

What seeding rates and seed treatments

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Seeding rates always seems to be a big question to a lot of producers and it really is pretty straight forward. The later into the season that you plant the more you plant. Planting wheat for grazing and grain OR planting into sorghum stubble, you plant more. It's that simple. Let's flesh that out a little bit. For our part of Kansas, standard seeding rates should be 75 to 90 pounds per acre. Early in the season you start at 75 to 80 pounds per acre and after the 15th of October I'd jump that up to 90 pounds per acre. If we get to November 1st and you are still trying to get wheat planted, you'd best push that to 120 pounds of seed per acre. If you are planting in September for grazing, then just plan to be planting 90 to 120 pounds of seed. If you are planting into sorghum stubble, 90 to 120 pounds of seed per acre, and apply more nitrogen fertilizer as well. Now, how about seed treatments? Now days we have two considerations - fungicide alone or fungicide and insecticide treatment. IF you are thinking about grazing, make sure that your seed treatment will allow grazing. With that aside, all wheat seed should be treated with a fungicide. It isn't that much and it solves so many potential problems. Insecticide seed treatments are still a big question mark. If you are planting a little early then I think it is relatively cheap insurance. Once we get past mid October I question how much good they may do. Fungicide absolutely, regardless of planting time, insecticide, probably only on early plantings. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

A second cutting of prairie hay?

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I received a very good and legitimate question last week. If a producer cut his prairie hay in early to mid July, just like we recommend for maximum quality, it has really regrown with all of the rain that we had from mid July to mid August. In some cases there may easily be 2/3 of the forage out there now that there was when it was cut the first half of July. So is it possible to get a second cutting of prairie hay? Welllll, yes and no. After two short hay years I can understand the desire to get a few more bales put up and stored away. Last winter was pretty mild, this coming winter may not be, you never know. Right now the native grasses are finishing putting up seed heads, producing some seed and storing up root reserves. By October 1st, the grasses will pretty well shut down and even though they may look green, they will be fairly dormant or getting close to dormancy. But right now, they will respond to cutting by trying to put up new growth. We usually want 6 weeks of good growing conditions following haying to allow the grasses a chance to regrow and restore food reserves in the roots. By cutting in early September we are going to cause the grass to start to regrow and it honestly won't have much of a chance to get those root reserves replenished. You'd be hurting next year's grass growth and hay crop. If you were to wait until the 1st of October it is unlikely that the grass would regrow very much and have much chance to use up those root reserves so an October mowing shouldn't hurt. But just be aware that the hay quality may not be that great either, so test it if you do cut! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm

Chuck Otte.

Still More Confusion on Wheat Curl Mites

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Okay, we need to spend some more time on wheat curl mites, wheat streak mosaic and that two week prior to planting thing. Wheat curl mites, the vector that carries the virus that causes wheat streak mosaic, overwinters on volunteer wheat, and other annual grasses including corn. The curl mite can only survive about 2 weeks without a green food source to feed on so we talk about breaking that green bridge. The curl mites can only travel a few feet in their lives without assistance. The most common assistance is from the wind which is why wheat fields to the northeast of volunteer fields often show the most infection. Wheat curl mites are generally limited to only blowing about 1/4 to 1/2 mile. So you get busy right now and you destroy the volunteer wheat, but in two weeks it rains and here comes some more volunteer wheat just a week before you want to plant wheat. Is that a problem? As long as there isn't uncontrolled volunteer wheat right across the road you shouldn't have a problem. It takes time to get curl mites re-established. So if you've got all your volunteer destroyed at this time anything that comes up from here on to wheat planting isn't going to be of much concern. The biggest concern is the field across the road to the west or south that isn't being tilled or sprayed. That could serve as an infection source. So it comes down to this, we all live down wind from somebody and curl mites in our volunteer could infect someone else's wheat. We all need to be good neighbors and take the time to control the volunteer wheat now so we don't infest the neighbor! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.