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The Centerline of Alpha Dressage Association for News and Upcoming Events •

August 2026

Highlights

OUR NEXT MEETING - UDJC Speaker

SPOTLIGHT on ADA Member Ryan Stark

NEW SHOW FORMAT INFO

Heidi Hauri-Gill Ride-A-Test Clinic

KEEP READING!

Keepin'



Cool

In the Works

Have you heard about the United Dressage and Jumping Club (“UDJC”)? The UDJC is a new format for a combined approach to shows and clinics. This new format focuses on providing opportunities to show and learn for riders and horses of all ages. TerraNova hosted several of these show/clinic events this past year and has more planned in the upcoming show season. Some of our Alpha members have participated in these shows and found them very engaging. UDJC creator, David Reichert, will join our September Members Meeting to fill us in on his vision for this new alternative to the recognized show circuit. We will meet in person at Ronnie DeWitt’s lovely farm and home while David will join us via Zoom on Ronnie’s wall-sized television. Don’t miss this opportunity to learn about an exciting new approach to learning and competing with our horses. See AlphaDressage.org for details.

Coming Up

Beginning in September, we look forward to our upcoming shows with even more schooling possibilities. We are currently in communication with several new facilities, as well as previous ones. It is our goal to have good footing, plenty of space for warm up and pleasant show grounds to make an inviting experience for all horses and riders.



Trotting Towards the New Show Season

Alpha Dressage Association is very excited to announce a Ride-A-Test Clinic for this fall on Sunday, November 22, 2026.

[Click here for Entry Form and Clinic Details](#)

Don't "Fall Off" !!

Be sure to Join us for our next ADA schooling show on September 27, 2026 – SAVE THE DATE –
Then monitor our Website
AlphaDressage.org
For show details

Music to Our Ears

Save the Date!!

Save the Dates!! In anticipation of a special annual Musical Freestyle Award being developed by Alpha, don't miss the January Musical Freestyle Demo Clinic on January 3, 2027 at Suzi Jennings' Farm --- followed by a Musical Freestyle Clinic for registered riders/horses on January 17, 2027! More Details and a Spotlight on Suzi will be forthcoming in the October Newsletter!

Mark your Calendars for when the new Dressage tests for 2027 arrive in October, pick out which test you wish to work on for our Heidi Hauri-Gill Ride-A-Test clinic and join us!

Entries Close on 11/1/26

Spotlights



A Word from the President

Hi Everyone, I hope you're all enjoying August in Florida! Slogging through the heat and humidity, wishing for rain, wishing the rain would stop, trying to keep your horse cool and dry, or get them to sweat at all, summer sores, scratches, etc. Running all the fans in your barn 24/7, shouting to be heard over them... Getting up to ride before dawn, or skipping it altogether because the heat index is already over 100 by 9 am..Trying to reason with Hurricane S...well you get it. Yes, it's a fun and exciting time of year! Oh, not so much? Yeah, me either... But, there are other things you can do! Spend time bonding with your horse while you hose him off multiple times a day...Seriously, though, I've tried to

spend some time this summer working on me and my body position from the ground, finding muscles I didn't know I had and learning how to activate them. It's an ongoing process and it doesn't always translate once I get back on, but, it's made me much more aware of where my body is and how to use it. AND, I can do it in air-conditioned comfort! Watching videos of amazing horses and riders is another good activity. Hopefully you are all finding ways to continue this Dressage journey as we trudge on through the remaining summer months and look forward to November when fall finally arrives here in sunny Florida and we can start enjoying our outside time again



Spotlight on Ryan Stark

USDF Medalist and ADA Member Ryan Stark is a Rider and Trainer with a lifetime of experience, along with tons of talent and energy! He can map out a plan of excellence and success for you and your horse. If you are looking for help with your riding and showing goals, read on!

[Click to Read Ryan's Full Story](#)

- Member USDF
- USDF Horse of the Year Award Recipient – multiple years
- USEF Horse of the Year Award Recipient – multiple years
- Featured in a chapter of Yvonne Barteau's "The Dressage Horse Manifesto" – Available on Amazon

Owner/Operator of Ryan Stark

Dressage in Sarasota, Florida, Tel.

608-695-0176

HAY, LOOK!! - contributed by Martha Koehnlein

Do you know about hay, what's good? What's not; the difference between first and second cuttings? The article below, "First v. Second Cutting of Hay – Does It Make a Difference?" was written by Dr. Brittany Kerley, Ph.D., with Mad Barn, a supplement supplier.

First vs. Second Cutting of Hay – Does It Make a Difference?

By Dr. Brittany Kerley, PhD



Selecting the right hay is one of the most important decisions horse owners make when planning a feeding program. The ideal forage for your horse depends on their activity level, health condition, and specific nutritional needs.

You may see hay labeled as first or second cutting, which refers to the order in which the hay was harvested from the same field. Many horse owners believe first cut is always lower quality forage than second cut, but this does not always hold true.

Keep reading to learn the facts about hay cuttings, what causes variations in quality, and why testing your hay is important to ensure it meets your horse's nutritional needs.

Hay Cuttings for Horses

Fresh forages are preserved as hay so they can be fed year-round, particularly when pasture access is limited.

During the growing season, grasses or legumes are mowed, dried, and baled at specific stages of growth to maintain their nutritional value for future use.

First Cutting

The first cutting represents the initial harvest of the field during the growing year. First cutting usually occurs in late spring or early summer, depending on regional climate and forage species.

When deciding the best time to harvest first cut, hay producers must balance two main goals: yield and quality. The longer a farmer waits to take the first cutting, the taller and more mature the grass becomes, resulting in a larger amount of hay harvested from the field. However, as plants mature, nutrient quality declines.

This means that waiting too long to harvest first-cut hay can produce forage that is more fibrous and less digestible, even if total yield is higher.

Farmers must also consider the growing climate. Harvesting the field earlier allows more time for regrowth and may create opportunities for additional cuttings. In many cases, multiple cuttings can increase total seasonal yield more than producing one large first cut.

For this reason, some farms harvest the first cutting earlier in the season, resulting in hay that is less mature and higher in nutrient quality. Ultimately, the quality of first-cut hay reflects a combination of factors, including when the field is harvested and the stage of maturity at the time of cutting.

Second Cutting

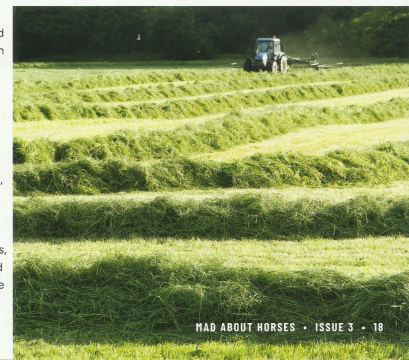
After the first harvest, the plants continue to grow, drawing on stored energy reserves in the roots. A second cutting is usually taken 6–8 weeks later, often in mid to late summer, depending on the weather and regrowth rate.

When the first cut is taken later, the second cutting is often leafier and more nutrient-dense. This is because the forage has less time to mature between cuttings compared to the long growth period prior to the first cut.

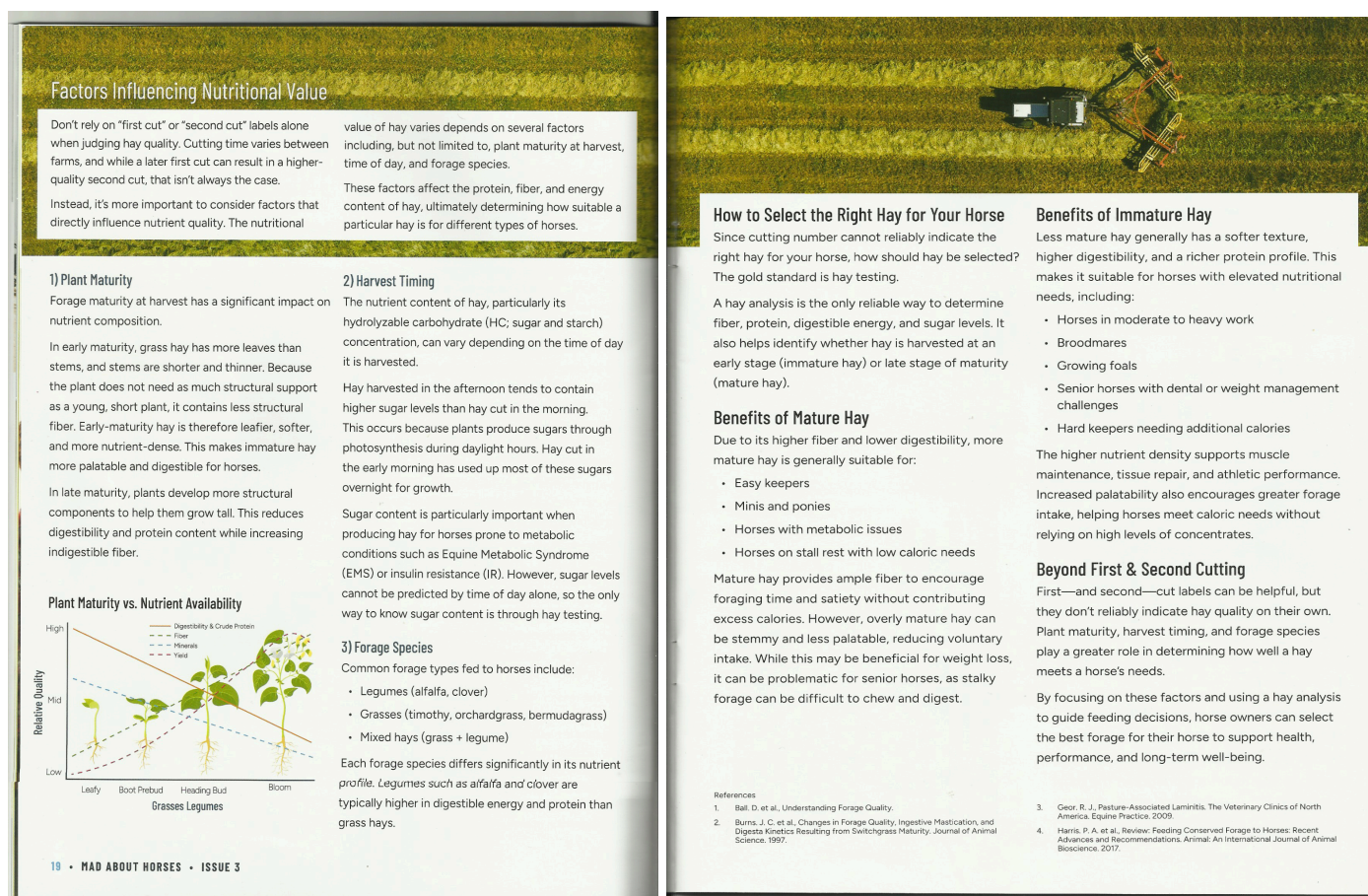
However, when the first cut is taken earlier, both first and second cuttings can be comparable in nutritional quality, or the first cut may even be higher quality.

Additional Cuttings

In many regions, third and even fourth cuttings are possible, especially in areas with long, temperate growing seasons or consistent irrigation. However, each successive cutting generally yields less volume and requires careful management to sustain plant health and quality.



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The above article was written by Dr. Brittany Kerley, PhD, Mad Barn Nutritionist and reprinted with permission.

"As a North American leader in equine nutrition, Mad Barn thanks The ADA for featuring this story. To read the full version, visit

<https://madbarn.com/first-vs-second-cutting-hay-for-horses>

Mark your calendar!

DATE	TIME	EVENT DESCRIPTION	CONTACT PERSON
9/15/26	6:30 PM	ADA Member Meeting with guest speaker David Reichert of the UDJC, Via Zoom	At Ronnie DeWitt's Ranch, 6907 207th St East Bradenton Fl 34211
9/27/26	All DAY	ADA Schooling Show Fox Lea Farm, 800 N Auburn Rd, Venice	AlphaDressageShows@gmail.com
11/07/26	6:00 PM	Annual Banquet- Applebee's Fruitville Rd, Sarasota	AlphaDressage@gmail.com
11/22/26	TBD	Ride-A-Test clinic	ADAdresageshows@gmail.com
1/3/27	TBD	Musical Freestyle Clinic-part 1	sschoettle@yahoo.com
1/17/27	TBD	Musical Freestyle Clinic-part 2	sschoettle@yahoo.com

This list will be added to and edited weekly.

Check out our website AlphaDressage.org

For the latest additions and edits!

About Us

The Alpha Dressage Association is a Group Member Organization (GMO) dedicated to promoting the art and sport of Dressage locally through education and competitive events, affiliated with United States Dressage Association (USDF). We offer Clinics and Dressage Schooling Shows for both traditional English Dressage riders as well as Western WDAA riders.

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