

problem encountered in making hay. However, if producers attempt to make hay at four week intervals instead of at six week intervals, they should be able to get the grass stored within six weeks of regrowth most of the time.

Hay-Cutting Frequency Reported by Florida Dairy Managers										
	Weeks of Regrowth									
	4	4-5	5	5-6	6	6-7	7	6-8	8	8-10
Responses	1	1	3	1	9	3	1	11	3	1

2. Corn and Sorghum Silages.

Only a few samples of corn and sorghum silages were collected. The corn silage appears to have been harvested at about the right maturity based upon their average moisture content. The CP content is similar to that reported in the feed composition tables of the National Research Council. TDN of corn silage was lower than that normally seen for corn silage grown in cooler areas of the U.S. This is usually due to the higher NDF content of corn silage grown in Florida.

Sorghum appears to have been harvested on the immature side based upon its chemical composition. As the plant matures, it dries out and the grain content increases. Although it depends somewhat on the variety, sorghum should be harvested and stored at a moisture content about 72 percent. At this maturity, it's TDN should be closer to 60 percent and it's CP content closer to 7 percent.

Chemical Composition of Corn Silage and Sorghum Silage Sampled on Dairies				
Forage	Number of Samples	Moisture (%)	Crude Protein (% DM)	Total Digestible Nutrients, %
Corn silage	4	67.3	7.9	57.8
Sorghum silage	3	78.3	10.7	56.6

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Industry Characterization.

1. The dairy industry in the Suwannee River Valley is relatively young. The average farm has been operating 15 years and is smaller in size than the state average (396 vs. 545 cows per farm).

2. Although over two-thirds of the dairies grow some forage for their cows, over three-fourths of the dairies purchase some forage to meet their forage needs, primarily Coastal bermudagrass hay.

Hay Production.

1. Nearly sixty percent of farms produce Coastal bermudagrass hay.

2. Average amount of nitrogen applied per acre generally matches the University of Florida's recommendations (80 pounds of nitrogen per cutting).