

GIT R DONE

A little nice spring-like weather always causes an outbreak of diesel fever among farmers. Before you start working your row crop land, however, let's take a look at your alfalfa.

We are getting closer and closer to field work time. In fact, many folks already are anxious to apply fertilizer, spray fields, even chop stalks.

If you also have alfalfa, though, it is critical that you take a little time to check those fields over the next couple weeks to make sure you don't miss making some important decisions.

First is weed control. As I discussed during one of these programs last week, last fall provided excellent weather conditions, both moisture and temperature, to start a bumper crop of winter annual weeds like mustards, pennycress, and wild oats or downy brome. If you want to prevent these weeds from possibly damaging your first cutting, you must act now to apply the right herbicides before your alfalfa develops much growth.

Next comes evaluating your alfalfa stand. With all the alternative cropping and forage options available to you, there is no good excuse for having low production from fields due to a thin stand of alfalfa. If stands in your alfalfa fields have declined to the point where you should make additions like oats for extra hay this year or maybe orchardgrass for more permanent help, these plantings need to be done now, before your alfalfa gets too much of a head start and overwhelms later planted new seedlings.

I know you are tempted to rush ahead to prepare for corn and bean planting. But don't forget about your alfalfa. Even a short delay could be too late.

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