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(S.D.)-Farmers, Ranchers Dealing With Hay Shortage



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/21/2013 09:09 AM

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) - South Dakota farmers and ranchers are searching for solutions to deal with the hay shortage.

SDSU Extension agronomy crops field specialist Larry Wagner says that the issues started last summer when pastures started giving out and some people had to start feeding early in the fall.

Wagner says it's like adding a month or two to a winter feeding program.

The USDA says production of all dry hay in 2012 was down 9 percent to 120 million tons - the lowest production level since 1964. South Dakota produced 4 million tons last year, a 53-percent decrease.

Wagner says it's going to be costly bring in hay from other parts of the country - as much as \$300 per ton for good alfalfa hay.