



National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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March 4, 2019

Alfalfa Checkoff Funds Eight Research Projects

NAFA Distributes Funding to Address Industry Priorities

Alfalfa farmers who have purchased alfalfa seed from participating marketers have provided funding for eight new Alfalfa Checkoff research projects. The U.S. Alfalfa Farmer Research Initiative (USAFRI), better known as the Alfalfa Checkoff, recently awarded the fourth round of funding to projects submitted by researchers from a diverse collection of geographic areas of the country.

“The Alfalfa Checkoff gains momentum with each new round of funding, and continues to be a valuable asset to the industry,” said Beth Nelson, NAFA President. “The Checkoff is funding important alfalfa research we believe will have the greatest impact within the alfalfa community.”

The Alfalfa Checkoff attracted proposals covering a wide range of topics intended to drive innovation and profitability in the alfalfa industry, as well as a broad geographic area. Research projects in Georgia, Minnesota, Montana, New York, and Wisconsin were approved for funding and include (*project objectives can be viewed on the [NAFA website](http://www.alfalfa.org)*):

- Evaluating Hand-Held NIRS Units for Measuring Forage Quality of Fresh-Chopped Alfalfa & Alfalfa Hay & Haylage
 - *Jerry Cherney, Cornell University*
- Analysis of Root Carbohydrates in Alfalfa Treated with Four Harvest Intervals & Five Potassium Rates in the Southeast
 - *Jennifer Tucker, University of Georgia*
- Plant Population & Stem Counts to Predict Yield of Modern Alfalfa Varieties
 - *Craig Sheaffer, University of Minnesota*
- Impacts of Winter Grazing on Alfalfa Production
 - *Emily Meccage, Montana State University*
- Potassium Fertilization & Its Impact on Yield, Quality, & Winter Hardiness of Alfalfa
 - *Marisol Berti, North Dakota State University*
- Regional Characterization of Alfalfa Manure Legacy Impacts on Soil Quality in Crop Rotations
 - *Joshua Gamble, USDA-Agricultural Research Service*
- Side-by-Side Evaluation of Preservation Alternatives for Alfalfa Hays
 - *Wayne Coblenz, U.S. Dairy Forage Research Center*
- Sustainable Management of Waterhemp in Established Alfalfa for Dairy Systems
 - *Mark Renz, University of Wisconsin*

Funding was determined by a NAFA review committee which selected projects that best met established research priorities, including: new and updated NAFA publications; agronomic management; feed value consistency; forage quality improvements; new uses and market development; fertility, soil management, soil health, macro/micro nutrients; and yield improvements. Proposals were scored on methodology/ analytical approaches; industry need; cost effectiveness/budget/matching funds; partnerships; and outreach.

Final reports from the first round of alfalfa checkoff-funded projects, made in early 2017, continue to roll in as the data and results from those one-year projects are revealing important results – available at http://alfalfa.org/USAFRI_FinalReports.php. Be sure to bookmark this page and continue to monitor it for more results throughout the coming fall.

NAFA strongly encourages alfalfa farmers to patronize checkoff-participating alfalfa seed brands to support the U.S. Alfalfa Farmer Research Initiative. A current list of participating marketers can be found at alfalfa.org. (*If your favorite alfalfa brand is not on the list, contact NAFA at 651.484.3888 for information on how a seed marketer can become a participating brand.*)