

Fertilizing Bromegrass and Alfalfa

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Now that we've rolled past the first of November and fall growth is slowing down on our bromegrass and alfalfa, it is time to think about getting both of these crops fertilized. Alfalfa we can do anytime this winter, but I really like to get it done earlier rather than later. This way any future rains or snows can carry those nutrients into the soil. AND if you have some weeds or cheat coming up in your alfalfa, you can get those fall dormant treatments on as well. Many, or perhaps most, brome producers have traditionally aimed to fertilize their brome in late winter, which often then turns into early spring, well after the bromegrass has started its spring growth. Then, if the weather is working against us, all of a sudden it is the first of April, the brome still isn't fertilized and you're really starting to miss the boat. I've spent a lot of time looking at 30 years worth of brome fertilization studies done at K-State in Manhattan. Under ideal conditions, there is virtually no difference between fertilizing in November or February. Under virtually all situations, fertilizing in April hurt your yield a little bit, but often got you better protein, IF you harvested in a timely manner. But in years with moisture stress or less than ideal situations, a November application was going to give you the most consistent yield response. So don't stall or let yourself run the risk of getting hung up by the weather in late winter. Get out there in the next few weeks and get that bromegrass fertilized so you're done with it! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Bindweed and Musk Thistle Control

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I've already talked several times this fall about weed control in the late autumn. Specifically, we are looking at bindweed and musk thistle for fall control but for very different reasons. Bindweed, a deep rooted really nasty perennial plant is busy moving as much food as it can into the roots for the winter. It is a very hardy plant, having come from the Ukranian region of Asia, and will keep growing in the fall until we start to routinely get temperatures down around 20 degrees. So we should still have a couple of weeks to get bindweed treated. Fall treatment gives us many options for herbicide control, depending on where the bindweed is growing. But perhaps the best news is that some of our lowest price options, like 2,4-D and Dicamba are very effective in fall treatments. Keep in mind that you need to couple this, where possible, with spring treatments to also get new seedlings and then you need to just plan to repeat this for several years. But you can have success. Musk thistle, on the other hand, is a biennial. It starts growing in the fall, overwinters and then grows very rapidly in late winter and spring. At this time of year, especially given the recent rains, most of the seeds that are going to sprout have and the small seedlings, or rosettes, are very susceptible to herbicides. In pasture settings, 2,4-D and dicamba can work very well. The addition of a few ounces of Tordon will also give you the added benefit of some soil activity just in case we have some late germinating plants this fall or next spring. So take advantage of these nice fall days, and go spray! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Ag Leases

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. As fall harvest starts to wind down it means we are headed towards the end of the year and that means something other than just the holidays. It means that it's time to start working on your agricultural leases. Unless you have a written contract with a defined ending date, a lease continues from year to year. In fact if all you have is an oral agreement, they continue in perpetuity until proper termination is given. As a reminder, we are rapidly approaching that termination deadline. To be properly terminated, notice must be given in writing at least 30 days prior to March 1 and setting the termination date as March 1 on all land not planted to wheat or barley. You can give notice anytime as long as it is at least 30 days prior to March 1. But most leases will continue on so the end of the year is the time to call up the landlord and go spend some time with them. Discuss the year and how the crops did. If you have a cash lease with a final payment, settle up and then talk about what your plans are for the coming year. What crops are you going to plant. What kind of improvements need to be made. To be bluntly honest, the weakest link in most lease agreements is the communications, there just isn't enough of it. Now, if you need a refresher in the basics of Kansas Agricultural Leases I will once again be hold my ag lease informational meeting this fall. That date is going to be the Monday before Thanksgiving, November 25th, starting at 7 p.m. at the 4-H/Sr. Citizen's Building. There haven't been any changes in the farm lease law, but it's always good to go over the basics regularly! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.