



MSU Agriculture Innovation Day Focus on Forages and the Future



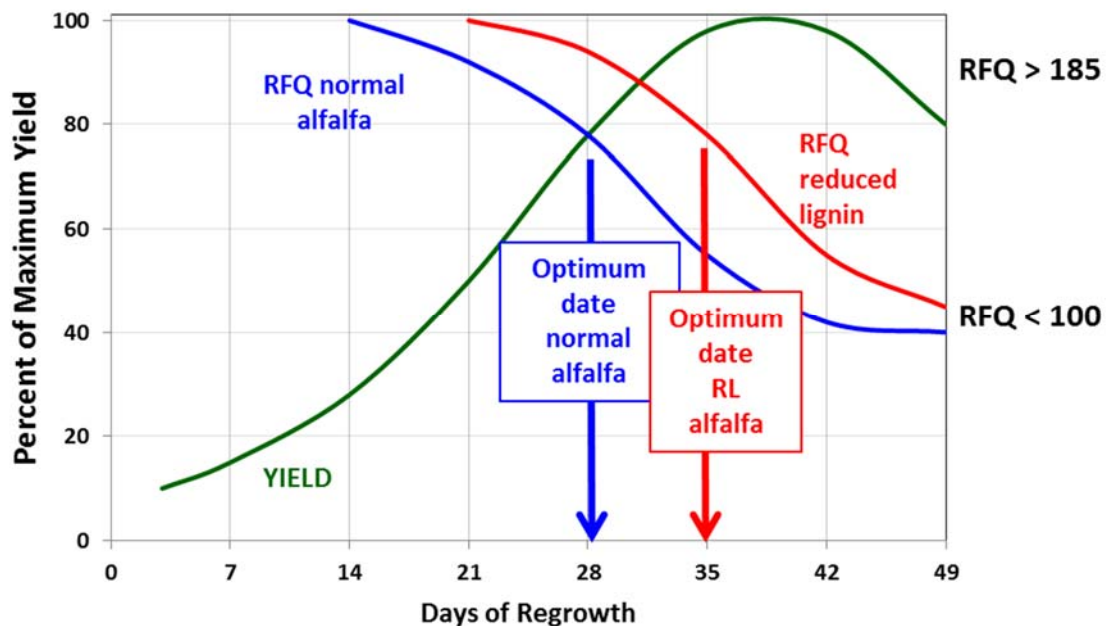
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Take Home Messages

Making the Most of Reduced Lignin Alfalfa in Your Operation

Dr. Mark Sulc, The Ohio State University

HarvXtra varieties will contain about 5% lower lignin content over most of the season, when harvested on the same dates as standard varieties. This should translate to better forage quality.





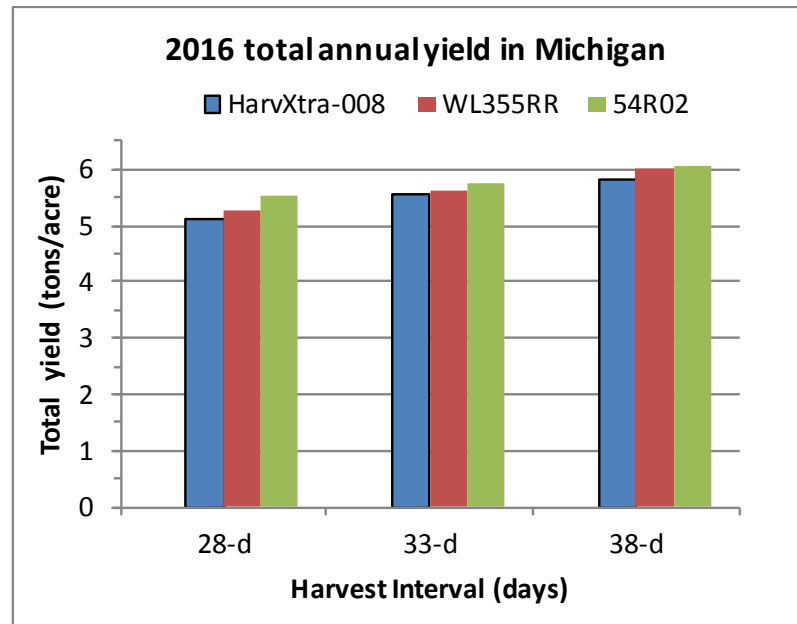
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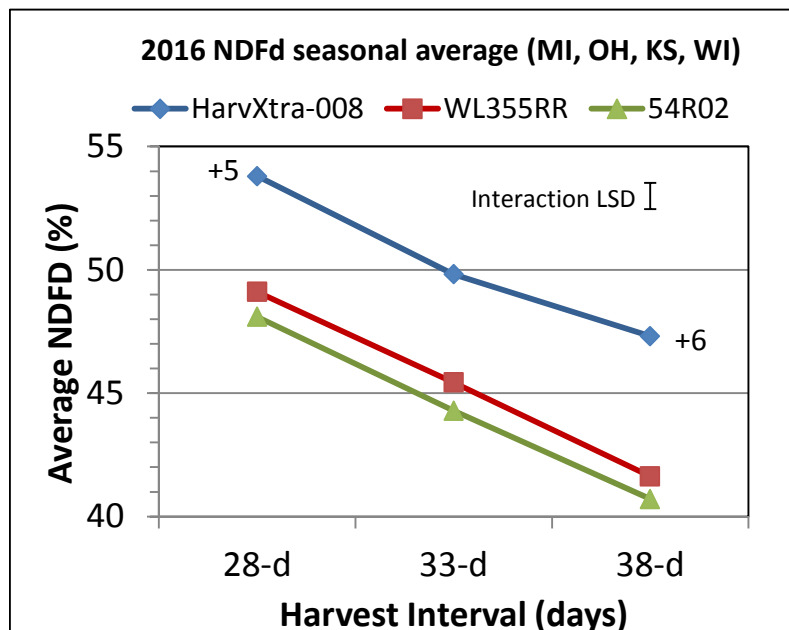


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The first HarvXtra variety we tested was 5% lower in yield when harvested on the same date, but newer releases should be similar in yield to standard varieties.



Less lignin means greater fiber digestibility, usually about 5 units higher in NDFd
This should lead to about 2.5 lbs more fat corrected milk per cow on a high alfalfa diet.





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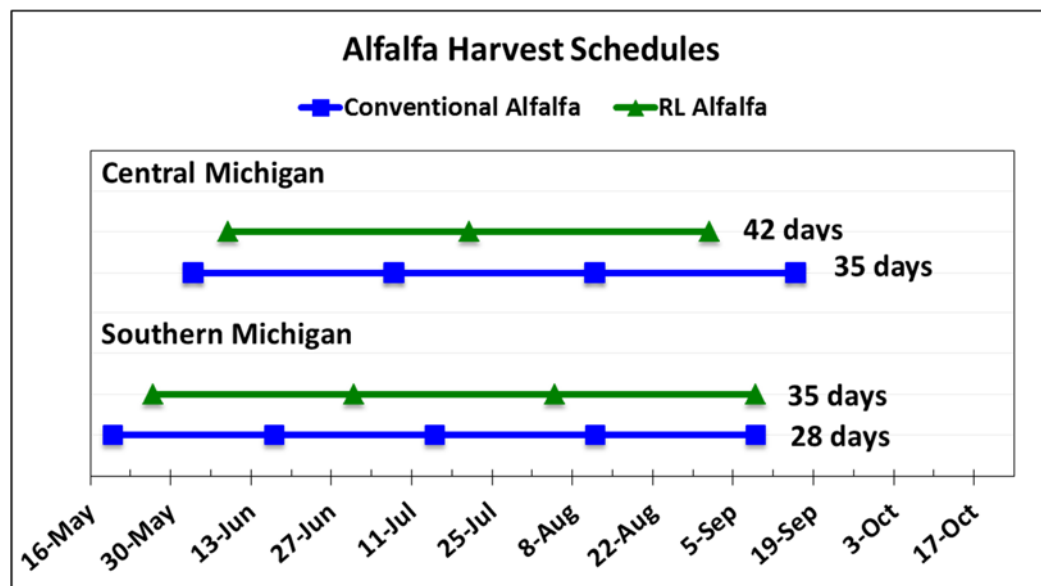
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Reduced lignin alfalfa should allow more flexibility in harvest timing

- HarvXtra can be harvested 5 to 7 days later than standard varieties for equal forage quality and equal or higher yield. This should translate into one less harvest per year, saving cost and possibly lengthening stand life.
- Maintaining good quality longer is important when weather prevents timely harvest.



We are learning together how to manage this new trait

- Animal response data is needed and is being collected on producer farms
- Nutritional strategies will need to be optimized to take full advantage of this technology
- Longer term studies are needed to understand implications to stand persistence
- More detailed financial analyses need to be developed as more data is collected