

Lease Termination Deadline

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. The deadline for landlords serving lease termination paperwork is or was January 30th. A landlord can not terminate an oral lease, or a written lease without termination dates, after that date. It also means that if a landlord wanted to change the terms of a lease and didn't get it done, they can not force new lease terms on the tenant after that date. But does that mean that a landlord and tenant can not agree to new terms in February, March or even later? Of course not. There's many times that a landlord and tenant know that they want to change the terms of the lease but also know that they may not have time until later in the winter. As long as both parties are in agreement, lease terms can be changed in the middle of the summer. A landlord and tenant can do almost anything, anytime, as long as they are in agreement on what they are doing. The laws surrounding ag leases were put there primarily to protect tenants from landlords. Because of the nature of agricultural production, it isn't fair, a word economists hate by the way, for a tenant to be working land and getting it ready to plant and then have a landlord kick them off the first of May. The statutes come into effect when there are problems. When one party is trying to take advantage of another party. It'd be nice if we never had to rely on the laws, but that just isn't the case. But it doesn't preclude landlords and tenants agreeing to new terms and changes at anytime. But for everyone's protection, why not put it in writing, this time! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Waste Not Want Not

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. It is absolutely amazing at how much feed, specifically forage or roughage, is wasted in some cattle operations. In years when hay is stockpiled it may not be a big deal. But when the situation is tight, feed management needs to be tightened up as well. Forage loss can be as high as 40% of the feed purchased or stored, but is usually more in the 15 to 20% range. To look at it in another way, that means that for a 1200 pound bale of hay, about 250 pounds never gets into the animals. Which also increases the forage cost by 20%. If your operation has a forage waste rate of 20%, hay that is selling for \$125 a ton has a net as fed value of \$156/ton. You are always going to have some feed loss, but you need to take steps to keep it as low as possible. The worst possible way to feed hay is to unroll a big round bale. You will lose over 1/3 of the hay to trampling. Sure, if it is snowy or muddy and you want to give the cattle a dry place to lay down or have their calves, then buy some cheap hay and roll it out. But if you are feeding, get it into a bale feeder or grind it and put it in bunks. Other things you can do include only feeding as much as the cattle will consume daily. Sure, it may make a little extra work, but you probably aren't paying yourself an hourly wage anyway. Store forages where they are less subject to moisture and storage rot. Feed by groups. Sort cows from heifers and then split cows into those that need more or less feed. Again, it's more work, but your feeding efficiency will rise and costs will drop. So, lower your feed costs through smarter feeding. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Improving Grazing Distribution

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Cattle are patch grazers. What originally starts the patches we aren't really sure. You turn cattle out into a pasture that was burned, hence no old stubble they will start doing selective grazing and then for the rest of the year they will keep going back to those patches. About the only thing that will change them is a shortage of feed forcing them to mow down everything. While these patches will move, there are often parts of every pasture that cattle won't regularly visit. Many of these avoidance areas can be predicted or at least understood. Water source is going to be a big one. If there is one source for water the area around it will always be heavily grazed. If there are options, sometimes a water source can be fenced off to move cattle to an alternate source. Topography and prevailing winds can make a big difference. Cattle will choose the highest spot in a pasture as they can get the most wind there which helps reduce insect issues and a good breeze always feels good in the summer. Likewise, access to shade can be a big deal, especially in a summer like last year! Even simple things like pasture shape or different species compositions in various parts of the pasture can make a big difference. Many of these things we can't change. Improving grazing distribution may need nothing more than putting salt and mineral in a different part of the pasture instead of always putting it right inside the main gate. Or it may mean putting in some fences to force cattle into using other parts of a pasture. If you are having problems with grazing distribution, call me and we can talk about it. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

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