

Extension Provides Education Through Forage Testing in Carroll County

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RELEVANCE

Carroll County*

- Forage crops including hay are grown on more acres than any other crop.
- Hay is grown on 24,158 acres yielding a total of 58,800 tons.
- Value of hay sales is \$2.77 million, second only to vegetables.

Producers are always seeking ways to increase income from their hay crop and reduce feed costs. Since 2019, the USDA FSA office serving Carroll County has conducted the NAP for forage producers. In order for producers enrolled in the program to be eligible to receive NAP program payments, they must have their hay sampled. Virginia Cooperative Extension Carroll County provided this sampling service

*2017 USDA Census of Agriculture data



Collecting hay samples



Hay ready to be sampled

RESPONSE

Beginning in 2019, 452 hay samples from 75 producers were collected by the Carroll County ANR Agent and sent to Cumberland Valley Analytical Services for analysis. Each hay sample was represented by hay cores taken from a minimum of 10 bales. The samples were analyzed and the results were returned to the ANR agent, the producers and to the FSA office.

**“Hay quality is much more important than quantity.”
Stephen Turner, Carroll County producer.**

RESULTS

Year	Samples	Producers	Not Tested#	New Clients%	FSA Payments
2019	39	20	6	6	216,000
2020	181	50	27	17	511,175
2021	125	52	16	7	534,505
2022	107	42	2	2	365,145
Totals	452	*75	51	32	1,626,825

*Total Producers unduplicated

#Had not previously tested hay

%Had not previously worked with VCE agent

The Carroll County ANR agent conducted in-person meetings during which the results of forage tests were explained to the hay producers who participated in the program.

The Agent also worked with individual producers to develop improved winter-feeding programs. Knowing the value of their forage made this process more efficient. The largest cost in animal production is feed cost. Knowing the nutrient content of the feed enables the producers to feed their animals more efficiently which will lower cost feeds and increase overall profitability.

Average Forage Analysis by Year*				
	2019	2020	2021	2022
C.Protein	9.95	10	8.85	9.54
TDN	57.9	54.8	55.9	57
RFV	80	78.8	78.9	80.4
NDF	66.5	67	67.4	68.25
Nem	0.547	0.527	0.54	0.55
*First Cutting Results				