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# Understanding Alfalfa Characteristics Beyond Yield – Pest Management!

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*See: <https://alfalfa.ucdavis.edu/+producing/variety/>*

**Yield is very important but....** We would always recommend yield as being the most important factor when choosing an alfalfa variety. The economic benefit of choosing superior lines can be seen in Figure 1. But what other factors should be considered?

Figure 1. Economic returns from variety choice, based upon yields.

**Fall Dormancy (FD) is an important characteristic for choosing alfalfa varieties:**

1. Fall Dormancy Affects Yield
2. Fall Dormancy Affects Quality (slower growth)
3. Fall Dormancy Affects Stand Life (>8 FD at Davis)
4. Winter Activity/flood Damage

## Choosing Pest Resistance in Alfalfa Varieties

An alfalfa variety is a 'population' consisting of a range of plant types in a single variety. The 'mean' value creates superior or inferior varieties in terms of yield, stand, pest resistance, and quality. Varietal Pest Resistance through choice of variety is often the only way to combat specific diseases or insect pests.

### Recommendations Sacramento/San Joaquin Valley:

	4-9 Rating
Fall Dormancy:	
Spotted Alfalfa Aphid (SAA):	R
Pea Aphid (PA)	HR
Blue Alfalfa Aphid (BAA):	HR
Pythophthora Root Rot (PRR).	HR
Bacterial Wilt (BW):	MR
Fusarium Wilt (FW):	HR
Stem Nematode:	HR
Root Not Nematode:	HR
Verticillium Wilt (VW)	R

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