

Sorghum Pests

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. As we get closer and closer to the end of the growing season, the number of potential problems facing any of our crops grows and grows. I've been out looking at quite a bit of sorghum last week. I was seeing a fair amount of large leaf spots in some fields from sooty stripe. This is probably the most common leaf disease in sorghum in the state. It creates a nice long oval spot, several inches long, with a brown center and a yellow margin. The center of the brown part, especially on the undersides of the leaves, can be just covered with nice little black dots in nice and neat little rows! Severe infections can reduce yields. The disease is going to be worse in a summer with high humidity and more rainfall. Look for disease resistance information from your seed supplier. I have been looking for sugar cane aphids but none yet thankfully. If we are going to have sorghum headworm issues, they are going to show up anytime now also. Start heading down a row of sorghum looking in the head for a feeding caterpillar. An average of one small larvae per head can indicate it's time to spray. One per head can reduce yield by 5%. I haven't seen any headworm yet. The first part of last week we had several mornings with temperatures in the 50s. These temperatures can mess up sorghum pollination, delaying seed set. While this in and of itself isn't an issue, the longer that a female sorghum flower is left unfertilized, the more likely it is to be infected with ergot. We don't see it often, but.... This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Miscellaneous crop issues - webworms, grasshoppers, bacterial blight of beans

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. The great weather this summer is not only great for us, but also great for a lot of insect and disease issues in our crops. If you are seeing tiny little brown specks on your soybean leaves that have little yellow halos around them, in addition to some tattering leaves, then you are seeing bacterial blight. We see some of this every year and it's certainly going to be worse with humid rainy weather. Usually even what looks like severe infection doesn't really cause much yield loss which is a good thing since this is a bacterial infection and we don't have many price effective treatment options. As of late last week there was very little soybean rust to be found anywhere in the US other than right along the gulf coast. That could change with one good hurricane, but so far so good. We've been seeing a scattering of other insect pests. Garden webworm has been found in alfalfa and could be showing up in soybeans too. This one is easy to ID as all you have to do is look for leaves that are pulled and stuck together. We should be about to the end of the webworm cycle. In alfalfa, an early cutting may be the best option. Finally, in spite of all the rain earlier in the season we've got a heck of a crop of grasshoppers coming along. Feeding damage has been seen in alfalfa fields and on the edge of some sorghum fields and honestly could show up almost anywhere. Some spot treatments could be necessary if this continues. If you do treat the edge of fields treat out into the ditch or surrounding areas as well to create a buffer zone to provide additional protection. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Safe Travels on the Roads

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Corn harvest is about to get started. Last week I was already hearing reports of corn down to 16% moisture. While some folks may hold off until after Labor Day, others may very well be already started. A few weeks after that wheat planting will be getting started and then full bore into soybean and sorghum harvest. All of this is gearing up at the same time as a major holiday weekend and then football season and other fall sports and then hunting season. Okay, what I'm getting at here is that roadways that are already busy and often crowded are about to become more so with large pieces of farm equipment. I have a lot of friends who have to move some of that equipment on state highways on a regular basis and the horror stories that they tell me, and the flat out stupid things that I've seen drivers do scares the living daylights out of me. This is a short radio program so let me cut to the chase. Too many drivers out on the roadways are habitually running late and driving impatiently and people are going to get killed around this big equipment. The law is the law and if you are behind a piece of farm equipment, no passing zones still mean just that. Sit there and wait until it is clear to pass or the farm equipment has a chance to move over. Yes, that farm equipment has every right on that roadway that you do in your car. They don't HAVE to pull over until three vehicles back up behind them AND there is a safe place to pull over. So until then just slow down, swallow your curse words and deal with. Being three minutes late getting some place is better than someone getting killed! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.