

## Stripe Rust

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Stripe rust is out there, quite honestly probably in every single field. We don't need to have a lot of rain to have stripe rust. Simply heavy dew in the morning or a light shower like we had the first weekend in April can get leaves wet enough for long enough to create a real problem. The other situation this year especially is the ongoing strong southerly winds. Any disease inoculum that was in Texas or Oklahoma the past three weeks is now in Kansas, just count on it. So, stripe rust is out there, and probably so is leaf rust but recent weather has certainly favored stripe rust. I found early evidence of stripe rust in the county nearly 3 weeks ago. But so far it's at fairly low levels. Recent statewide surveys were only finding limited stripe rust on upper leaves in fields near the Oklahoma border. Growers should not be applying fungicides yet. I am not a fan of half rate fungicide application at early stages of growth. Using reduced rates of any pesticide are one of the ways that we more quickly select for resistant genotypes of an insect, disease or weed. Plus, we have yet to consistently see any yield improvement from these practices. Given the current yield outlooks and wheat price, we really need to be sitting tight and monitoring. We need to wait until we are seeing flag leaf emergence and then evaluating disease severity, yield outlook and price. If we don't start getting rains, our yield forecast is going to start dropping making the likelihood of an economic return less. Rust is there but just sit tight. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Wheat Issues

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I've been out looking at quite a few wheat fields in recent days and as you can imagine I'm seeing wheat in all stages of growth and all stages of condition. Needless to say what we need most right now is timely rains. Of course, then that will simply accelerate an already accelerating rust problem. By far the biggest problem I've been seeing though is not dry soils, or rust or even frost damage. Many fields that I stop in where the wheat was looking good but seems to be going backwards now, is because of seeding depth issues. When I walk into these fields and start picking out poor looking plants the first thing I do is to start digging down around the base of the plant. I'm looking for the crown and more importantly the seed. The thing about wheat and all grass plants is that the original seed sticks around and quickly shows where the planter placed it. These problems I've been seeing invariably show up in no till fields that were planted to soybeans. There is often a lot of soybean residue in the areas where the wheat isn't looking good and sadly, all too often the seed was placed under the residue, but essentially at or very near the soil surface. The wheat plant needs to develop a crown for secondary roots to grow properly. If the seed is under residue but on the soil surface, it will probably germinate, but it will be in trouble starting in early spring. Wheat seeded 1 to 1.5 inches deep will be able to develop a proper crown and a healthy and vigorous root system. So before assuming that frost or drought is the culprit, dig down and find your seed placement first! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Management Following Wildfire

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Last year we didn't burn very many grasslands. We did not have good soil moisture and we felt that old dry grass was better than no grass at all. So we left the drip torches in the shop. This year we have good soil moisture and most producers want to burn, but it's been a challenge to find weather conditions that are favorable or safe. And in some cases we have had fires that we didn't plan on and those may cause some problems. Most of the fires have been within the normal burning time frame and I do not expect any real reduction in grass production. Reduction in grass production is most likely going to come from lack of rainfall on through the summer. If you have a pasture that was partially burned during a wild fire event and you do nothing else, the cattle will selectively graze the burned area heavier and ignore the grass in the areas that didn't burn. The most important thing to do, if the weather and burning conditions allow, is to burn the rest of the pasture so you'll have more uniform grazing. Then of course comes the challenge of checking fence, replacing fences and all of that. If you aren't able to get the rest of the pasture burned, consider locating water, salt, mineral in areas that weren't burned to encourage cattle into those areas. You may also want to consider stocking at about three fourths normal rate in those partially burned pastures just to help reduce grazing pressure in the areas that were burned. This has become a very interesting year and our challenges may not be over yet. As always, call me if you want another set of eyes to evaluate a wild fire burn. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.