



Judging Hay and Haylage

	Perfect Score	
	Hay	Haylage
Maturity	40	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hay should be cut when legumes are in first flower and grasses are in boot stage (heads just emerging) • Late cut hay is low in field value • Early cut hay will produce low yields but be tasty 		
Colour, Odour and Disease	20	35
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should retain a green colour • Hay should have a fresh smell • Haylage should have a sharp, sweet smell • Musty, burnt or rotten smells indicate poor quality hay or haylage • Discolouration is undesirable 		
Leaf to Stem Ratio	20	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the feed value is in the leaves • Good quality hay will retain most of its leaves 		
Moisture and Condition	0	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moisture content should be 55-65% • You should not be able to squeeze out water • Very wet samples may rot in silo • Should be free from mould or slime • If too dry, haylage will lose nutrients and taste 		
Legume-grass Balance	15	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legumes are higher in protein than grasses of similar maturity • For hay: over 75% legumes is excellent • For haylage: over 50% legumes is best 		
Purity	5	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign materials such as weeds or straw indicate a low feed value 		
Total	100	100

Sections of the Judging Fact Sheets were adapted from the 4-H Ontario Judging Toolkit
with the permission of the Ontario 4-H Council.

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