

## NAFA's Role in Supporting the U.S. Forage Industry

Ronald Cornish

(National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance, St. Paul, MN 55126, USA)

**Abstract:** Formed in 2006, the National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance (NAFA) is an umbrella organization of state and regional alfalfa seed and hay associations, genetic suppliers, seed marketers, and industry members dedicated to promoting the interests of the United States' alfalfa seed and hay producers through education, research, promotion, and advocacy. NAFA is governed by a 25 member board of directors. NAFA's primary focus is advocacy and policy development/implementation in all areas affecting the alfalfa seed and forage industry such as research funding, farm policy, agricultural coexistence, crop insurance, environmental regulation, and biotechnology. NAFA also hosts the Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar (AITS), a highly respected educational event drawing international attendance. Topics include genetics, seed production, growth and development, fertility, and management. AITS gives participants knowledge to make the most of their alfalfa investment. NAFA visits Washington, D.C. annually to discuss issues related to alfalfa and alfalfa forage systems. Representatives attend more than 100 meetings to promote NAFA objectives, educate Congressional members about the alfalfa industry, and build recognition of the United States' 3rd most valuable field crop. NAFA was successful in securing valuable research funding for the Alfalfa Forage Research Program (AFRP) and the Alfalfa Pollinator Health Initiative (APHI). Additionally, NAFA is working with stakeholders for an improved alfalfa insurance program. As the third most valuable crop in the United States, alfalfa and other forages play a very important part of the United States farm economy. We strive to have our forage seed and hay products be the best quality for global and domestic markets. NAFA is dedicated to working with other governments and industry agencies to help ensure global access. NAFA welcomes the opportunity to work together to expand markets, and promote the use of high quality seed and forages for both meat and milk production on the global stage.