

## Ag Radio programs for January 26 - February 1, 2015

### Cow herd to-do in February

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. As most cattle producers are gearing up or getting into full swing with calving in February, there are plenty of other management considerations for herds. Late winter can be a very good time to take cull cows to market. Twig Marston always talked about cull cows being those that fell into the Four-O Rule - Open, Old, Ornerly and Oddball. Any cows that fall into that category should be sent to the sale barn along with any that have physical or structural problems or those that have been historically poor producers. Continue feeding or grazing programs but be prepared to kick things up a level if really cold weather returns OR once calving gets going. Control lice and other external parasites to help keep feed costs in check. Remember that cattle, even in the coldest weather, will drink 5 to 11 gallons a day. With recent warmer weather that's been pretty easy to accomplish but when it gets cold again, make sure that they have plenty of open water! Continue to work on developing replacement heifers properly. Weigh them now to calculate needed average daily gain to achieve target weight by breeding season. Heifers should weigh 60 to 65% of their mature weight by the start of breeding season. If, like most cow herds, your cows are in the 1300 pound range, then heifers should be weighing 780 to 840 at the start of the breeding season. If you've got some thin, light heifers, you may really need to get the feed to them so they'll flush before breeding. And continue minerals! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Farm Bill Updates

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. The farm bill decision making landscape seems to be changing on a weekly basis or maybe even more often. I'm still trying to work in producers for consultations as my schedule allows. Call and make an appointment but I will warn you that I encourage you not to merely look at possible payments from the farm bill because they really are just estimates that verge on a wild guess. I strongly encourage you, in most cases to reallocate your base acres to come closer to matching your actual crop rotation. Then from there, go ARC-CO or PLC. ARC individual just isn't really meant for most of our situations. Early last week the National Ag Statistics Service released their 2014 wheat yields for most counties. FSA will use the harvest yield plus failed acres to set the 2014 county yield used to calculate ARC payments. Remember that final payments for ARC come down to COUNTY average yield and then national marketing year average price. The wheat price is getting firmer every week and K-State economists made their estimates of what county ARC payments might be. Because we had a good wheat yield, basically our olympic county average, we are not expected to receive any ARC payment for farms administered through the Geary/Riley office. Riley county may get a couple of bucks per acre as their county yield was just a few acres less than Geary. But Morris, Clay and Dickinson are poised to get the maximum payment, or 10% of the target revenue BECAUSE their wheat yields were enough lower than their county average. If you want more details on these estimates, call. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm

Chuck Otte.

Are Nitrogen stabilizers worth it?

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We are starting to see more and more nitrogen fertilizer stabilizers out there. Some are volatilization inhibitors, some are nitrification inhibitors and they work in many different ways. But we're starting to get hit more and more with new products making all sorts of claims about stabilizing applied nitrogen. Soooooo, are they worth it? Do they really work? For the most part, yes. Nitrogen is very mobile in the environment. Nitrate can move out of the root zone in high moisture conditions and surface applied nitrogen, whether it's UAN solution or urea granules, can quickly convert to ammonia gas and volatilize that way. Over the years we've been most concerned about volatilization losses in warm humid spring weather, but recent work out of Montana has shown amazing amount of losses under just the right conditions in cold wintery conditions as well. Injected fertilizer becomes an issue when there is an extended period of time with soil temperatures above 50 degrees before there are roots there to take up nitrogen. Which is why we don't recommend applying late winter injected nitrogen for sorghum. Controlling the fate of our nitrogen, so we don't very much of it is going to continue to be a critical part of nutrient management for optimal utilization. We may need to look at applying more nitrogen post emerge in our crops, something I grow up doing. I think we need to start using nitrogen stabilizers on a regular basis for both surface applied and subsurface applications. Which product to use ultimately comes down to cost. If you have questions, give me a call! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.