



IAPO's Hay Analysis & Ration Formulation Program

Hay makes up a large part of the winter ration for most cowherds in Ontario. The quality and quantity of feed eaten by cows has an effect on the condition of calves at birth, cows milking ability and potential for rebreeding. Calves born in a weak condition are more likely to pick up diseases. They have reduced immunity which means less resistance to disease. This shows up most often if calving takes place during wet, cold conditions.

“What cows are fed effects the condition of calves at birth, milking ability, and potential for rebreeding”

All hay is not the same. This year's challenging haying conditions have left farmers with a wide range in quality. We can't change the quality of this winter's hay feed. However if we know the quality we can put the available hay to best use. This means feeding poorer hay when the cowherd's needs are least and feeding better hay when the needs are greatest.

“Haying conditions have left farmers with a wide range in quality”

How do we find out the quality of hay? A sample of your hay can be sent to a lab for analysis. The analysis report shows the moisture, protein, calcium, phosphorus, calcium to phosphorus ratio, potassium, magnesium and sodium content. Soils in certain parts of the province are lacking in minerals. Magnesium and selenium are good examples.

“With hay samples, analysis, and ration balancing, beef producers can meet the needs of the herd, maintaining productivity & profitability”

This fall IAPO is offering to take a hay sample for each producer and have it analyzed. We will follow the analysis with a balanced ration. The ration will show the amount of hay needed per day. The amount and type of salt and mineral will also be indicated. If hay quality is poor a grain supplement may be recommended. A grain supplement may be required for growing and finishing animals depending on expected gain. IAPO will cover the cost of analysis (some restrictions apply).

If you are interested in having your hay sampled and tested please **call the Camden at Stirling office at 1 800 363-0329 or Tyler at the London office at 1800 663 6912** or let us know when you see IAPO staff as we visit your farm.

IAPO

First Nations Farm and Business Financing