


# Alfalfa Report

4-27-05

**Insect Management:**  **Threecornered alfalfa hopper**, *Spissistilus festimus*, is a treehopper commonly found in alfalfa. Adults and nymphs suck plant sap by puncturing stems. Female treehoppers girdle stems by depositing eggs. The stem and leaves turn red, purple or yellow above the girdle. Adults are light-green, thick-bodied, triangular insects about 1/4 inch long and readily fly when disturbed. Nymphs are grayish-white, soft bodied, with saw-toothed spines on their backs. Nymphs are confined to the lower portions of the plant and may not be picked up in a sweep net. Threecornered alfalfa hoppers rarely cause economic damage. Definitive monitoring and treatment guidelines have not been developed because threecornered alfalfa hoppers are a sporadic problem in alfalfa.

**Weed Control:** Sandbur, both field and southern, can be controlled with Poast and Select when it is no larger than 1 or 2 leaves. If it gets much larger than this or if it is coming back from established plants, it will tolerate both of these herbicides.

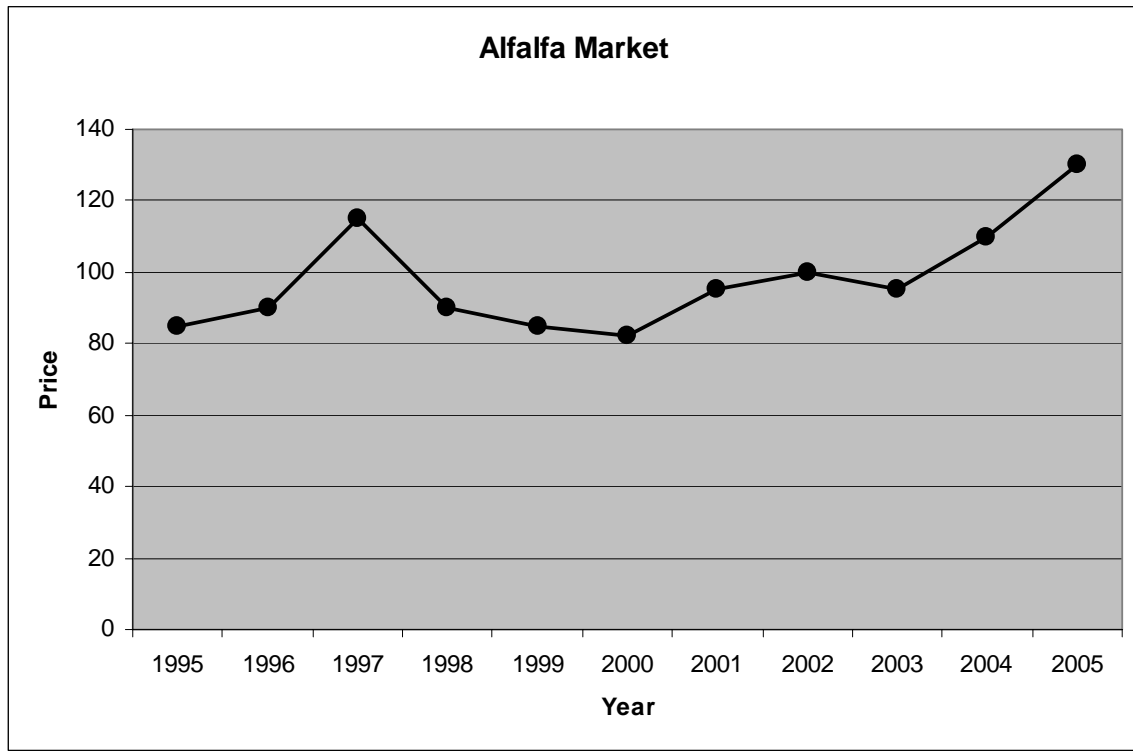
**Alfalfa nodulation:** Alfalfa has the ability to interact with certain bacteria (rhizobia) to convert atmospheric nitrogen gas to a form useful to the plant. Inoculation is initiated by these bacteria, which invade the root hairs of the plant and cause the nodules to develop on the roots. The plants provide the bacteria with food (carbohydrate) and the bacteria provide the plants with nitrogen, and a symbiotic relationship is established. Nitrogen fertilizer is generally not required for healthy, effectively nodulated alfalfa.

<u>Market Summary</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Offgrade</u>
Past 2 weeks	140	120	130	95-110
Last year	120	90	110	70-90

## 10 Year Summary

2005 - 130  
2004 - 110  
2003 - 95  
2002 - 100  
2001 - 95  
2000 - 82  
1999 - 85  
1998 - 90  
1997 - 115

1996 – 90  
1995 – 85



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