

# Supply and Demand Situation of Alfalfa in China and the Future Development Trend

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**1. Alfalfa production** Since 2001, China's alfalfa production has been growing on the whole, which are mainly concentrated in northwest China, north China and northeast China(Fig1). As reported, China's commerical alfalfa production increased from 2,207.00 thousand tons in 2001 to 4,270.83 thousand tons in 2014, with an average annual growth rate of 5.2%(Fig2).

**2. Alfalfa demand** China's alfalfa demands are mainly from dairy industry and the other herbivore husbandry industries. According to the statistical data, the demands for alfalfa in China's dairy industry increased from 1,401.30 thousand tons in 2001 to 4,390.49 thousand tons in 2014, with an average annual growth rate of 9.1%(Fig3); the demands for alfalfa in the other herbivore husbandry industries reached up to 880.34 thousand tons.

**3. Alfalfa trade** China's alfalfa imports increased from 2.40 thousand tons in 2001 to 1,008.00 thousand tons in 2014. China's alfalfa exports declined from 34.00 thousand tons in 2001 to 8.00 thousand tons in 2014. It was characterized by a net import pattern(Fig4).

**4. Alfalfa supply and demand balance sheet** China's alfalfa supply is increased from 2,175.50 thousand tons in 2001 to 5,270.83 thousand tons in 2014, especially in recent years the role of the supply of imports increase. China's alfalfa demand is increasing, the rate of alfalfa demand for cow is high, which is approaching 83 percent. Other demand for alfalfa is also increasing (Tab1).

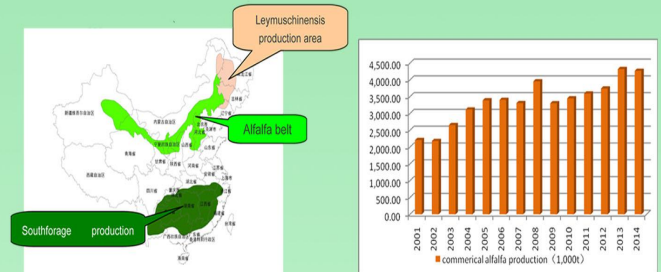


Fig1 Alfalfa belt in China

Fig2 Commerical alfalfa production in China

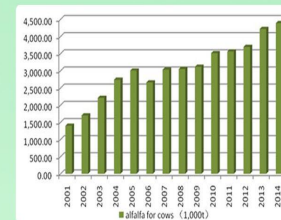


Fig3 Alfalfa for cows in China

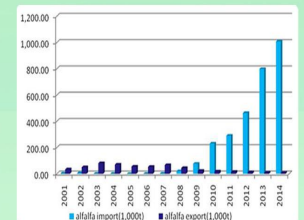


Fig4 Alfalfa import and export in China

Tab 1 Alfalfa supply and demand balance sheet (1,000t)

year	alfalfa total supply				alfalfa total demand			
	commerical alfalfa	import	export	total supply	cows	high yield cow	middle yield cow	other demand
2001	2,207.00	2.40	34.00	2,175.50	1,401.30	700.70	700.70	774.20
2002	2,181.00	4.70	50.50	2,135.20	1,701.10	850.50	850.50	434.10
2003	2,653.30	1.00	81.10	2,573.30	2,210.70	1,105.30	1,105.30	362.60
2004	3,117.50	0.50	70.70	3,047.30	2,742.30	1,371.20	1,371.20	305.00
2005	3,389.50	0.10	55.50	3,334.10	3,009.80	1,504.90	1,504.90	324.30
2006	3,404.60	0.50	53.70	3,351.30	2,663.60	1,331.80	1,331.80	687.70
2007	3,309.40	2.20	66.80	3,244.70	3,034.10	1,517.10	1,517.10	210.60
2008	3,957.90	19.80	44.80	3,932.80	3,052.90	1,526.50	1,526.50	879.90
2009	3,302.30	76.70	23.30	3,355.70	3,119.20	1,559.60	1,559.60	236.50
2010	3,448.00	230.60	18.20	3,660.50	3,514.70	1,757.40	1,757.40	145.70
2011	3,593.80	289.60	14.90	3,868.50	3,564.50	1,782.20	1,782.20	304.00
2012	3,743.90	462.70	12.20	4,194.40	3,697.40	1,848.70	1,848.70	497.00
2013	4,322.58	799.80	8.50	5,113.88	4,220.33	2,080.44	2,139.89	893.55
2014	4,270.83	1,008.00	8.00	5,270.83	4,390.49	2,164.33	2,226.16	880.34

Source: 《Grass Industry Statistics in China》, 《Animal Husbandry Statistics in China》.

**5. Alfalfa supply and demand forecasts** Alfalfa is becoming more and more important for animal husbandry, especially the restructuring and development of the dairy industry, alfalfa demand continues to grow in China. Driven by 'The Project of Promoting the Alfalfa for Dairy Industry', cow pastures construction their own alfalfa base, alfalfa production continues to grow in China. Foreign alfalfa quality advantage still exists, foreign imports remains current levels or increase slightly in short-term.

**6. Recommendations** As a consequence, it is suggested that the alfalfa industry should be incorporated into the rank of effectively solving China's food safety. We should further adjust the agricultural plantation structure, reduce the surplus corn planting and simultaneously develop the alfalfa planting. More specifically, we should increase funding and technique supports, integrate the existing projects such as 'The Project of Promoting the Alfalfa for Dairy Industry', 'The Project of Changing Crops into Fodders', 'The Project of Developing the Breeding Industry in South China' and 'The Project of Adjusting the Corn Planting Structure in Liandaowan Region', so as to promote the development of alfalfa industry towards scale expansion, organization and diversification.