

Chloride for Wheat

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I remember 25 years ago we were talking about chloride application in wheat for disease control. The idea of applying chloride was novel to many of us and we probably didn't think it would last. Well, what we have found out since then is that yes, the chloride did offer some excellent response in the form of improved disease resistance and oh, by the way, it also improved yield. We used to get a lot of chloride as a tag along with many of our fertilizers. If there was any potassium in your fertilizer mix, it was probably coming as potassium chloride. Then we started slowly moving away from some of those traditional fertilizers and we quit getting that chloride. Chloride is a mobile nutrient just like nitrogen and sulfur. To do a good soil test you need a 0 to 18 profile and preferably a 0 to 24. While chloride is not an expensive element to apply and we are usually talking 10 or 20 pounds per acre, it is certainly worth doing a decent soil test for. Response is quite predictable on medium and low testing soils. The good news is that there is still time to get a soil profile soil test done yet in the next couple of months, assuming the soil will stay thawed long enough to pull a set of profile samples. And while we're at it, we can run nitrate and sulfur on that same sample so we have that information for future reference. Chloride is normally applied as either potassium chloride or ammonium chloride and due to the mobility of chloride, it is readily available after application. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Nitrogen Fertilizer Utilization in Corn

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. The way we have traditionally been fertilizing corn is going to have to stop! Okay, I know many of you are aware of that and slowly moving away from it, but really, the way we fertilize a lot of our crops needs to change. We need to do more and better soil testing. Yes, we've come through an era of really high commodity prices and just as we all knew, the prices have dropped a bunch the past couple of years. But fertilizer prices haven't. We can't afford to just cut our fertilizer rates as that can ultimately raise the per bushel cost of production thereby impacting profitability. We need to be doing more profile soil testing and timing better when we do that testing. For wheat, let's get it done ahead of planting, for corn let's do it in March. The era of trying to apply all of our nitrogen preplant has to end. That may mean knifing a good chunk of the nitrogen and maybe phosphorus down between the rows before the corn is too tall. For those who can irrigate it may mean trickle feeding a third of the nitrogen on during the growing season with each irrigation. The opportunities for us to lose preplant nitrogen is just too great and we can't afford to over-fertilize 30 or 40% to compensate. We need to work on controlling those winter annual weeds because they are using enough nitrogen in the off season and we just don't seem to be able to make it up with extra fertilizer. We've got to look at zinc and chloride and sulfur as well as nitrogen, phosphorus and yes potassium. The times have changed, the economics have changed and our crop fertility management needs to change as well! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK,

I'm Chuck Otte.

What's the right planting rate or date or maturity?

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We had an agent update on crop production last week. Naturally being an agronomist by training I always find these days fascinating. We listen to soil fertility folks and cropping system folks and weed control folks talk about their most recent research as well as research done by cohorts here in Kansas and other states. We spent a lot of time looking at multiple years of planting dates and planting rates and different maturity varieties and hybrids. We saw trends develop and trends destroyed. Ultimately, it came down to the simple fact that if we knew what the summer was going to be like, we could be really good at picking all those things we have to decide each year. But what became even more obvious, as we narrowed things down to looking just at Kansas over the past three or four years was that it really came down to what were the conditions going to be for your particular fields and your management style. Have you ever really thought about all the variables that you're trying to manage in a single crop year? Don't, you'll go crazy! Oh, I can give you some pretty good averages on maturity groups and planting rates but YOU need to keep track of what's working for YOU. Everyone else may be sold on a 4.6 maturity soybean variety, but if you've always had best yields with a 3.8, then stick with it! Always assume average weather and manage for excellent weather. If you manage for the average you'll always be behind the curve. If you manage for below average weather and we get the rain, you don't have the horses to run the race. But you've got to keep track of what works! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420

KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.