

Wheat Update

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Well, about two days after I recorded last week's radio programs, the heavens opened up and dumped on us big time! We are probably one of the few locations in the state that may have a little bit of wheat hurt by standing water! So what does this mean for us? Well, it cuts the losses is what it boils down to. Remember, head size was being determined several weeks ago when things were dry. Heads are going to be smaller this year. Tiller numbers will also probably be reduced. With the rain though, we could see some late tillers come on which isn't always a good thing. From here we just have to wait and see that the weather does to us. Flag leaf development has arrested meaning that the flag leaf, which is so critical to good grain fill, will be smaller than normal. In other words, the engine that drives the factory is a 4 cylinder instead of a V8. It also means that the leaf just down from the flag leaf will become more important and may justify fungicides to protect it. We don't normally worry about anything but the flag leaf, however, this year we may have a different situation!

Fortunately, disease pressure to the south is way down, because of the drought so that may be to our benefit. I'm very concerned about weed pressure especially following this rain. The extra tillers that are generated by the rain may help shade more soil, but possibly not in time to stop germination, so be on the lookout for weed issues as we get closer to harvest. But in the meantime, let's be thankful for the rain! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Alfalfa weevil

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I had really hoped that I would be done talking about alfalfa weevil for the year. But I've started receiving calls about lack of control and retreating. I'm not going to make any friends with this next statement but here we go. I've received questions about lack of control and again the concern of pesticide resistance. K-State entomologists have not been able to find any evidence of resistance. Weevils from fields regularly sprayed and weevils from organic alfalfa fields, under laboratory testing have shown equal control with pesticides. Which comes back to application issues. We strongly encourage using carrier rates of 15 to 20 gallons per water. This may be double what a lot of applicators are actually applying. We need those heavier carrier rates to get good penetration into the canopy and down to the bugs. There is no systemic action, we have to get the insecticide on the weevil larvae. On top of that we want temperatures above 50 degrees when we treat. We want it to be warm a couple of days prior and a couple of days after. Otherwise the larvae are down at the base of the plant and not actively feeding. If you couple cool cloudy weather with low carrier rates, I will guarantee that you will have poor control of larvae. Warm weather, lots of carrier. If you do want to retreat, make sure those two conditions are met first. Then you may want to go with one of the old standbys live Sevin or Malathion. Sevin only requires 7 days from application to harvest and malathion can be sprayed the day that it is harvest. Which at this point may be better than an early cut! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm

Chuck Otte.

Soybean seeding rates and populations

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Last week we talked about when to plant soybeans - and remember I was encouraging getting them in the ground as soon as possible. But today let's talk about seeding rates. In the days before Roundup Ready seed, when everyone kept back seed, we planted a lot of seed, way more than we probably needed. Because seed was cheap. At the cost for today's seed, we don't see quite as much of that. The days of dropping 200,000 seeds for a stand of 175,000 is long gone. Even with the former cheap cost of seed there was no logic for those kind of plant populations. A whole host of studies over the past 15 years has shown that there is really no need for soybean plant populations of much over 120,000 under the highest yielding environments and probably in the 80 to 90,000 final population under most average conditions. How many seeds you drop depends on several things. First and foremost is how are you planting the soybeans? If you are using a planter then in most conditions assume 80% establishment possibly even 85%, or for an 80,000 final plant population, drop 100,000 seeds. In 30 inch rows that's going to be 4 to 5 seeds per foot of row. But if you are using a drill, even the best drills, then you are probably going to have establishment rates of more like 65% and you'd need to drop about 123,000 seeds per acre to get that 80,000 final plant stand. You might really want to spend some time comparing how many seeds you are dropping to how many plants are getting established. It may make you want to reconsider how you are planting your soybeans!

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