

# **Extending the Research of PM-Cut Hay and Producer Acceptance. (C06-shewmaker214932-Oral)**

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## **Abstract:**

Alfalfa growers traditionally cut hay in morning as well as afternoon. Plant physiologists have known that sugar and starch concentrations in forages increase during the day from photosynthesis, and decrease during night from plant respiration, but the research has not been adopted by hay growers. A focused effort to extend research gave 5 regional presentations in Idaho to 350 hay growers, and one to 600 in California. The objective was to inform forage growers that a change in cutting schedule could produce higher quality hay. In Idaho 80% of 76 producers surveyed (31,000 ac) responded they would cut hay in the afternoon in the future to harvest higher quality forage, an increase of 67%. California producers indicated they would increase PM-cutting from 59% of the 1999 crop to 90% in 2000. The most effective educational tool was a time-lapse video of 2 beef steers offered a choice between AM-cut and PM-cut hays. Growers watched steers prefer PM-cut alfalfa and appreciated the implications, whereas a table of statistics was not influential. Although this topic was well covered in agricultural press, discussions while watching the video were the most effective method of extension.

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