

### Planting Dates, Planting Rates

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We're now just a few weeks away from wheat planting time and I've started fielding a few questions about wheat planting dates and wheat planting rates. What I'll start with is saying that planting rates depend on planting dates! Planting too early causes lots of problems. You will have a much greater risk of having insect and disease problems. The wheat will normally be expected to have excessive top growth which can use up valuable moisture and nutrients. However, some people like to plant early, even as early as September 20<sup>th</sup>, so that they can have fall pasture for cattle. If you go this route remember that you'll need extra nitrogen and preferably a variety that has Hessian Fly resistance. In general we recommend waiting until the Hessian Fly free date of October 5<sup>th</sup> before you start planting. My personal preference, if I could pick an ideal window, would be October 7<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup>. The newer varieties of today do not need as much growth as the older varieties, so let's get enough growth for the yield and winter survival, but not too much. For planting rates, I'd like to start the season at 65 to 75 pounds per acre. I feel that this rate will hold good til about October 25<sup>th</sup>. At that time we need to start upping to about 75 to 85 pounds per acre, up to 90 after November 1<sup>st</sup> and if you HAVE to plant after about November 10<sup>th</sup>, push 120 pounds per acre. Yield comes from seed, seeds require heads. The later you plant the fewer tillers and heads you'll have per plant so you need more plants! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Let's Get That Volunteer Destroyed

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. With recent rains the volunteer wheat is really coming on strong, right on schedule. There's a natural dormancy in hard red winter wheat, which is actually a good thing. But six to eight weeks after it is mature, this dormancy wears off and then, as rainfall occurs, all of that wheat that went out the back of the combine starts to sprout and grow. And that's where the trouble can really begin! Many insect and disease problems easily over summer on volunteer wheat. The short list of this includes several aphid species, wheat curl mites, Hessian Fly, barley yellow dwarf and wheat streak mosaic. Like I said, that's the short list, the total list is too long to repeat here. In integrated pest control, we call this volunteer wheat a green bridge. Many of these pests need green material to over summer on. While many of them may be able to survive on other species of plants, they don't thrive on them. With abundant green wheat around, the populations can thrive and build. By getting rid of this green bridge, at least two weeks prior to planting, you greatly reduce the number of pests to attack your or your neighbors wheat. If you use tillage, then try to get to it 15 to 20 days ahead of planting. If you are using herbicides, remember that there may be as much as a two week lag time between treatment and everything dying. If the volunteer is in a field being rotated to wheat or sorghum, consider using a residual product like atrazine to help control other fall weeds. But the key thing to keep in mind right now is to get your plan in place to control that volunteer wheat....soon! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Using anhydrous ammonia for wheat production

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. While quite a few producers use anhydrous ammonia as the nitrogen source for their wheat production, there's probably a lot more that should. Sadly I think that people who wait and topdress in the late winter wind up losing yield. Good availability of nitrogen in that fall growth phase makes a big difference in how prepared that wheat plant is to produce the following spring. With that said, there's a few general considerations if you are going to use anhydrous on wheat. First of all, don't apply until about 2 to 3 weeks before planting. But on the other hand, to avoid any potential seedling damage, apply at least 1 to 2 weeks before planting. Anhydrous has to go through some chemical reactions after application. Assuming there is decent soil moisture, these reactions take place very quickly. As long as soils aren't overly dry or overly wet nitrogen loss will be very nominal. My biggest concern, most Septembers is actually not overly wet soils, but soils that are so dry there is no moisture for the ammonia to grab on to. If you can see vapors coming out of the soil behind the applicator or smell an excessive amount, it is too dry! Shank spacing on the applicator is very crucial. We recommend spacings no wider than 20 inches. Studies across Kansas have shown as much as a 5% yield differential when 15 inch spacings were compared to 30 inch spacings. And of course, we really encourage application at an angle to the direction you intend to plant. One last note is on safety. Make sure that the safety tanks are full of fresh clean water at all times. Anhydrous can be dangerous! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.