

# Forage production and hay prices in 2026



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Grower



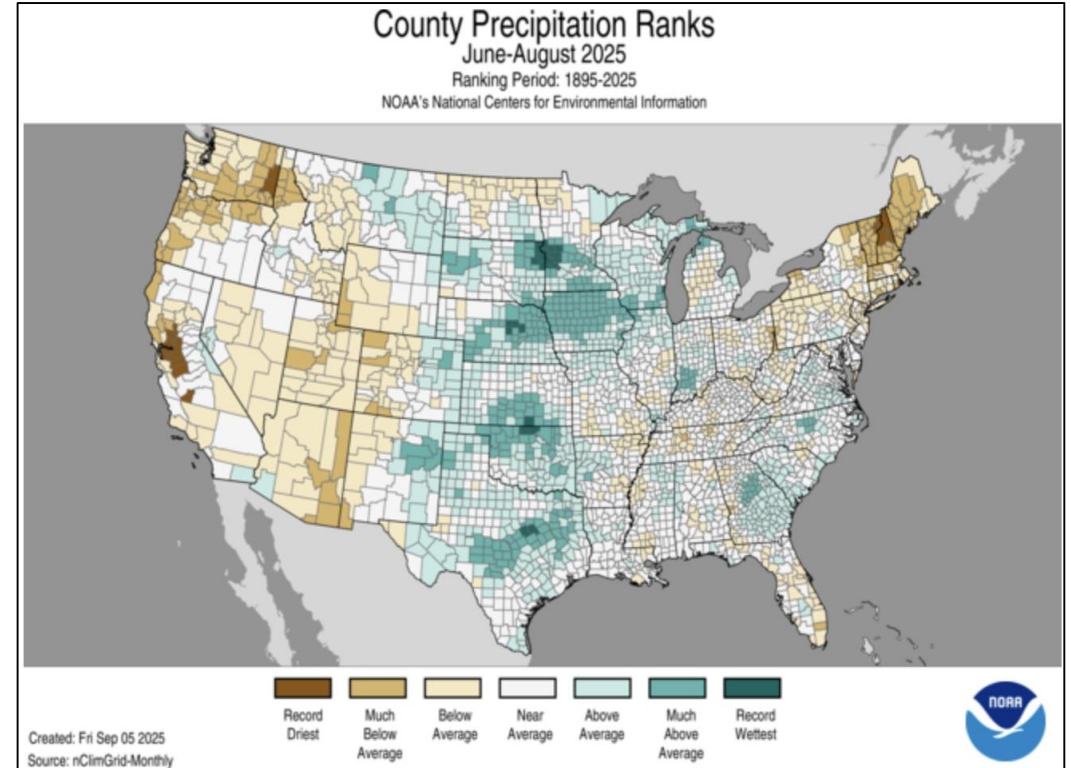
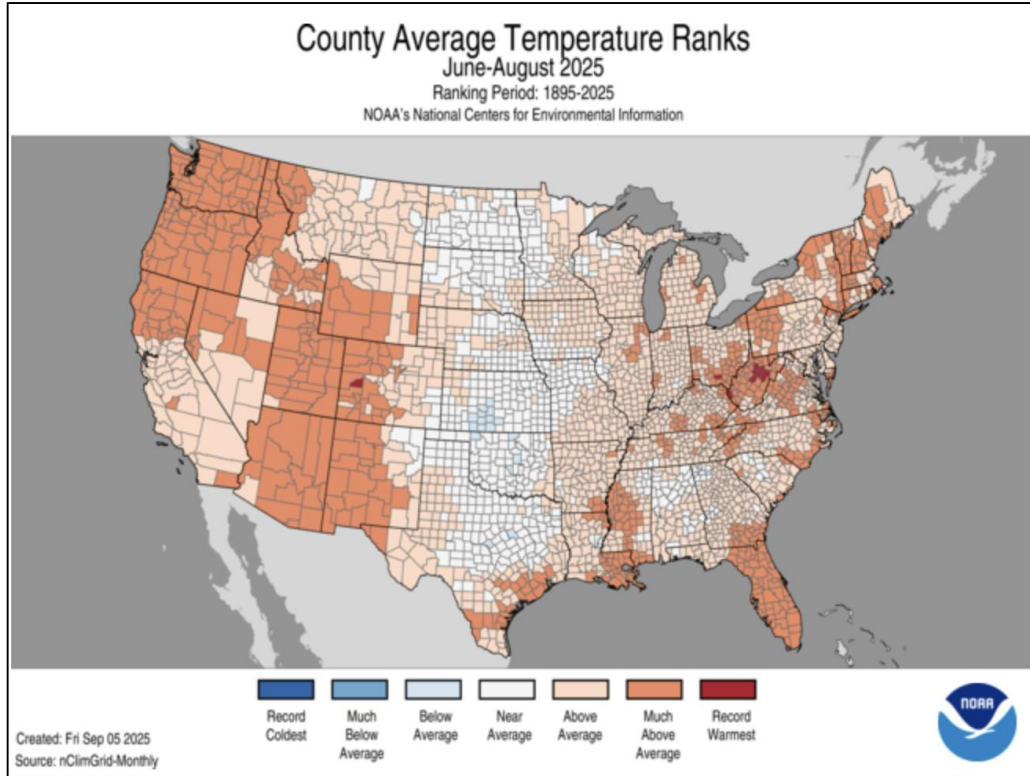
Reminder: Forage production and market trends are regional.



# What have we been dealing with?

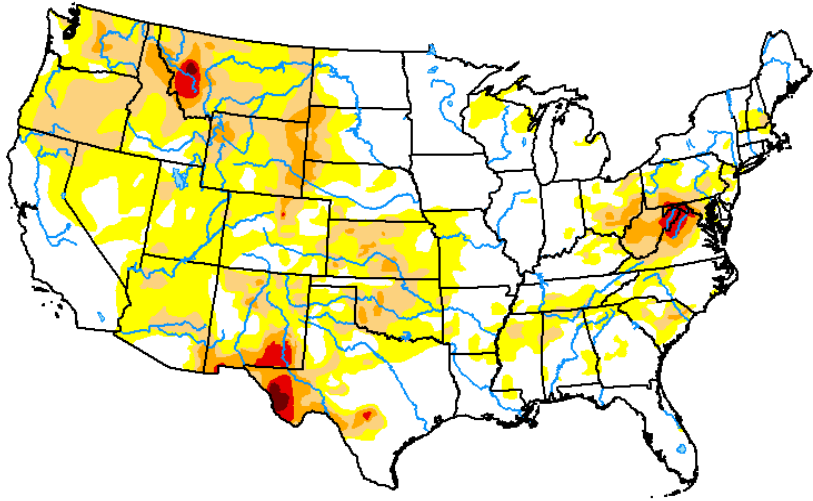
- A lot of early season rainfall (sometimes in excess)
- Dry late summer and fall
- Low commodity feed prices
- Beef prices remain high, herd numbers are low
- More dairy cows, lower milk prices
- Total forage production, hay stocks to be announced

# Temperature and precipitation



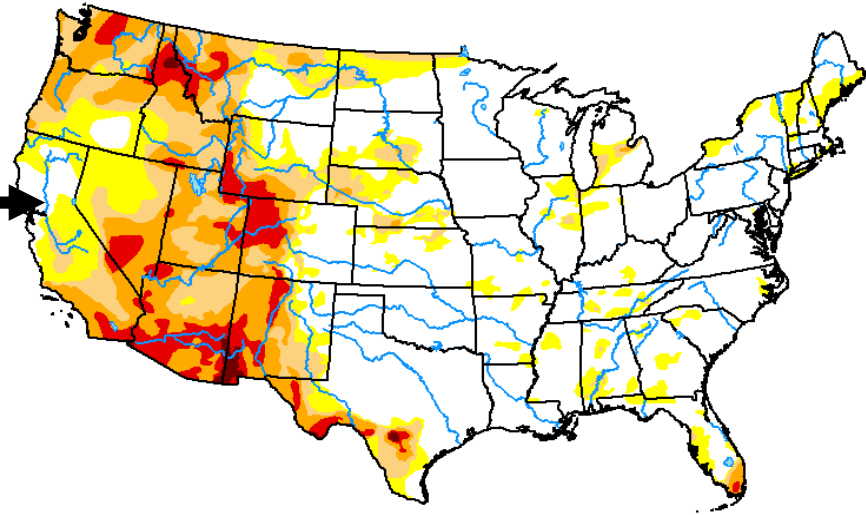
# Drought impacts

June 3, 2025



Source: U.S. Drought Monitor, Continental U.S.

Aug. 5, 2025

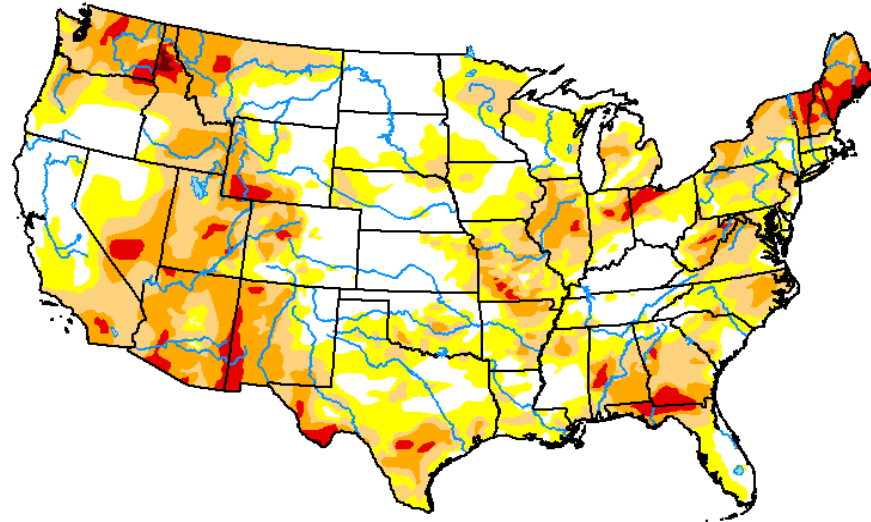


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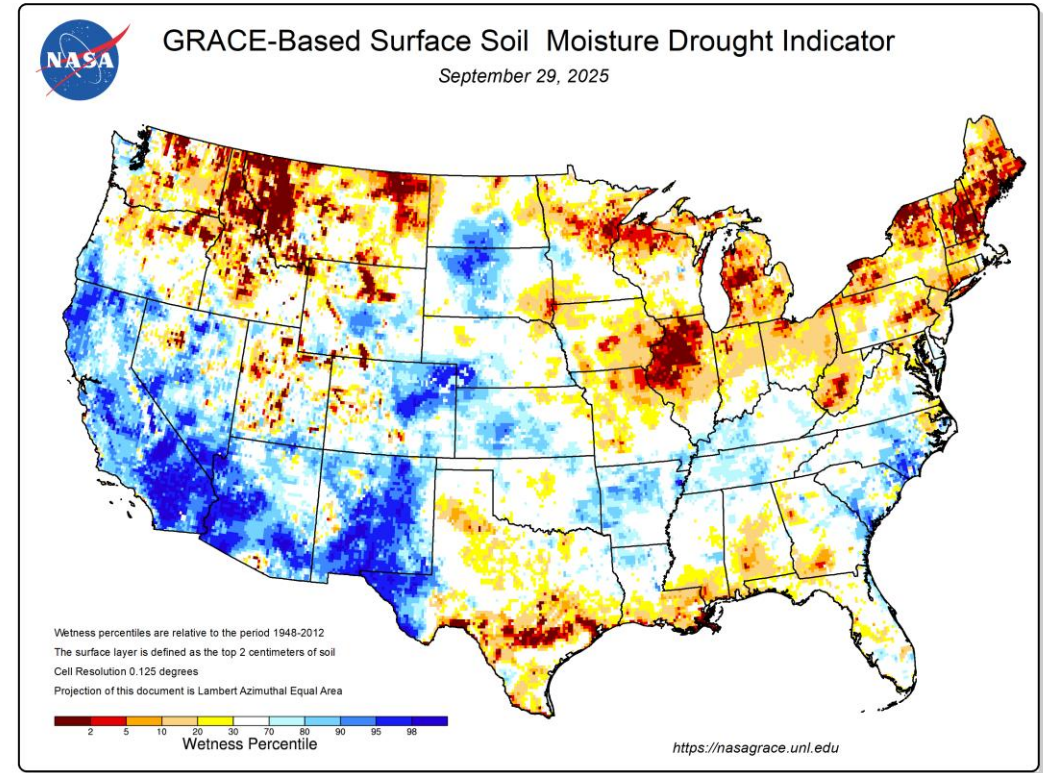
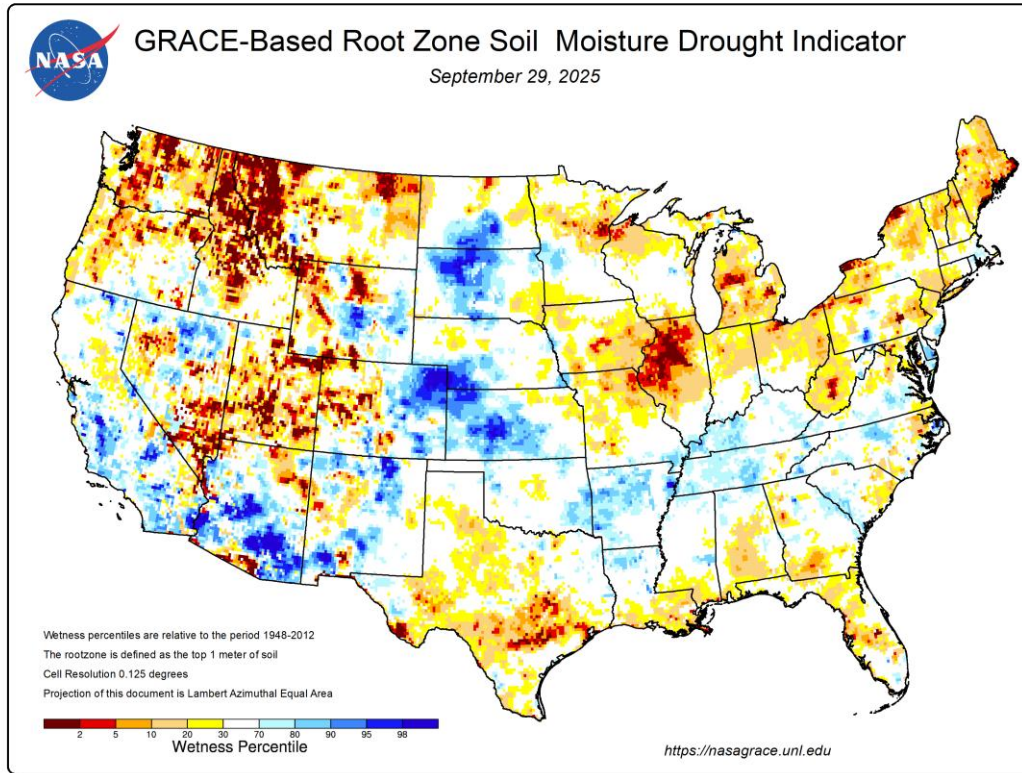
# Drought impacts

October 30, 2025



Source: U.S. Drought Monitor, Continental U.S.

# Soil moisture conditions



# Corn planting conditions

<b>Corn Planted - Selected States</b>				
[These 18 States planted 92% of the 2024 corn acreage]				
State	Week ending			2020-2024 Average
	May 11, 2024	May 4, 2025	May 11, 2025	
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Colorado .....	30	37	53	38
Illinois .....	41	32	54	60
Indiana .....	34	26	45	42
Iowa .....	56	49	76	69
Kansas .....	60	50	61	57
Kentucky .....	56	40	52	63
Michigan .....	25	23	42	31
Minnesota .....	54	44	75	61
Missouri .....	71	54	68	71
Nebraska .....	52	50	73	65
North Carolina .....	94	73	86	92
North Dakota .....	20	17	41	16
Ohio .....	35	22	25	27
Pennsylvania .....	28	15	32	25
South Dakota .....	30	39	69	43
Tennessee .....	72	61	76	75
Texas .....	79	78	84	81
Wisconsin .....	37	16	44	40
18 States .....	47	40	62	56

Source: USDA-NASS Crop Progress Report, May 12, 2025

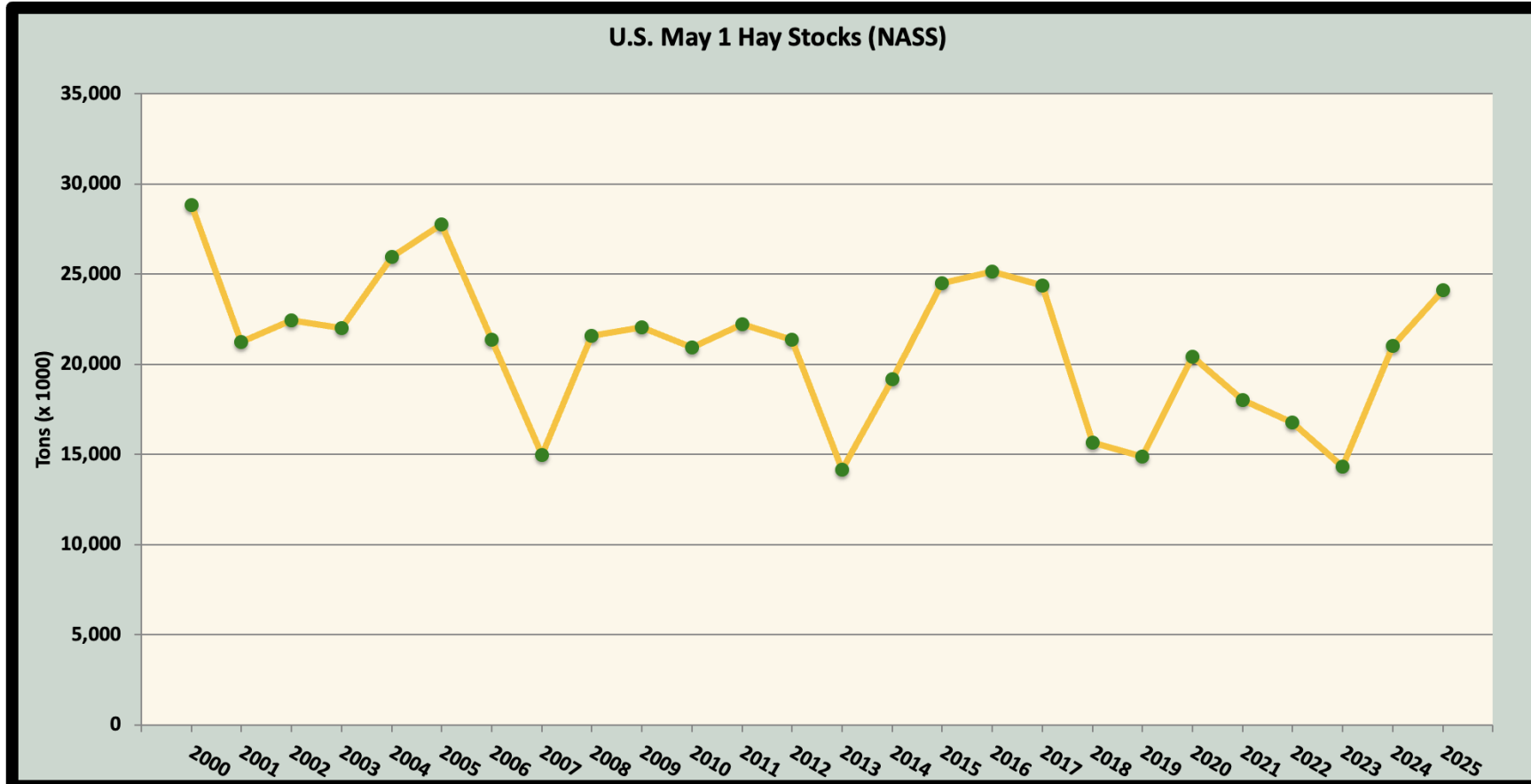


# Corn silage harvest

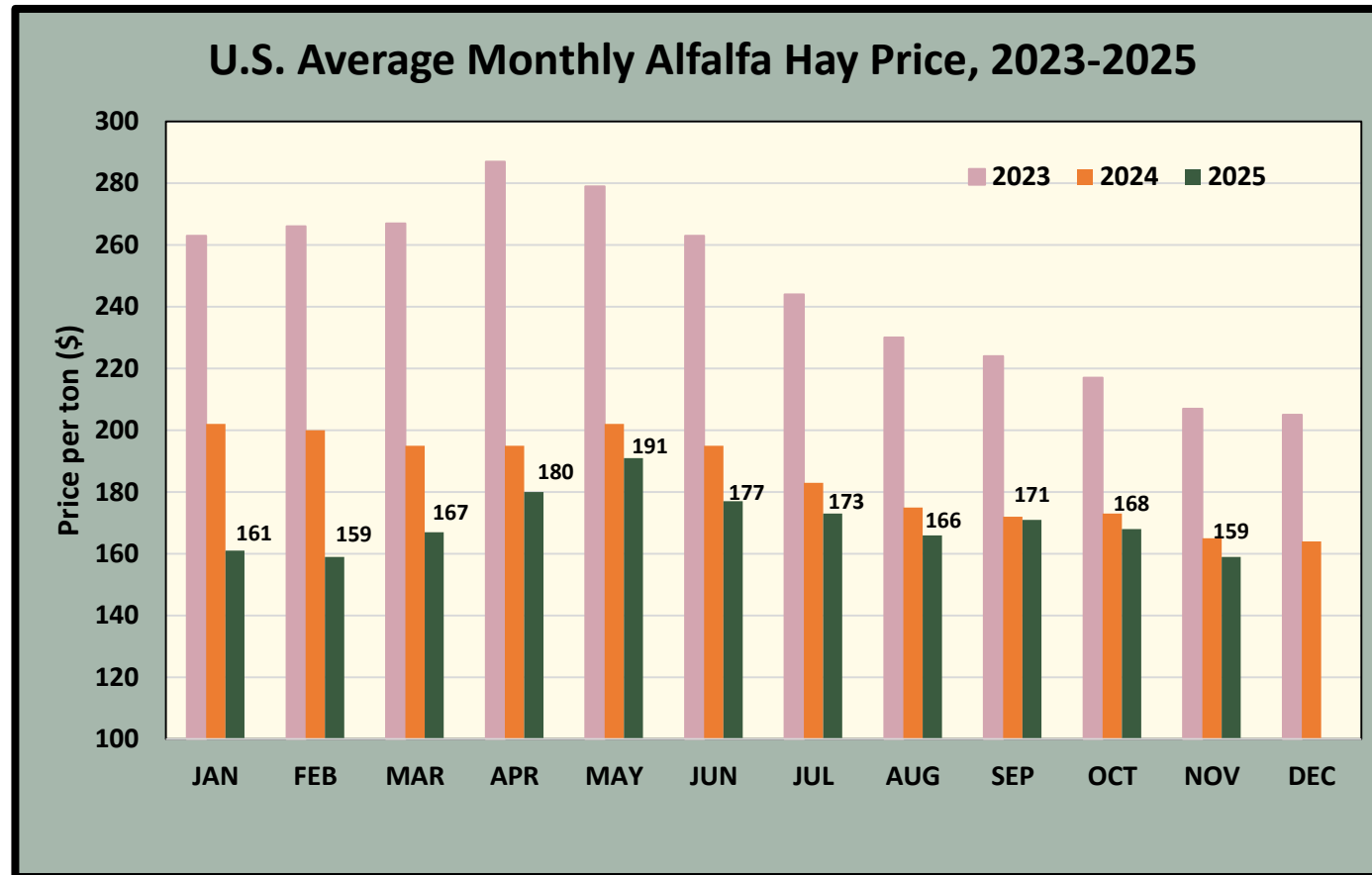
- Dry harvest conditions
- Drought and heat stress
- High disease pressure



May 1, 2025, hay stocks were up 15%



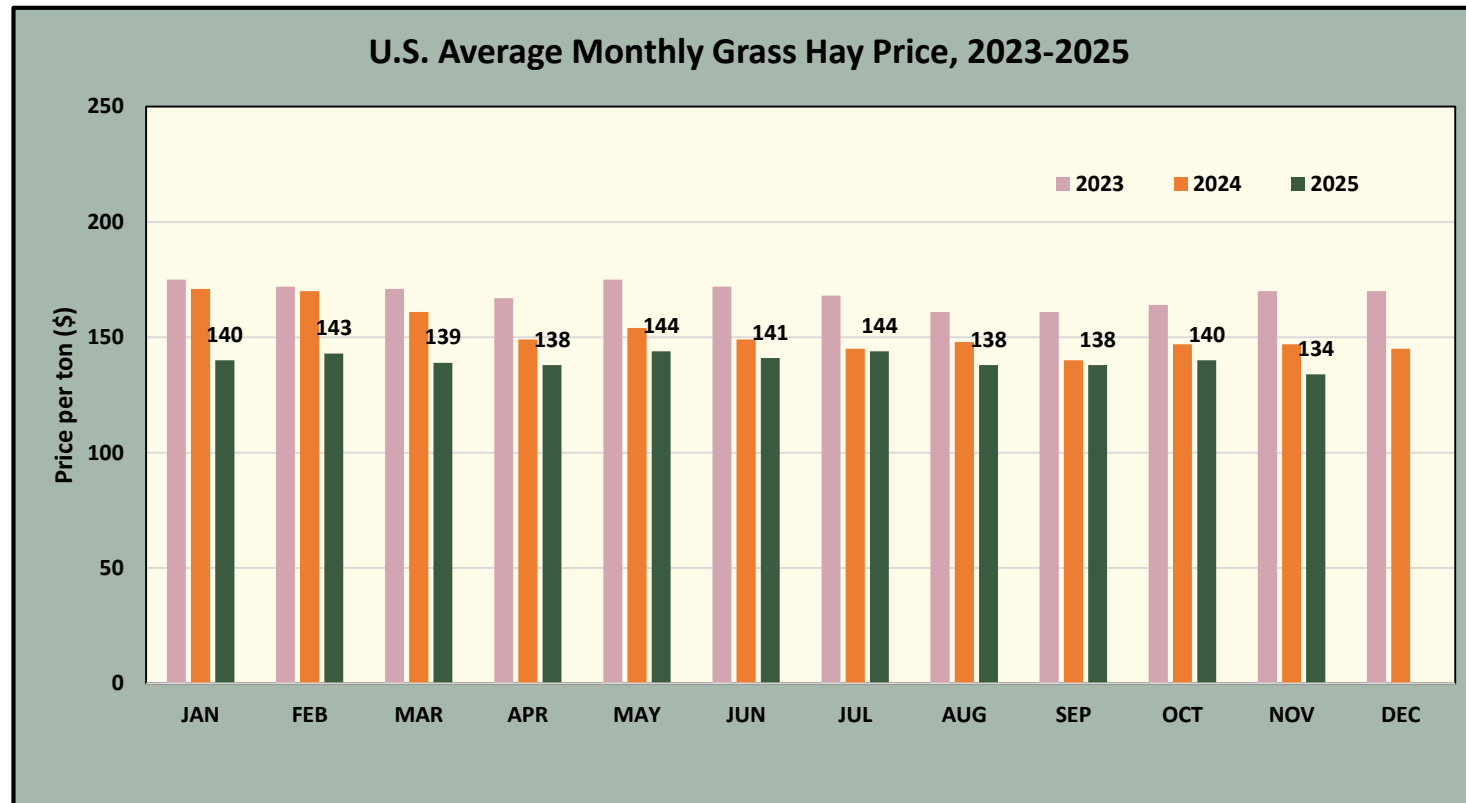
# Monthly alfalfa hay prices



Mean of all quality types, weighted by volume

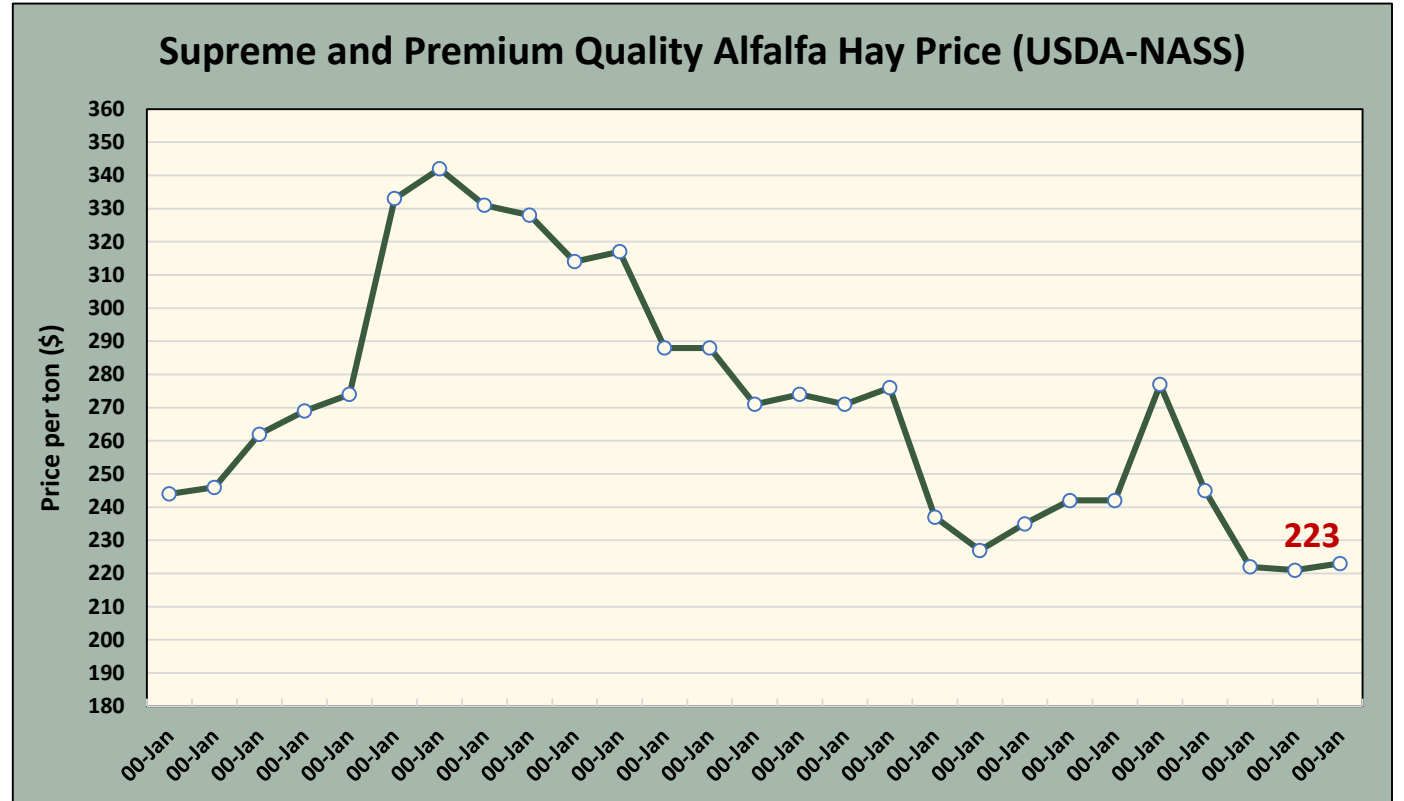


# Monthly grass hay prices



# Supreme and Premium quality alfalfa hay prices

- Major price decline flatlined
- Price used for Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program
- Average of top five dairy states (California, Idaho, New York, Texas, Wisconsin)
- Disclaimer: This average price may not reflect your local price



# Supreme and Premium quality alfalfa hay — IOWA

- **Dyersville Hay Auction (12/17)**



32315 Little Rd • Dyersville • IA 52040  
563-543-0230  
[dyersvillehay@gmail.com](mailto:dyersvillehay@gmail.com)  
[dyersvillehayandstrawauction.net](http://dyersvillehayandstrawauction.net)

Auction report for 12/17/2025 - Receipts 1323 tons  
- Bale Count - 2225

<u>Quality</u>	<u>Large Squares</u>	<u>Round Bale</u>
Dairy Quality	\$215 / ton	n/a

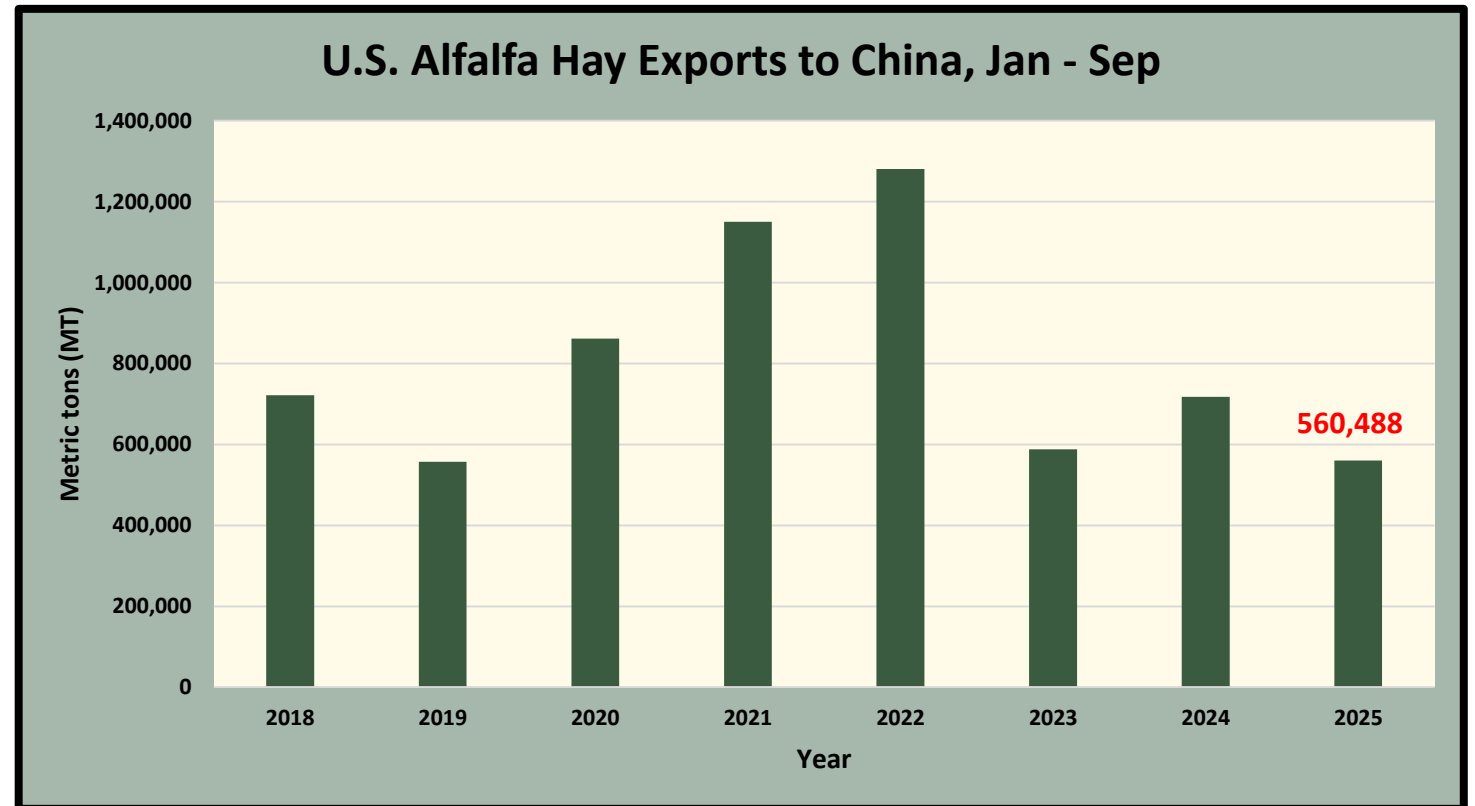
- **Rock Valley Hay Auction (12/19)**

Hay (Conventional)					
Alfalfa - Premium (Per Ton)					
	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Price Range</u>	<u>Avg Price</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Crop Age</u>
Large Round	46.00	147.50-160.00	150.43		3rd Cut



# Alfalfa hay exports down dramatically

- Export demand has a big influence on Western hay prices
- Most U.S. alfalfa hay historically shipped to China
- Down 22% January through September year-over-year



Source: USDA-Foreign Agriculture Service

# What direction are hay prices heading?



- No sign of hay prices improving
- Commodity prices will likely stay low
- Hay stocks could influence hay prices
- Beef and dairy markets unsupportive
- Hay prices can't get much lower than production costs
- Weather will be, and always is, a critical factor

# Forage seed supplies outlook for 2026

Average supply	Tight supply	Extremely tight supply
Annual ryegrass	Alfalfa	Alsike clover
Red clover (C)	Bromegrass	Ladino clover
Festulolium	Meadow bromegrass	Red clover (I)
Forage sorghum	Smooth bromegrass	Reed canarygrass
Meadow fescue	Berseem clover	Timothy (I)
Hay millets	Ladino clover (C)	Trefoil
Forage peas	White clover	
Perennial ryegrass (tetraploid)	Yellow blossom clover	
Italian ryegrass	Pearl millet	
Sorghum-sudangrass	Orchardgrass (early)	<b>C: Common varieties</b>  <b>I: Improved varieties</b>
Sudangrass	Orchardgrass (mid)	
Tall fescue	Orchardgrass (late)	
Tall fescue (novel endophyte)	Perennial ryegrass (diploid)	
Teffgrass	Timothy	

Source: Patrick Reed, DLF Seeds

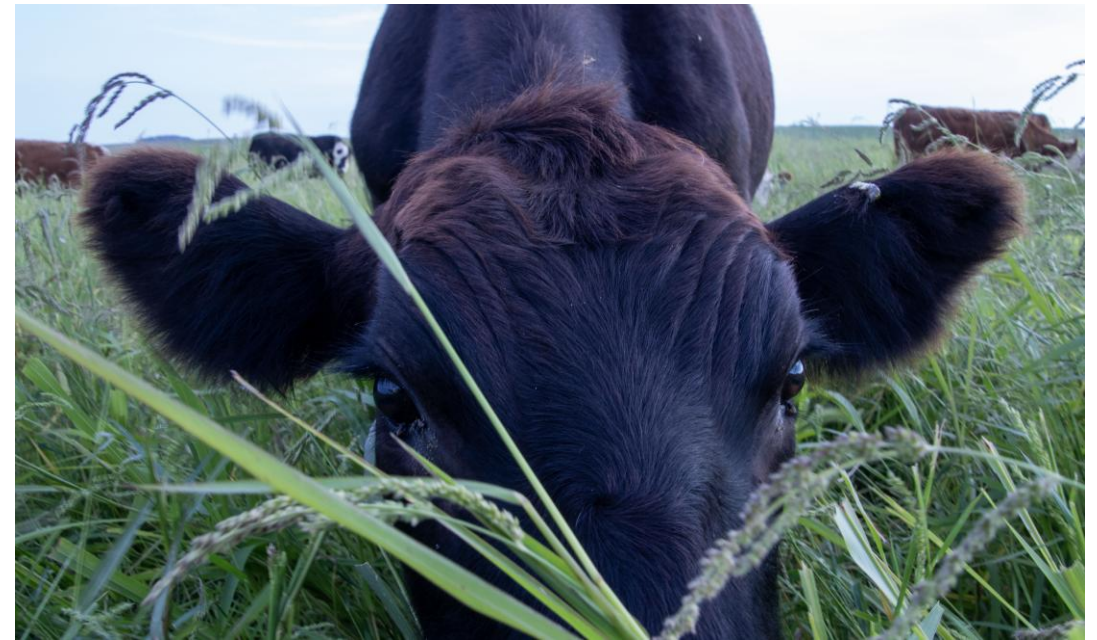


## To sum it all up . . .

- Another year of weather extremes
- Hay prices are weak, and will continue to be
- Take inventory of your forage/feed supplies now
- The only way to know forage quality is to test it

# Thank you!

- Questions: [amberf@hayandforage.com](mailto:amberf@hayandforage.com)
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