

## ALFALFA VARIETAL PERFORMANCE

The 1987 Alfalfa Varietal Performance trial was conducted at the Dickinson Branch Station in cooperation with Dr. Dwain Meyer, Department of Agronomy, North Dakota State University.

Varieties included in this planting were: Big 10 from Dahlgren & Company; Spreador 2 and 86639 from Northrup King & Company; WL225 from W-L Reo Inc.; XPH2001 from Asgrow Seed Co.; Dekalb 120 from Dekalb Seed Company; Mich 80-16 from Michigan State University; Vernal, included as a check variety, and Nitro a new kind of alfalfa developed by USDA and Minnesota researchers at the University of Minnesota.

The new variety is named for its high nitrogen fixation capacity. It is suited for a one-year rotation of a legume into a cropping plan and will produce equal or higher hay yields than traditional varieties.

Nitro is a non-dormant alfalfa variety – it doesn't respond to cool fall weather and the plants likely won't survive winter. Rather than storing nutrients for cold-weather survival, Nitro keeps growing and fixing nitrogen an extra four to six weeks.

Hot, dry weather conditions prevailing from April through early June were not favorable for establishing alfalfa. No harvest was possible from the 1987 seeding.

**Table 1. Alfalfa Trial 1987**

Variety	R 1	R 2	R 3	R 4
86639	1	3	6	5
Spreador II	2	6	7	2
Vernal	3	4	1	8
Big 10	4	8	5	3
WL 225	5	1	2	7
XPH 2001	6	9	8	4
Dekalb 120	7	2	9	1
Mich 80-16	8	7	3	6
Nitro	9	5	4	9
Planted May 14, 1987				