

## Weekly Ag Report

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Hi this is David Lile with the weekly Ag Report.

Monday's rain storm helped settle the dust and rinsed pollen out of the air, but June rain in Lassen County usually means that somebody's hay is getting wet and that's never a good thing. Rain damaged hay is discounted in price sometimes more than 50%.

How much damage does rain cause? Well that depends...if just one day or night of rain passes through and then dry weather returns, farmers can turn the windrows to promote drying and might still put up high quality hay. No doubt Lassen County farmers are skilled at managing hay harvest through a rain storm. However, persistent wet weather that lasts for several days creates a bigger problem. Think of it this way, the best condition for putting up high quality hay is for it to dry quickly. A rapid curing process locks in most of the proteins, carbohydrates and sugars that were present at cutting. On the flip side, several days of moist conditions provide the perfect opportunity for bacteria and molds to infest the hay before it cures. This reduces the nutritive value of the hay, and makes it less palatable for livestock.

If there is a silver lining to all this, it is that lower value hay not suitable for dairies can still make good winter hay for our local beef cattle.

On the weed front...tall white-top (perennial pepperweed) our region's most difficult and troublesome weed is bolting, which means it is sending up the upright stems that will create flowers. The optimum time to treat white-top is from when the flower buds are first visible through flowering. We are also at a critical time for Scotch Thistle, which should be treated *before* it flowers. So the time is now to make sure you have weed control products on hand, your sprayer is working and calibrated, etc. Give us a call at the Cooperative Extension office at 251-8133 to visit about control options.

On the Ag calendar... remember to get those Fair Entries turned in this week ahead of the June 8 deadline and we are all looking forward to Farm Bureau's Rock the Wake event on Emerson Lake on June 16.