

## **THE CONNECTION BETWEEN STORAGE AND QUALITY OF MEADOW HAY**

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The practical application of hay quality is of particular importance in Hungarian beef cattle and horse farming. Due to the high price of protein and supplementary feeds on the international market, it may be a worthwhile alternative to base the demand for feedstuffs exclusively on high feed value meadow hay. To do this, it is necessary to be aware of the daily variation in quality and quantity. Following the good practice guidelines both livestock farming and product marketing can be planned. Our recommended solution is focusing on quality reservation. The presented technology (ventilation, dry floor, large air space) guarantee the conservation of the genuinely high value hay. Strict protocol must be applied (mowing at the right time with conditioner, forage sampling for digestible fibre content). After stacking, bale temperature increases during the first 5 days up to 41°C. Then the next 8 days a stagnant trend is seen. At the final stage, core temperature stabilizes at 30°C. Preventing caramelization and hay stack fires are priorities for every farmer.