

Time to Increase Seeding Rates

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. As we approach the end of October and move into November, we need to make a move on our wheat seeding rates. In clean tilled fields you should be running 90 to 100 pounds, in no till settings you need to be looking at 100 to 120 pounds per acre - higher in sorghum stubble. And if we hit the end of next week, or past November 10th, we need to give serious consideration to not planting any more wheat at all. Here's why. Every day now the sun is getting lower in the sky and there's fewer minutes of daylight. The ground is cooling quickly. The wheat seed is going to take longer to germinate and get growing. You're going to have less and less fall development. We know that the wheat seedling essentially doesn't hardly need to be out of the ground for the vernalization, or cold treatment to get it stimulated to make a head next spring. But several things are going to happen with later planted wheat. The plants are going to have fewer tillers and the heads that are produced will be smaller. What gives us yield of any grain crop? Kernels, that's right. Fewer tillers per plant mean fewer heads per plants. Smaller heads mean fewer kernels. So to compensate we have to plant more seeds to create more plants to get the head count up so we can get kernel production. We also need to fertilize a little heavier. We often back off on fertilization of late planted wheat and that's a mistake. More seeds now, more starter fertilizer, especially phosphorus and more nitrogen in mid winter. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

If you are thinking about cheatgrass herbicides

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Our wheat acres, over the past 30 years, have dropped to about a third of what it used to be. Changes in farm programs as well as changes in the genetics of the soybean and corn crops have done created this change and it was the best thing we could do to help deal with some of the cheat problems that we had. It was rare to find a wheat field that didn't have cheat, but thanks to the rotations we are using today, I see a lot of very clean fields. But I also see a enough cheat in some fields that we need to talk about it. For varying reasons, we still have wheat fields in continuous wheat, or nearly so, and as such we need to keep in mind that we do have a growing arsenal of herbicides to control or at least suppress the level of cheat. But it's important to know which annual brome, or what type of cheat, you are dealing with. We don't have much rye or ryegrass in our wheat, thank goodness. True cheat as well as Japanese brome and downy brome can be controlled by Olympus and Maverick, as long as ALS resistance hasn't built up in the population yet. Additionally, PowerFlex is quite effective if all you have is downy brome. But for the best control you really need to treat this fall when the grasses are small and actively growing and the wheat has at least three leaves but prior to jointing, which it won't do until fall. If you've had a problem before you're going to have a problem again and you just need to treat. And if you go with a fall treatment of Olympus or PowerFlex, you still may have an option for double crop after harvest next year. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Weeds in Pastures

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I'm still getting questions about spraying for weeds in pastures this fall. As you inspect a lot of pastures this fall you will in fact see a lot more large forbs in these pastures. Some producers think that these weeds are moving in and taking over the pasture, crowding out the grass. Well there is cause and effect between the amount of grass and the weeds, but most producers have it backwards. With the exception of really aggressive non-native weeds like musk thistle or sericea lespedeza, weeds don't crowd out the grasses. The weeds take advantage of situations where there is less grass growth and more open or bare soil. Think about areas where cattle congregate like near a watering tank, mineral or salt feeder or a grain bunk. They graze and stomp down the grass and there's always more weedy type plants there. Or think of that pasture that's been over grazed for years. The cattle ate the grass down and reduced the grass plant's vigor which created an open environment for weeds to move in in the fall or early spring. Think about what the pastures looked like last fall. There was no grass growth in the second half of the season last year. The pastures were pretty barren. This created a lot of open area and there's always a lot of seeds laying dormant in the ground or blowing in from elsewhere. Yes, there were more weeds in pastures this year, but if you've got a lot of grass seed heads out there this year then the grass is on it's way to recovery. Don't waste money spraying, just focus on maintaining proper stocking rates. Spray the musk thistle, but just give the pasture a few years. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

Otte.