

Corn Seeding Rates

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. It's not going to be too long until planters are rolling and corn will be going in the ground. Every corn producer should already have their seed supplies locked in, but have you already determined what your planting rate is going to be? Before you harvest each fall, you need to evaluate your corn populations based on ear fill. When I judge crops at county fairs everyone is always looking for that perfectly filled out ear of corn. And while it may look nice, if you have every single ear of corn filled out nearly to the end, then your population isn't high enough. On the other hand, if more than 5% of the plants are totally barren of ears, then the population is probably a little too high. I would make adjustments by about a 1000 kernels dropped per acre at a time. If you are a seed counter, then use the 350 and 500 guidelines. If most ears have fewer than 350 kernels, you may need to back off on seeding rates. If there are consistently more than 500 kernels per ear, you can probably stand to take your seeding rate up. With that said, we need to take into account the weather for dryland production. Irrigation is another story, pull out the stops, full speed ahead. If you feel lucky, then go ahead and push those dryland seeding rates. In upland dryland fields in our area, I'd be trying to drop between 24 and 26,000 seeds per acre. On creek bottoms and better soils I'd be looking at 26 to 28,000 seeds per acre. Under full irrigation, if you aren't dropping 35,000 seeds, you're leaving yield on the table. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Livestock watering options

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Last week we talked about renovating farm ponds and one of the things I mentioned was that it may be better to consider other options. So what are some of the other options. Pipelines can be one of the easiest options to consider. Simply tapping into an existing water system, either well or rural water district can be cost effective if it is less than 1/4 mile to where you need the water. At roughly \$2 per linear foot this often can become the cheapest option. In some pastures there may be old windmills that have fallen into disuse mainly because the windmill itself has fallen into disrepair, but there is still water in the well. There are people around that can repair and replace windmills - I can hook you up with some folks if you are interested. Or, you may decide that you want to go with a solar powered pump. If electricity is available within 1/4 mile though, it may be cheaper to go that route though. A basic solar pump system is going to cost you \$2500 to \$3500 and if you need to go more than 200 feet to water, you'll need more solar panels and that will raise the cost. I didn't say all of these would work for everyone - they are just options. And the problem in much of the flint hills is that there isn't groundwater always available, period! Many pastures in our area have already been fitted with spring developments, but if you haven't and you have a seep or spring that still had water the middle of last summer, this is still an option also. All too often we have only considered farm ponds as a livestock watering option and we just need to keep our minds open to other options, especially in drought! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Oil Spill Prevention and Control

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Some of you have probably heard from your bulk fuel supplier about new EPA rules regulating Oil Spill prevention, control and countermeasures. The whole point is to prevent oil spills (and in this case oil means any petroleum product) into waters of the US and adjoining shorelines. I think we all know what can happen to land and water with even small scale spills. The important thing to remember is that this doesn't impact you UNLESS you meet all three of the following criteria. 1. Store, transfer, use, or consume oil or oil products, such as diesel fuel, gasoline, lube oil, hydraulic oil, adjuvant oil, crop oil, vegetable oil, or animal fat. 2. Store more than 1,320 total gallons in above ground containers or more than 42,000 gallons in completely buried containers; Count only containers of oil that have a storage capacity of 55 gallons and above. Adjacent or non-adjacent parcels, either leased or owned, may be considered separate facilities for SPCC purposes. Containers on separate parcels (that the farmer identifies as separate facilities based on how they are operated) do not need to be added together in determining whether the 1,320-gallon applicability threshold is met. 3. Could reasonably be expected to discharge oil to waters of the US or adjoining shorelines, such as interstate waters, intrastate lakes, rivers, and streams. The environment and flow properties of oil when combined with a rain event must be considered. If you answered yes to all three of these criteria, contact me so I can get you lined up with what you need to do by May 10th so you are in compliance. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.