



Droughts and flooding rains...

In the south, the fire season has added pressure to a market already stretched by drought and high summer temperatures; while in the north, floods have reduced grazing and cut transport links... it's Summer in Australia and we continue to work with you through the stressful times and the good.

Summer challenges include increased risks of haystack or harvest-related fires during cutting, baling and storage - please take a look at [the abundance of hay safety info and advice on our website](#) and make sure you're doing all you can.

Season 3 of the [Hay Matters Podcast](#) kicks off this month.

Tune in as our own Steve Page chats with industry experts about on-farm testing for Prussic Acid and Nitrates, plus the risks of spontaneous combustion — and how to prevent it.

Every year brings new challenges and rewards. Thanks for partnering with us in every season.



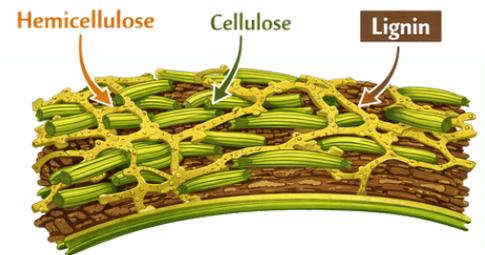
Tim

Tim Ford
Managing Director,
Feed Central & LocalAg



What Lignin Means for Your Summer Hay

When it comes to hay quality, lignin is one of the most important - and least understood - components.



Lignin is the tough, woody part of the plant cell wall. It gives plants structure as they mature, but nutritionally, it's essentially indigestible. Even more importantly, lignin binds to digestible fibre, reducing the overall energy animals can extract from the feed.

Lignin is the key reason cutting timing matters. It cannot be digested and cannot be reduced by curing or storage. So maturity at cutting largely determines fibre quality.

In summer, lignin becomes particularly relevant.

Hot conditions accelerate plant maturity, meaning pastures can become stemmy very quickly. As plants move from leafy growth to seed head, lignin levels rise. Drought and heat stress can also thicken cell walls, further increasing fibre and reducing digestibility.

Higher lignin levels are typically reflected in elevated ADF results on a feed test - and that means lower digestibility. For producers, this can translate to:

- Dry stock maintaining rather than gaining
- Lactating animals underperforming
- Growing stock not hitting targets

The result? Hay that looks acceptable but delivers less energy than expected. High-lignin hay isn't "bad" - it can be ideal for maintenance animals or easy-keepers. But without testing, it's impossible to match hay quality to livestock needs with confidence.

Testing removes the guesswork and ensures you're feeding for performance - not just filling a feeder or looking at colour.

[Read more](#) 



NDF and ADF Explained: The Key Numbers in Your Hay or Feed Test

NDF and ADF - sounds technical! But once you understand what they really measure, they become two of the most powerful numbers on your feed test.

Firstly, hay is made up of two main parts:

- 1. Cell contents** – sugars, starches, protein, fats (the highly digestible stuff)
- 2. Cell wall** – fibre (the structural part of the plant)

As plants mature, the cell wall thickens and becomes more complex. That's when fibre levels increase and digestibility usually drops.

NDF and ADF are measurements of that fibre fraction. They're part of what's called the detergent fibre analysis system, developed to better understand forage quality beyond crude fibre (which is now considered outdated and less useful).

NDF measures the total cell wall content of the forage. It includes hemicellulose, cellulose and lignin. Think of NDF as the "how much can they eat?" number because NDF is strongly related to intake.

ADF measures a smaller portion of the fibre fraction. It includes cellulose and lignin. It does not include hemicellulose. Think of ADF as the "how digestible is it?" number.

These two numbers tell a story when viewed side by side.

High NDF	High ADF	Mature, stemmy, lower energy hay
Moderate NDF	Moderate ADF	Balanced forage
Lower NDF	Lower ADF	Early cut, leafy, higher energy hay

The actual % figures for both measures varies between forage types, and then of course different livestock species have different needs. But if you start by understanding these fibre figures, you're well on your way to understanding that hay isn't just hay. It's a structural carbohydrate package that can either support performance or quietly limit it.

And you'll be feeding with intention, not habit.

[Read more](#)



Latest Listings

Lot #91512

Vetch Hay

172 tonnes available

Meering West VIC

Energy: 10.32 MJ/kg
Protein: 20.70%

[Get More Details](#)

Lot #90328

Oaten Hay

708 bales available

Forbes NSW

Energy: 10.10 MJ/kg
Protein: 10.40%

[Get More Details](#)

Inspectors are on the road right now

Call the Feed Central office on 1300 669 429 and we'll have one of our friendly, expert inspectors out to you as soon as possible.

FEEDcentral Quality Assurance ON-FARM INSPECTOR LOCATIONS

- Wade Alexander
- Anthony Balzar
- David Clothier
- Steve Page
- Annabelle Ford
- Ben Wright
- Greg Mills
- Phil Banton
- Georgia Boddington
- Jim Harris
- Jim Delahunty
- Danny Dunne
- Jeremy Boddington
- Anthony Lines

From LocalAg Plus

National Hay Market Snapshot

January saw increased demand due to concerns about high temperatures and dry conditions in NSW and VIC.

Tight carry-over hay stocks, combined with high ex-farm prices in Quarter 2, 2025, pushed buyers to act earlier. Many moved to secure quality cereal and protein hays based on feed test results. The goal was to fill empty sheds before further price rises.

Lucerne continued to command a premium. Cereal and pasture hay traded steadily. Quality remained the key driver of price differences.

Trading activity was seasonally subdued through early summer. Many producers assessed rainfall patterns and the autumn outlook before committing large volumes to market. Some regions saw improved soil moisture and reasonable production prospects.

However, uncertainty around seasonal conditions kept supply cautious. The overall market remained balanced but tight heading into autumn.



Dave Clothier,
National Sales
Manager



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From the Lab

What to do if you have a Prussic Acid positive?



Drought-stressed crops are prime candidates for prussic acid (hydrogen cyanide) accumulation. Sorghum, sudan grass, sorghum-sudan hybrids, and some millets can build up cyanogenic compounds when growth slows, making them potentially toxic to livestock.

If your forage tests positive for prussic acid, the first step is don't graze it. Hungry animals are at higher risk, and even small amounts can be dangerous.

Next, assess whether the crop can safely recover. After drought-breaking rain, plants may resume active growth, diluting prussic acid levels. Waiting 7–14 days for this regrowth, and testing on-farm again, can help you assess risk, but only if plants are growing steadily and no further stress occurs. A lab test will determine levels so you can make decisions.

Other management options include cutting for hay, as proper conditioning and curing volatilizes hydrogen cyanide, or mixing high-risk forage with low-risk feed to dilute toxicity. Always monitor livestock closely.

Finally, testing is essential. Drought can create unpredictable spikes in prussic acid, and visual inspection alone isn't reliable. A positive test isn't a death sentence; it's a warning to manage timing, dilution, and feed strategy carefully.



Hay Matters Podcast

OUT
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Agronomist Ken Cunliffe of AgEtal recently dropped by to record a podcast episode about Prussic Acid and Nitrates with Steve Page, Feed Central's Grower Services Manager and podcast host. Listen to their conversation when the Hay Matters Podcast returns for 2026!

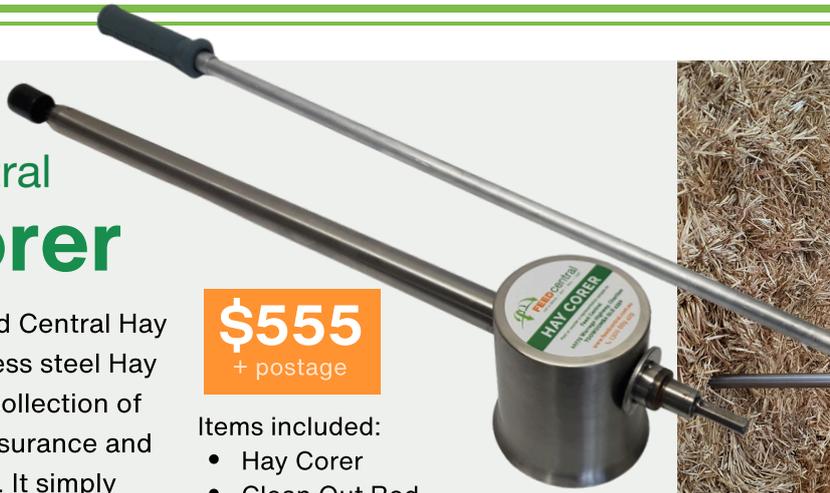
Hay Corer

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Items included:

- Hay Corer
- Clean Out Rod
- Hay Corer Storage Satchel
- Clip Seal Bags



Delmhorst Moisture Meter

The key to a high quality product is proper moisture monitoring with the correct and precise equipment.

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FarmScan Moisture Meter

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