

San Luis Valley, Colorado, Alfalfa Variety Performance Test at Center, 2009.

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Summary

The 2009 results of Colorado State University's alfalfa variety performance test at Center are presented together with 2007-08 in Table 1. Plots were planted in July 2006 and the first harvest year was 2007. The trial will be harvested for three years. Alfalfa stands are excellent and plots have been fairly well weed-free both years. The field had insecticide applied for alfalfa weevil prior to second cutting in 2008. The field is center-pivot irrigated as needed.

There was good snow cover in 2009 and stand loss was minimal. Rains were plentiful in the month prior to first cutting, thankfully, there were very few rains during curing. First cutting was a little earlier than normal this year. Harvest was excellent with very good precision. Vernal and Ranger had the lowest yields. Ten (10) of the cultivars were in the top yield group for first cutting. Second cutting was also early, yields averaged only 1.6 ton/acre. There were only two varieties in the top yield group for second cutting.

Table 1. Forage yields of 16 alfalfa varieties at Center, CO (San Luis Valley)^{2/} in 2007-9.

Variety	Source	Total 2008	Total 2007	2-Year Average	2009 1st	2009 2nd	2009 3rd	Tot
-----tons/acre ³ -----								
FSG 406	Allied Seed	6.13*	5.56*	5.85*	1.98*	1.68*		
L 447 HD	Legacy Seeds	5.81*	5.74*	5.77*	1.88*	1.64		
Lariat 120	JR Simplot Co	5.84*	5.64*	5.74*	1.86*	1.82*		
Ameristand 407TQ	America's Alfalfa	5.82*	5.58*	5.70*	1.90*	1.67		
Genoa	NK/Syngenta	5.58*	5.69*	5.63*	1.86*	1.63		
WL 357 HQ	WL Research	5.65*	5.61*	5.63*	1.95*	1.63		
Mountaineer 2.0	Croplan Genetics	5.78*	5.44	5.61*	1.82	1.62		
FSG 351	Allied Seed	5.39	5.82*	5.61*	1.85*	1.52		
Ranger	USDA-NE AES	5.38	5.65*	5.51*	1.72	1.44		
54V09	Pioneer	5.58*	5.42	5.50*	1.76	1.60		
Whitney	Eureka Seeds	5.32	5.56*	5.44	1.79	1.54		
FSG 408 DP	Allied Seed	5.39	5.44	5.42	1.84*	1.54		
Vernal	USDA-WI AES	5.27	5.43	5.35	1.74	1.59		
WL 355 RR	WL Research	5.43	5.03	5.23	1.77	1.60		
Medalist	Int. Farmers Assoc.	4.88	5.50	5.19	1.94*	1.57		
FSG 425 RR	Allied Seed	4.71	5.14	4.93	1.86*	1.67		
Average		5.50	5.52	5.51	1.85	1.61		
CV (%)		10.4	4.5	6.2	5.6	7.4		
LSD (0.10)^{4/}		0.68	0.29	0.41	0.12	0.14		

^{2/} Trial conducted on the Richard Ramstetter Farm, Saguache County Road 44 & Road B; seeded 7/20/06 at 20 #/acre.

^{3/} Yields calculated on oven-dry basis.

^{4/} Least Significant Difference: yield differences less than LSD are not statistically different.

* Top Yield Group; yields followed by * are not significantly different from the highest yield in the table (LSD 10%).

Site Information:

Elevation = 7700 ft.

Average annual precipitation = 6.92 inches.

Average frost-free days = 88 days (32⁰F).

Average last spring frost - June 10; average first fall frost - September 6.

Soil Series: Platoro Loam / Norte gravelly sandy loam.

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