

Round Bale Storage

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Some recent blasts of wintery weather just drive home the point that winter is coming and any given winter in Kansas can give us extremes all over the board, and in just a few days. One thing that we can always improve is our round bale storage management. Large square bales often go into sheds and that is sure the ideal thing. Round bales don't work so well in sheds so we often store them outside. But one of the five things that we can do to decrease forage loss in round bales is to build more capacity and store them inside. In dry years it may not make a lot of difference, but just a couple of wet years can you could save enough forage that you could pay for that new hay storage shed. So now let's move over to a little less capital intensive things that reduce forage loss in big round bales. The first one is to increase bale density, especially tighten up that outer layer. The tighter that outer layer, the harder it is for oxygen to penetrate which means that those microbes can steal hay from you. If you can depress the surface more than a half inch, the bale could be tighter. Another way is to use covers, large tarps if you will, after you make your stacks. Plastic wrap or net wrap will also help. Select a good storage site, ideally with 4 to 6 inches of coarse rock underneath to channel rain or snow welt away in a hurry. And then orient your rows north and south so that there can be sunshine on all sides each day. Orienting the rows east and west means that the north side is going to stay wet a long time. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

What costs should be shared?

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Misconceptions abound regarding the Kansas ag lease law. Many landlords and/or tenants are under the belief that the Kansas statutes are much more specific about details than they in fact are. There's no requirement, for example, for a pasture to have water unless it is advertised as such. Pastures are rented as is. One topic that brings up a lot of questions is which expenses are shared in crop share leases. The state statutes are quiet on that. In reality it is up to the tenant and the landlord to work that out. Now, the FSA office is going to be interested from the point of view as to is their material participation so that the landlord qualifies for a share of the payments. But that's a programmatic thing that has nothing to do with the Kansas ag lease law. Historically and traditionally, yield increasing inputs were shared. This usually meant fertilizer, later herbicide and insecticide and in some cases seed. If a field needed to be limed, that was often shared too. Then the tenant provided the equipment and labor to do all the tilling and harvesting. Sometimes the landlord would pay harvest and hauling. But things started to get complicated when no-till came along. Herbicides were being used for burn down in place of tillage. So is that expense shared? I'm not going to give you any answers other than encourage the tenant and the landlord to talk it through. If you aren't sure about something, then the two of you can set up an appointment with me and we'll sit down and push some numbers around and see what comes out. It may not be traditional, but we can make it equitable! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Do I need chloride or sulfur on my wheat?

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We know that we need nitrogen on our wheat every year and a fair number of years we need phosphorus. Potassium is rarely deficient, yet anyway - the day may be coming, but what about other nutrients like zinc, iron, chloride and sulfur? Zinc and iron are rarely an issue in wheat production, in fact I don't think I've ever recommended zinc or iron on wheat. Sulfur and chloride are a couple of odd ducks. We don't consider them a macro-nutrient, like nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium because the plants need for these are generally lower. But they aren't micronutrients because the plants need them in greater quantities than that. I have seen situations where both chloride and sulfur have been needed in wheat fields. The challenge though is in remembering to test for them and then doing it right. The deficiency symptoms can be deceiving - sulfur deficiency can look exactly like nitrogen deficiency and chloride deficiency can look like a disease problem. So testing is really needed. And just like nitrogen, chloride and sulfur are mobile elements so a 24 inch profile soil test is really preferred. Because they are mobile elements though, we still have time to get these tests done and applications made in late winter. If you have never tested for sulfur or chloride and haven't seen a good response to your traditional fertilizer program, this may be a logical next step. Take a 24 inch sample in 6 to 8 locations, and bring it in to the office. We'll get it tested for sulfur and chloride as well as all the rest of the normal stuff including organic matter and nitrogen. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.