extremely important to assure an accurate forage test. A lab test is only as good as the sample provided to the lab. In practice, hay sampling produces more variations in the results than does lab error. Here's the dilemma: Thousands of pounds of highly variable plant material must be represented in a single, tiny thumbnail-sized sample! This sample must not only represent the proper leaf-stem ratio and the legume/grass mix,



but also reflect the spotty presence of weeds. Sampling variation is a common problem in hay testing and causes millions of dollars in lost revenue each year. However, if sampling protocol is carefully followed, sampling variation can be reduced to an acceptable level, and the feed quality successfully predicted.

What to Sample

A "lot" of hay is the forage harvested within one day from one field and/or specific variety/hybrid. It is taken from the same cutting, is the same stage of maturity, and has a uniform amount of grass, weeds, or rain damage. A hay lot also is uniform in other qualities: odor, amount of mold, color, stem texture and size, and leafiness.



How to Sample

1. Test each forage lot separately. Mark the location of each lot in the barn or storage shed for easy reference when feeding.
2. Take 15 to 20 widely separated cores or samples from each lot.
3. Use a bale core sampler to reduce error. The core sampler should have an internal diameter of at least 3/8 in and a length of 12 to 24 in. Keep the core sampler sharp so it cuts through bales rather than pushes stems aside. Insert the core sampler at a 90-degree angle on the end or at a 45-degree angle anywhere along the side.
4. Mix the cores in a clean pail. Place the

entire sample in a clean plastic bag and seal tightly. Do not divide the sample. It is normal for the leaves and stems to separate and settle in the sample.

5. Label each plastic bag with the farm name, address, a sample number, plus forage type (ex: alfalfa, alfalfa-timothy) and variety.

Sample locations for various types of bales

Baled Hay	Distribution of Leaves and Stems.	Best Place to Sample
Small Square Bales	When viewed from the end, leaves are concentrated on the tight side of the bale.	Take a core sample through the center of either end.
Large Square Bales	Uniform across the end face, but may vary throughout the length.	Take sample anywhere on the bale. Insert corer at 45 degree angle to the side or 90 degree angle to the end.
Round Bales	Uniform on the circumference.	Take a core sample from the curved side of the bale. If the surface is moldy, remove the outer layer before sampling. The corer should be perpendicular to the side.