



CANADA
4-H Manitoba

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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