

Hay Buyer's Checklist

1. Buy hay from a reputable source. Put on paper, hay type, your purchasing cost, time of delivery and other services you might require such as lab analysis, etc.
2. Insist on a hay analysis. Crude protein content of hay will vary greatly with hay type and stage of maturity at harvest. Prairie hays harvested in late June or early July will test 5-6% crude protein. Bermuda/fescue hays will vary greatly with a range of 6-16% crude protein due to stage of maturity at harvest.
3. Buy according to weight. The price of hay must be in relation to the amount of dry matter received.
4. Look at bale quality. You want a solid bale that doesn't sag. Net wrapped round bales can be handled more often and stored outside better than string wrapped bales.
5. Look for mold, dust, seed heads, weeds and foreign objects. These "anti-quality" factors can be very important for certain classes of livestock such as horses and young calves.
6. Buy locally, if possible. Buying hay from nearby farms reduces delivery charges.