

Ag Radio programs for June 26 - July 2, 2017

2017 Bluestem Pasture Rental Rate Report

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. The 2017 Bluestem Pasture Report hit my mailbox last week and is available on the agmanager.info website. Before I go any further I don't want anyone to look at it and tell me it is worthless, especially if they didn't fill out a survey form that I had available. This information is only as good as the information they get from their survey's. If you want better information you need to be contributing! Unlike in some years when the survey is lagging full year, this survey was done March to May of this year. Right to the chase, average reported rental rates for cow calf pairs, without service, was \$170.71. The range in prices, as usual, is rather large - \$100 per pair to \$255. There are a lot of intangibles that go into this such as how long has the contract existed, how much does the tenant do for the landlord, etc. That \$170 average for a cow calf pair though seems to me to be pretty equitable based on some of the calculations that I was doing in late winter. On a per acre basis, in the northern zone, which includes Geary County, without care it was \$24 per acre. These are all for full season grazing which for most leases was May 1 to November 1. When it comes down to acres of grass per head we are at the lowest acreage that I have seen in a couple of decades. Throughout the Flint Hills this average was 6.9 acre per cow with spring calf. I feel that given the size of today's cows and calves, this is a little bit on the low side. I would feel better at 7.5 to 8 acres per pair. At these stocking rates we really need to watch that grass growth in late July and be ready to reduce if it's dry. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Plan Now To Avoid Wheat Streak Mosaic

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Many producers feel that wheat streak mosaic is a western Kansas issue and this far east we don't need to worry about it. That kind of thinking is a set up for disaster. Wheat streak mosaic is a virus. The virus is carried by a tiny little mite called the wheat curl mite. The wheat curl mite has no legs to speak of. But it can blow easily in the wind. For the mite and the virus to survive the summer, they need what's called a green bridge. With no suitable green vegetative plant material for two weeks, the cycle is broken. The most common way that the virus and the mites survive is on volunteer wheat. If volunteer wheat is not controlled and wheat is planted adjacent to it, especially to the east, north or northeast, wind will blow the mites into the new crop in the fall and the cycle starts all over. Now, the mites and the virus can survive on weedy grasses and they can also survive on corn. They may not thrive, but they will survive. So it becomes imperative to control your volunteer wheat, especially in early September. If you have double cropped beans into the wheat stubble, you will probably not have much volunteer wheat, but you need to be out in those fields in early September checking just to be sure. If you aren't double cropping beans, you need to be doing something in those stubble fields, either spraying a herbicide to kill the wheat or tillage. And the wheat needs to be dead at least two week prior to any wheat being planted within a quarter mile. Be a good neighbor and control the volunteer. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Insect issues, or not

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I was out looking at some soybeans the other day, looking amazingly well at the time considering how little rain we'd had, and I noticed some holes in the leaves. While I didn't see any, this is the work of the bean leaf beetle, a little critter that is about the size of a cucumber or rootworm beetle, has a light tannish green background color and then some black spots. Sometimes these young plants can have a lot of holes in a hurry on them and it looks quite concerning. The good news is that the damage is not usually as bad as the grower thinks it is and the soybean plant has the ability to recover quickly. What may look like a lot of feeding to you is often less than 30% damage and the leaf does keep carrying on photosynthesis. First generation is cranking up now, a little earlier than normal and the second generation will come along in late August or early September. I've never seen an early season infestation bad enough to justify treatment. Even September feeding rarely justifies treatment.

Let's switch now from one legume to another. Potato Leafhoppers are being seen in alfalfa fields right now and they can be of concern. Leafhoppers are small skinny green bugs that jump, hence their name, as you walk through the field. They suck sap out of the leaves and can cause a lot of yellowing on the ends of the leaves that can expand to 3/4 of the leaf area. Their feeding also stunts alfalfa growth. This time of year, it can be assumed that the alfalfa isn't growing because of dry soils when it is actually leafhoppers. If you are seeing erratic growth and yellow leaves, better call me! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Yellowing soybeans?

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. With rapidly changing conditions it is quite possible that you may be seeing some discolored soybeans. Most often you are going to see soybeans yellowing and the causes can be many and varied and the degree of discoloration, or yellowing, can be from slight to severe. Given the weather we've had this spring it wouldn't surprise me if we have more than a few soybeans that are suffering from poor root development due to planting into soils that were a little too wet, or planting in area that are overly compacted. Often, discoloration that starts or ends abruptly is often compaction. When the soil is moist you can go out with a probe and find it very quickly! At this time there's nothing to do but at some point, we may need to look at some deep tillage when the soil is really dry. There's a lot of debate about effectiveness of deep ripping, but in cases of severe compaction I feel it can help. The rooting restrictions caused by sidewall compaction or traffic and tillage compaction can cause a deficiency of almost any nutrient due to restricted root zones, but often we are seeing a potassium deficiency even when there should be plenty of soil potassium present. We can also see iron chlorosis, frequently indicated by darker green veins on the leaves. Iron chlorosis is made worse in fields with high nitrogen levels and/or high pH. The other issue we routinely see is nitrogen deficiency. This happens when the nitrogen fixing bacteria are either not present, why didn't you inoculate, or they haven't been forming well due to wet soils. In extreme cases, N fertilizer may need to be added. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Management of late planted soybeans

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I've seen a lot of planters following combines in wheat fields. Talking with producers who have wheat they've reported anywhere from 50 to 90% of their wheat acres are getting planted with double crop beans. This is probably not a bad idea, that is as long as we get some nice rains during the summer. If it doesn't rain, we may all be questioning why we did this! Average date of soybean planting has been getting earlier by about 1/3 day per year. Naturally when you look at the year by year data it bounces around and this year 50% planted occurred on exactly the same day as it did in 1980, June 1st, but that was likely due to wet soil conditions delaying planting (in 2012, 50% planting date was around May 18th - but that was a dry year! As we talked last week we need to be maintaining about the same maturity date as we do with our full season beans. One thing that can help is increasing seeding rate on late seeded or double crop beans by 10 to 20%. More plants can help compensate for lower per plant yield. Higher seeding rates also tend to help canopy over earlier. The one thing I'm still worried about, and the hot and dry period hasn't helped any, and that's weed control. I saw far too many fields that don't appear to have had any soil applied residual herbicide OR it didn't get activated with rain. Many of these fields have had a post emerge application and you CAN see corners that didn't get sprayed, but there's still a lot of weeds in these fields that have been hurt, but haven't died and are still growing. On the other hand, I've also seen some really clean fields out there also! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.