

HOW TO SELECT AN ALFALFA VARIETY:

Determine an appropriate fall dormancy class

Alfalfa varieties differ in fall dormancy, defined as growth during the fall. Nondormant alfalfa varieties are usually planted in mild winter areas for their ability to grow in the fall. However, fall growth of nondormant alfalfa may be undesirable in areas subject to repeated frosts or freezes. Nondormant, very nondormant, and extremely nondormant alfalfa varieties (fall dormancy class 8, 9, and 10) are adapted to elevations below 4000 feet in Arizona. Other dormancy classes not included in this publication are moderately nondormant varieties (fall dormancy class 7) which may be grown from 3000 to 5000 feet, and semi-dormant and dormant varieties (fall dormancy 6 and below) which are adapted to colder winter areas above 4000 feet.

Identify potential pest problems

Select alfalfa varieties that have resistance to potential pest problems. Variety resistance is not available or not characterized for many important pests. However, pest resistance ratings are provided in this publication for verticillium wilt, anthracnose, phytophthora root rot, various aphids, and stem and root knot nematode. Verticillium wilt has been detected in Arizona hay shipments to China, but has not been positively identified in the field. Anthracnose occurs in the lower Colorado River area during hot, humid weather. Phytophthora root rot can be a problem on poorly drained soils during cool weather. Aphids occur in most production areas. Stem nematode has been reported in Maricopa, Pinal, Graham, and Yuma Counties. Root knot nematode has been identified in the lower Colorado River area, but usually is not important. Some diseases common to other alfalfa production areas such as bacterial and fusarium wilt are not known to occur in Arizona.

Decide on importance of salt tolerance and Roundup Ready

Alfalfa varieties are available that have salt tolerance or are Roundup Ready. Ratings are provided in this publication.

Determine the importance of yield and stand

Many of the varieties listed in this publication have been tested for yield and final stand by the University of Arizona in small plot trials. A summary of these trials is provided on the facing page. Most of these trials were conducted at Maricopa or Tucson.

Field-test several promising varieties

Plant several promising varieties in narrow strips or small areas of a few acres and evaluate performance under your own conditions.

Choose a variety (or two) for large-scale planting

Plant new varieties on no more than 25% of the newly seeded acreage. Planting inexpensive seed of a poorly-adapted variety costs in the long-run. A difference in seed cost of \$1.00 per pound is easily recovered by a more productive variety in the first year. Non-certified seed is also undesirable due to poor seed quality, introduction of weeds, and the possibility of planting an incorrectly identified variety with undesirable characteristics.



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This information has been reviewed by University faculty.
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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Jeffrey C. Silvertooth, Associate Dean & Director, Extension & Economic Development, College of Agriculture Life Sciences, The University of Arizona.

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Nondormant Alfalfa Varieties for Arizona 2019



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AZ1267
September 2019

extension.arizona.edu/pubs/az1267-2019.pdf

Pest resistance ratings¹, yield, and final stand for nondormant alfalfa varieties in Arizona and Holtville, CA (2019).

Variety	Marketing Contact	Pest resistance ratings ²								Traits			Performance	
		Verticillium wilt	Anthraco-nose	Phytoph-thora root rot	Spotted alfalfa aphid	Pea aphid	Blue alfalfa aphid	Stem nematode	Southern root knot nematode	Multifoliolate expression ³	Salt Tolerance ⁴	Roundup Ready ⁵	Yield % of Avg ⁶	Final Stand % of Avg
Nondormant (Fall dormancy class = 8)														
AmeriStand 803T	America's Alfalfa		MR	HR	R	HR	HR	HR						
AmeriStand 835NTSRR	America's Alfalfa	MR	LR	R	HR	HR	HR	HR			R			
GrandSlam	Dyna-Gro	R	R	HR	HR	HR	HR	R		H				
Integra 8800	Wilbur-Ellis		R	HR	R	HR		HR		M				
Magna 801FQ	Dairyland	MR	MR	HR	HR	R	R	R	HR					
PGI 801	Alforex Seeds	R	HR	HR	HR	HR	HR	HR	HR					
RRALF 8R100	LG Seeds		R	HR	HR			MR	R		R			
SW 8421S	S&W			R	HR	R	R		R		F		101	103
Very Nondormant (Fall dormancy class = 9)														
6906N	Nexgrow Alfalfa		R	R	HR	HR	HR	HR			G		102	106
AFX960	Alforex Seeds	MR	HR	R	HR	HR	HR	HR			G			
AmeriStand 901TS	America's Alfalfa	MR	R	HR		HR	R	R			G		102	98
AmeriStand 915TSRR	America's Alfalfa	MR	R	HR	HR	HR	HR	R			G	R		
CUF 101	Public			MR	HR	HR	HR		MR				101	101
DG 9212	Dyna-Gro	R	HR	HR	HR	HR	HR	HR		H			99	105
Lew	Public			S	R	S	S	R					103	100
LG 9C300	LG Seeds		R	R		R		R			G			
Magna 995	Dairyland	LR	MR	HR	HR	R		HR	R				101	107
PGI 908-S	Alforex Seeds	R	HR	HR	HR	HR	HR	R	HR		G/F			
RRALF 9R100	LG Seeds	R	R	HR	HR	HR	HR	HR			G	R	99	94
RR DesertRose	Croplan	R	HR	HR	HR	HR	HR	R				R		
Sun Quest	Croplan		R	HR	HR	HR	HR	HR			G		100	
SW 9215	S&W			R	HR	R	HR		HR		F		102	112
SW 9215RRS	S&W	MR	S	HR		HR					G/F	R	100	108
SW 9628	S&W		LR	R	HR	R	R		HR				105	96
SW 9720	S&W			R	HR	HR	R	MR	HR		F		107	107
UC Cibola	Public			MR	HR	R	LR		R				98	105
Extremely Nondormant (Fall dormancy class = 10)														
6015R	Nexgrow Alfalfa	MR	R	R	HR	HR	HR	HR			G	R		
AFX 1060	Alforex Seeds	R	R	R	HR	R	R	HR			G			
SW 10	S&W			R	HR	HR	HR		R				100	98

¹ Pest resistance ratings from "Winter Survival, Fall Dormancy and Pest Resistance Ratings for Alfalfa Varieties 2019 Edition", NAFA, https://www.alfalfa.org/pdf/2019_Alfalfa_Variety_Leaflet.pdf

² Resistance classes: HR = high resistance, R = resistance, MR = moderate resistance, LR = low resistance, and S = susceptible.

³ Multifoliolate leaf expression: H = high, M = moderate, L = low.

⁴ Salt tolerance: G = germination, F = forage.

⁵ Roundup Ready: R = Roundup Ready.

⁶ % of Avg: Variety performance as a % of the average in trials.