

Pasture Recovery

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Recent precipitation events have raised many of our hopes of getting at least early season growth in our pastures. How long that continues will depend on how often and how much it rains. Regardless, stocking rates do need to be adjusted. Plain and simple, stocking rate impacts losses in a pasture and recovery in a pasture. Even with just the moisture that we have received so far this winter, I think we can anticipate a heavy flush of forb growth this spring, mainly annuals but probably also perennials. Seeds of these forbs are always present in pastures, but with the lack of growth and the lack of fire, these seeds can sprout and get a jump on everything. This will continue for up to 5 years following the end of a drought. However, it becomes very hard to justify spraying these forbs, or weeds if you prefer. You simply don't have an adequate increase in growth to justify the expense of the treatment. Additionally, those cows will eat a lot of those weeds and grasses that we might not normally like to see in our pastures. Spraying brush is another story. Any year you don't burn pastures is a good year to treat brush with herbicides so take advantage of this low or no burn year. Drought has happened before and it will happen again. The grass will survive with just a little bit of care. As to overseeding thin pastures are thin spots in native pastures? This is virtually worthless. You simply can not get enough grass established to make a difference. Stock lighter and just be patient! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Alfalfa Weed Control

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Renovating ponds

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Whenever we had a drought, landowners often take advantage of the lack of water in ponds to renovate them. Even with recent snows and the resulting runoff, there's still going to be a bunch of dry ponds out there. We'll see if that statement makes it rain or not. If you haven't cleaned a pond out yet, but are thinking about it, here's some questions to consider. Is it going to be more cost effective to clean out an old pond, or might you be money ahead to just build a new pond somewhere else. Sometimes the lay of the land doesn't give you many options and all you can do is clean out an old pond. Conservatively, cleaning out an existing pond is going to cost you \$10 a cubic yard, and probably more when it's all said and done. If you are going to clean it out, where do you put the sediment? Well let's start with where you don't put it and that is right next to the pond or upslope as that is a sure fire way to get it right back where you just paid to move it from. The best place may well be on the back side of the dam. It can also be used to fill low spots, small gullies or ruts. Pond fill does not work well anywhere that it needs to support a wall as it has no structure left and therefore no strength. If it is a good dark color it can be used as topsoil but be aware that it won't have any organic matter and no nitrogen. The final thing to ask yourself is if a pond is a good option for watering livestock and are there other options such as a spring box or solar powered well. We have a great bulletin, actually a small book, called waterers and watering systems at the extension office that explains options. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.