

Farm Bill Educational Meetings

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Now that fall harvest is basically done, and the FSA offices are starting to figure out the farm bill, it's time for the rest of us to try to figure out the farm bill. While on the surface it may look pretty darn complicated, it can really be broken down into some basic decisions. We are co-hosting a meeting at Cico Park in Manhattan next Wednesday, December 17th on the farm bill. The Kansas Farm Management Association is doing the presentation but it is open to everyone. It starts at 9 a.m. and will run until noon. This will be one of the most in depth presentations that will be presented in the area - the other detailed presentation will be in Salina on January 20th. For the first time in quite a while you will be able to update yields and reallocate base acres. You can't increase base acres, merely reallocate. These decisions will need to be made by February 27th. Actual program election and sign up has to be completed by March 31st. Reallocation of acres will be fairly straight forward but updating yields will take a bit more time and paperwork. However, if your yields are well above the county averages it would be worth your time, especially if you choose the Price Loss Coverage option of the farm bill. The other two options are Agriculture Risk Coverage at the county or the individual level. You could elect NOT to enroll in anything, but you will then be defaulted into the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) but you will forfeit any payments for 2014 so you might as well sign up for one of them. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Farm Bill Considerations

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Just a quick reminder of the meeting on the new Farm Bill at Pottorf Hall in Cico Park next Wednesday, December 17th, from 9 to noon. The new farm bill comes down to three decision steps. First, determine if you can or should update payment yield. If you can prove that 90% of your payment yield for 2008 thru 2012 is higher than your established yield, then you need to do it. It'll involve some specific paperwork, but do it. Next, determine if you want to reallocated base acres. You can't increase acres, but you can make them match what you have actually been doing. This would be the correct approach to maximize risk management. OR you can look at existing bases vs reallocated bases to see which one will likely maximize payments through the life of the farm bill. Yield and base acres have to be done by February 27th! The third step is to select a farm bill program and then enroll in it. You will have one chance to elect which program you want to participate in and that will last for the life of the farm bill. But you will still have to enroll every year. The three choices are price loss coverage, county agricultural risk coverage and individual county agricultural risk coverage. You can miss and match price loss coverage (PLC) and county ag risk coverage (ARC-CO) for your different crops, but if you go individual ag risk coverage, you're all in on that one program and you have a lot more paperwork. For a few producers it may be the way to go. If choosing between PLC or ARC-CO it comes down to protection from catastrophic price declines or from shallow revenue losses. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Winter Travel Tips

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Well, we're just a couple weeks away from

Christmas, and then New Years and of course, we're heading right into the teeth of winter.

Which may mean nothing or it could mess up some of the travel plans many folks have for the holidays. Surviving winter weather travel comes down to two things - being aware and being

prepared! Being aware means listening to local weather forecasts. When there is a chance that

wintry weather may be developing a winter weather watch or a blizzard watch or something like

that will be issued. It simply means that conditions are shaping up that may create cold and or

snowy conditions. When wintry weather is imminent a warning will be issued. Because a shift of

as little as 20 or 30 miles can mean the difference between one inch of snow or 6 inches of snow

forecasts will never be perfect. But even one inch of snow, with or without wind, can make for

extremely hazardous travel. The biggest mistake that people make is to head out in a winter

warning when they should just stay home and wait for the conditions to improve. A majority of

travel can be delayed - sure, it may interrupt your plans, but it's better than interrupting your life!

If you do have to travel, have emergency supplies in the car. Plenty of clothing, extra water and

food are the most critical. Be prepared if you get stranded even if traveling less than 50 miles.

Always make sure that you have at least a half tank of gas in your car in the winter. But the most

important thing you can do is be aware and then don't travel in wintry conditions unless it's an

emergency! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.