

### Soil Testing for Wheat Fertility

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I strongly encourage producers to soil test their wheat fields every two to three years. I don't think it's necessary to test every year, but every other year or every third year I feel is crucial. We basically have two sets of tests we need to do in each field that we test. We do a 0 to 6 inch test to monitor soil pH, phosphorus, and potassium as well as soil organic matter and zinc. These are all non mobile nutrients or characteristics that we can easily test in that shallow sample. Probably most crucial in this battery of tests is soil pH and phosphorus. While we are seeing declines in soil potassium levels, most fields are still well above needed treatment levels. We also should do 0 to 24 inch samples as well to test for those mobile elements of nitrogen, sulfur and chloride. These nutrients move readily in the soil so we need to look at the major rooting profile to see how much of these nutrients we have. I honestly don't expect to see much residual nitrogen after the heavy rains of this spring, but we still need to do this test to monitor sulfur and chloride. We are seeing more and more deficiencies of these two over the past decade. We have to always fertilize to strengthen the weakest link in that yield chain. Try to take 6 to 12 samples in each field to make your composite sample for analysis. For the 0 to 6 inch sample that won't be too tough, but for the 0 to 24 inch it's going to mean a little bit of sweat equity. I've pulled a lot of soil samples of the years so I know exactly what it's like, but it's needed! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

How much nitrogen does your wheat crop need?

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Wheat fertilization used to be easy or so it seemed to be. We'd apply 100 pounds of 18-46-0 at planting time and topdress with another 45 to 60 pounds of nitrogen in the spring. It's just what everybody did. And we average 40 to 50 bushels per acre and were happy. But the wheat genetics have changed. You can still top dress with 45 to 60 pounds of nitrogen and you'll probably still get 40 to 45 bushels of wheat. And now days that will seem like a crop failure. We have wheat varieties that can push 100 bushels per acre IF the weather cooperates AND we apply the nitrogen that we need to fuel that high output race engine! It also means that we apply the fertilizer in a timely fashion, like November or December instead of waiting too late in March or even early April. We know that it takes about 2.4 pounds of nitrogen to get that first bushel of wheat. As we apply more and more nitrogen the yield goes up to a certain point. But eventually we get to a point where it takes 10 to 12 pounds of nitrogen to get that next bushel of yield..... we usually stop way before then. Given the likely low residual soil nitrogen after the wet spring I think we really need to be looking at total nitrogen applications of 80 to 100 pounds for our 2016 wheat crop. If you are following grain sorghum maybe even push that up to 125 pounds. If you are following soybeans, unfortunately we can't really give any nitrogen credit because the wheat crop is pretty well set before the nitrogen from the soybeans becomes available. Soil test and then fertilize the crop to make the best use of the available genetics! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

The Crickets are Coming, The Crickets are Coming

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, and some of you are already aware of this, but we are probably going to see one heck of a cricket invasion starting just about any time now. I'm surprised with last week's cool weather that we weren't seeing more move in around our homes. We actually have several cricket species in Kansas. Even throwing out the weird looking camel crickets and mole crickets, we still have house crickets, field crickets and striped ground crickets. It's these last three that really drive us crazy with their nocturnal chirping in the far reaches of our bedroom at 2 in the morning. But far and away, most of what we see trying to get in to our homes is the field cricket. I'll tell you right now that there's no guarantee that we can keep all the crickets out of your house this late summer and early fall. The first step is to make sure that doors fit tight and don't spend time holding doors open as you come and go from your residence - good luck with that if you have kids! Next, use a general purpose lawn and garden insecticide and spray a 6 to 12 foot barrier around the perimeter of your house. I'd even spray up on the foundation a little. Then using a premixed ready to use indoor treatment, spray the thresholds entering your house and the baseboard areas. That's where crickets like to travel. Crickets will still get inside your house but you are just hoping that they pick up enough of the insecticide that they die before they are able to keep you up for very many nights in a row. Always read and follow label directions when using any pesticide. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.