Australian Oaten Hay

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Rainfed forage grown for global dairy diets

A clean, safe forage to optimise rumen function, and improve cattle health and performance.

AEXCO

AgriFutures® Australia

A Research and Development Corporation of the Australian Government

Proven Benefits

"Microbial protein production is a key to profitable cattle production. A stable productive rumen is essential. Oaten hay can help provide that."

Adjunct Professor Ian Lean BVSc, PhD (Calif), DVSc (Syd), MANZCVS

Managing Director, Scibus and author of a report titled "Nutritional Benefits of Australian Cereal Forages" – data of which has been used in this guide.

Download the Nutritional Assessment of Australian oaten hay →

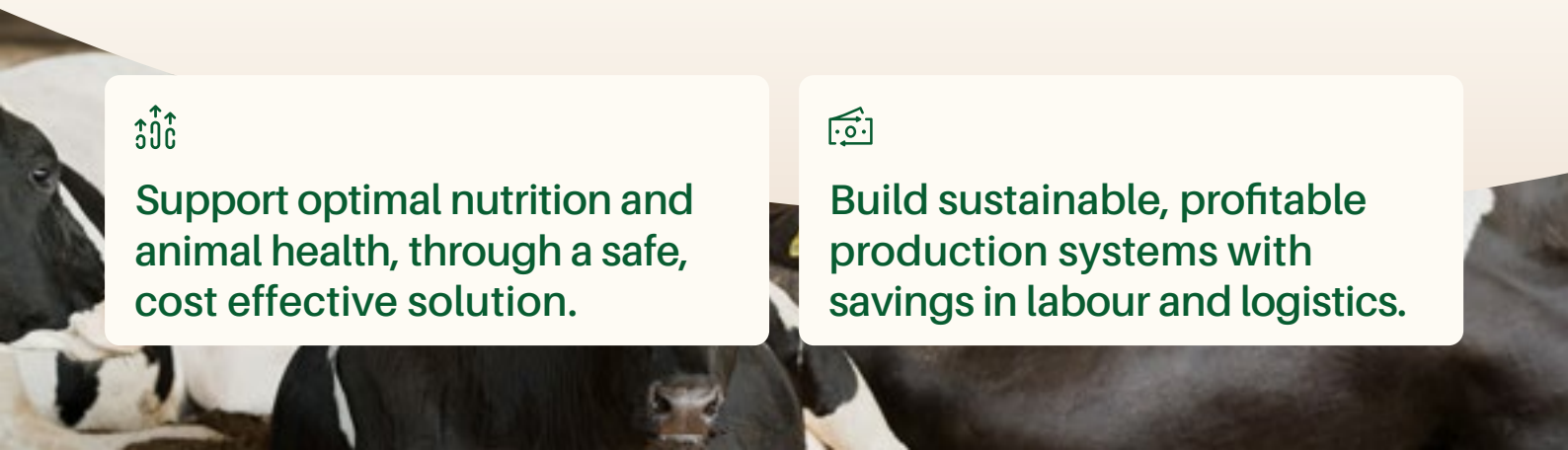
Key benefits of rainfed Australian oaten hay

An ideal complement to balance diets high in byproducts, starch or sugars.

Reliably boosts milk and beef production, as well as animal health.

Contains sugars, protein and soluble fibre that increases microbial protein production.

Consistent quality assurance through Australia's dependable supply chain.

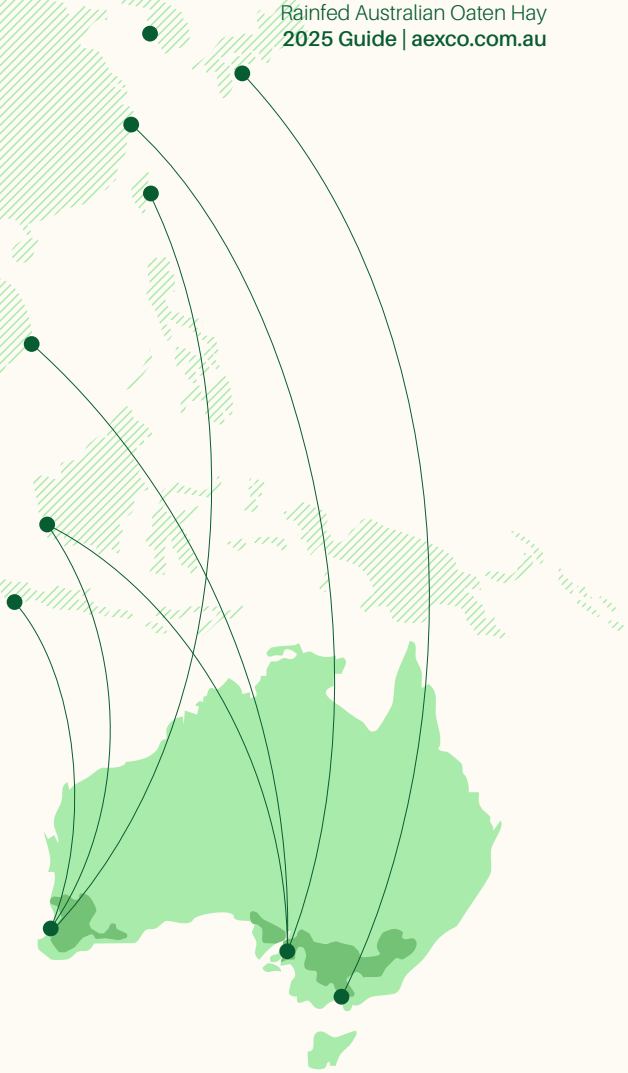


Support optimal nutrition and animal health, through a safe, cost effective solution.

Build sustainable, profitable production systems with savings in labour and logistics.

Production & Export

Australian hay exporters provide complete traceability from paddock to port.



1 Grown in ideal conditions

Oaten hay is grown in the major cropping zones of Southern Australia and harvested in spring. Naturally rainfed and cultivated in drier climates without irrigation, crops receive only moderate fertilizer inputs. As a result, they produce shorter plants with finer stems, yielding a lower-fibre hay that is highly digestible for cattle.

2 Harvested for optimal nutrition

Oaten hay is harvested at the optimal stage in its growing cycle, to ensure optimum digestibility and nutritional value. Careful timing preserves soluble fibre and sugar content, improving productivity benefits.

3 Precision-dried for safe storage

Australian oaten hay is baled and carefully monitored to maintain consistent moisture content under 12%. Tests have shown that it has extremely low presence of deoxynivalenol and zearalenone. Low moisture levels reduce the risk of mycotoxin contamination making oaten hay well suited to long-term, safe storage in various climates.

4 Compressed for efficient transport

To reduce shipping costs and maximise storage efficiency, oaten hay is pressed into high-density small and large bales. This processing allows for consistent quality, ease of handling and delivery to farms worldwide.

5 Sustainably produced

Through AEXCO, the Australian export industry has benchmarked supply chain emissions and is working to minimise them under the Australian Agricultural Sustainability Framework. Australia's hay production benefits from rainfed farming, lower fertilizer inputs, and cultivation on land that has remained uncleared for over 70 years. Combined with its proximity to key markets, these factors contribute to Australia's strong sustainability credentials.

Australia exports between 1.0 and 1.25 million tonnes of hay and straw each year.

With additional processing capacity and current cereal hay production more than is exported, exports can continue to grow.

Animal Health Benefits

Rainfed oaten hay contains slowly fermenting fibre that balances rumination. This reduces the risk of acidosis related health complications, improves milk quality and promotes rapid growth.

Mycotoxin Risk Mitigation

Tropical forages have low dry matter content and carry a high risk of mycotoxin contamination.

Australian oaten hay is high in dry matter and has extremely low presence of deoxynivalenol and zearalenone, making it much safer and suitable for storage.

>88%

Dry matter content (compared to <20% in tropical forages)

Diet Integration

Well-integrated diets allow cows, heifers and steers to perform well.

Feeds that complement oaten hay:

Protein-based diets → e.g. urea, lupins, canola meal, Australian wheat distiller's grains, soya bean meal, whole cottonseed.

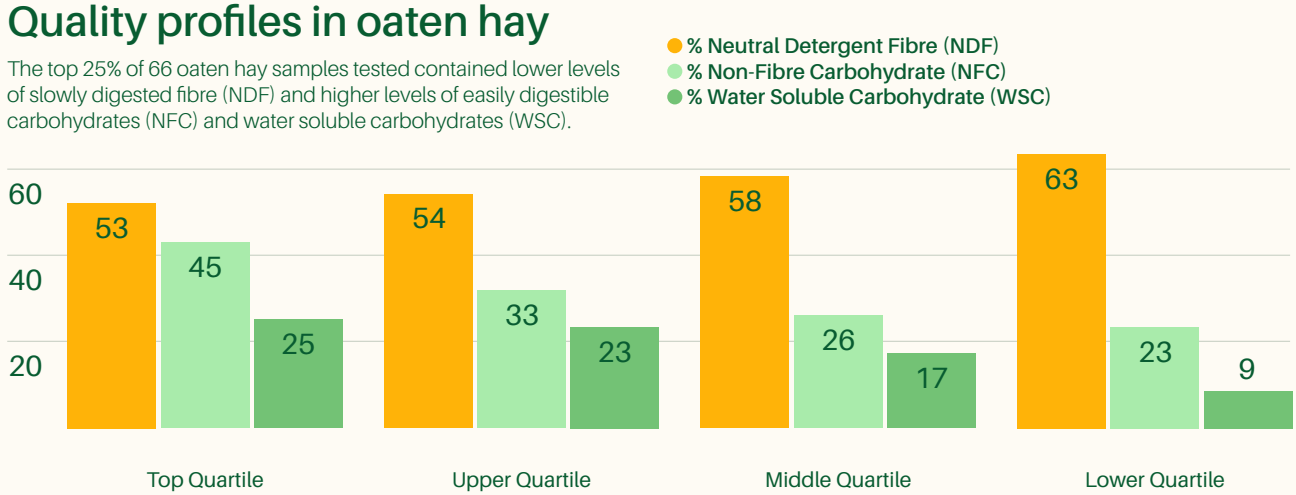
Carbohydrate-based diets → e.g. grains, tapioca, cassava, molasses, corn silage.

Benefits of diet integration

- Increase feed intake and digestive efficiency.
- Improve milk quality in dairy cows.
- Improve beef quality and flavour.
- Ensure animal health and contentment.

Quality profiles in oaten hay

The top 25% of 66 oaten hay samples tested contained lower levels of slowly digested fibre (NDF) and higher levels of easily digestible carbohydrates (NFC) and water soluble carbohydrates (WSC).



Nutrition

Rainfed oaten hay has valuable nutritional attributes that integrate well in energy-dense diets to support healthy, high-performance cows, heifers and steers.

1 Superior fibre characteristics

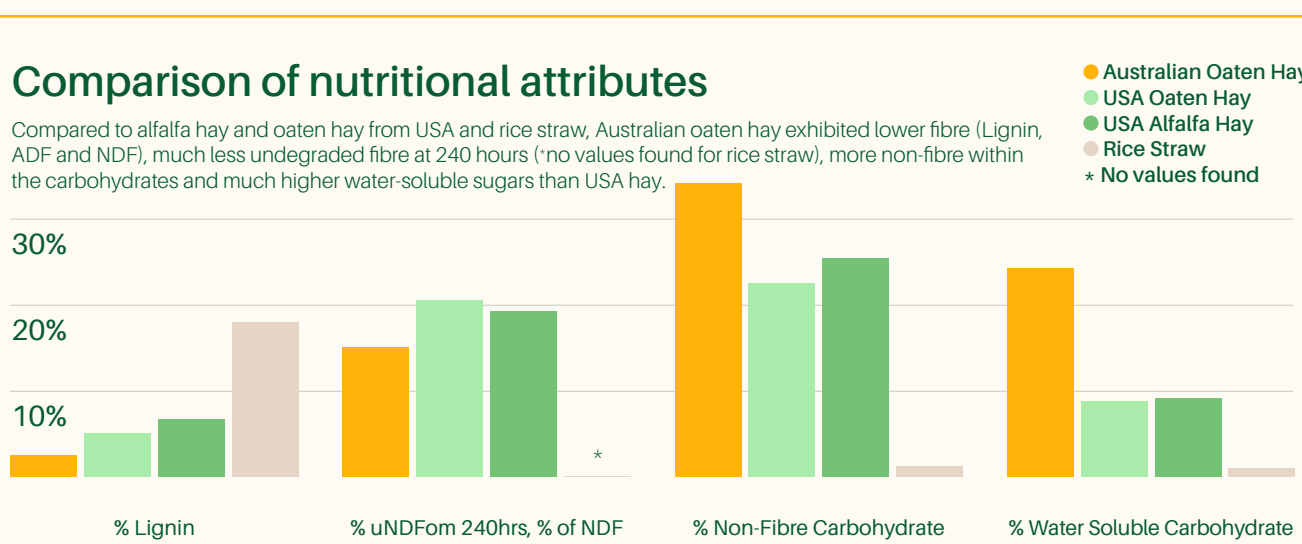
High in digestible fibre low in indigestible lignin content → Provides rumen stability when balancing with grains, cassava, tapioca and molasses.

2 High levels of soluble sugars

High levels of both ethanol and water-soluble sugars → Provides the right substrates for microbial protein production in the rumen.

Comparison of nutritional attributes

Compared to alfalfa hay and oaten hay from USA and rice straw, Australian oaten hay exhibited lower fibre (Lignin, ADF and NDF), much less undegraded fibre at 240 hours (*no values found for rice straw), more non-fibre within the carbohydrates and much higher water-soluble sugars than USA hay.



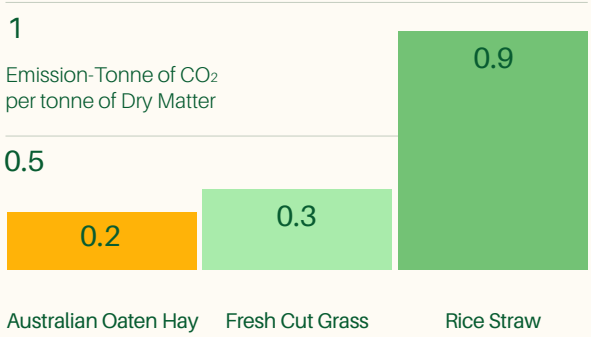
Oaten Hay for Indonesian Diets

Milk production from Javanese dairy farmers is limited by land, labour and access to high quality forages.

Benefits to small land-holder dairy farms

- Grow herd size on the same land
- Overcoming shortages of quality feed
- Boost feed digestibility and intake
- Cows will produce more milk and weight with oaten hay than rice straw
- Grow milk production per cow
- Better manage diets during the dry season when compound feeding increases
- Provide high quality forage in the dry season
- Provide a forage with lower emissions in production

Emission intensity of Indonesian forage sources



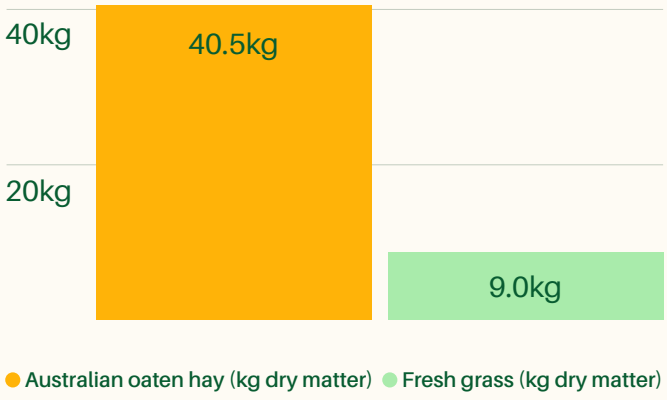
References
Australian oaten hay
"Emissions life cycle assessment for the Australian export oaten hay industry" An AgriFutures Australia report from Common Capital April 2024
Fresh cut grass and Rice straw
"Environmental impacts of dairy farming in Lembang, West Java" CGIAR Working Paper No. 221 2017

Logistical Advantage

Across the 300 farms surveyed in 2017, Lembang farmers spent an average of 34%* of their time cutting and collecting grass for their cows, due to the long distances between dairy farms and roadside grass collection sites. See full report here →

* From 2017 Study: Characteristics of small-scale dairy farms in Lembang, West-Java.

Fodder collected per motorbike load



A farmer can carry **4.5 times more** fodder with Australian oaten hay than fresh grasses.

Save time collecting grass → **Free up time to grow herd size.**

Image sourced from IndoDairy1

Contact us for further information about how our hay can help your business. aexco.com.au

Watch our video →