

Managing Volunteer Corn in Summer Fallow

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. When Roundup Ready technology first came out we all thought it was kind of quaint when we had a few Roundup Ready volunteer corn plants in our Roundup Ready soybean fields or in summer fallow fields. Well, in some fields the problem has continued to get worse and it isn't cute anymore. To me, heavy infestations of Roundup Ready corn is a clear indication of a poor herbicide plan. If good mixes of soil applied herbicides are being used in conjunction with a glyphosate product, you will have much less of a problem. Naturally there is a threshold below which the moisture and yield loss of volunteer corn just isn't a problem. That threshold appears to be about 500 plants per acre. If you have less than that, don't worry, for now anyway, but maybe do some field walking with a corn knife, and if it's over 500 plants per acre, you definitely need to be doing something about it! To put that 500 into perspective, that's 10 plants in a 30 by 30 foot area. By this time of year, about the only good options to control volunteer corn are going to be a corn knife. In soybeans, a good early season option is going to be Poast Plus or Fusilde DX. Another good option, again for smaller corn, is going to be one of the clethodim products like Select Max. You can use Liberty Link soybeans and spray with Liberty, but again, Liberty is going to be best on smaller corn earlier in the year. One management consideration is no till. Notill fields have about 1/8 the germination of volunteer over tillage. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Phosphorus Fertility on Wheat

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. 25 or 30 years ago it was pretty much standard practice for all wheat producers to apply 50 to 100 pounds of 18-46-0 starter fertilizer on their wheat fields just ahead of planting or with the drill. But as fertilizer prices started going up and we found high levels of residual phosphorus in many fields, a lot of producers started backing off on the use of starter fertilizer. Well, we've about come full circle. If you haven't soil tested in the past two years, it's time to get a test run. You know the drill, get 10 to 15 surface samples, meaning top 3 to 6 inches, bulk them together, unless it's a highly variable field, and then we'll run pH, phosphorus and potassium. Given the year that we had - very wet in June, I don't see much need to run a profile nitrogen test. If we see phosphorus levels below 20 ppm, we definitely need to add starter fertilizer. If fields are very low in phosphorus then I'd probably recommend an in row application, we just have to be careful with the rate. Phosphorus in the row isn't an issue, but the nitrogen and potassium can be. Fortunately we have some good starter fertilizers that are low in nitrogen and potassium and high in phosphorus so we should be in good shape. One other thing I want to add is the apparent growing importance of sulfur and chloride in wheat production. We have been watching levels of both of these drop in fields in recent years and I think that every field, in the absence of a profile soil test, should have 10 to 15 pounds of both of these added annually. Corn and bromegrass probably could justify the same treatment as well! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Liming 101

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. One thing we don't talk about around here is liming crop fields. Given the abundance of limestone around here, we just find so many times that lime isn't necessary to raise soil pHs. But then it comes around and bites you in the butt big time, quite commonly when we have a disaster with a new seeding of alfalfa. Alfalfa is the most sensitive crop that we grow on a regular basis. Soybeans (and red clover if anyone cares), are intermediate in their sensitivity to acid soils with wheat and corn being very tolerant. If you are planting alfalfa, you should never stick a single seed in the ground until you have soil tested. The seed is just too expensive to have to redo it one year later because the stand is stunted and not growing. I saw a field of new alfalfa this spring where the first 20 feet of the field, which had caught lime dust off the road, looked fine and the rest of the field was short stunted and anemic. The part of the field that looked good was 6.1 pH while the rest of the field was 5.1. Even at 6.1, there was still a need for liming in that part of the field. Surface application of liming can help a little bit but to really be effective lime needs to be incorporated into the surface 3 to 6 inches after application. As for lime source, don't be tricked by claims of needing less lime because it's pelleted or a highly pure form. If the soil test calls for 2000 pounds ECC, effective calcium carbonate, then apply that in whatever form it takes. It may be 2200 pounds of a high ECC product or 4000 pounds of an average ECC product. But just make sure that you are getting fields limed when needed! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

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