

Farm Bill Open Enrollment

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I got confused the other day, which in and of itself isn't really that uncommon. I received a news release from USDA that was titled "USDA opens enrollment period for agricultural risk coverage and price loss coverage safety-net programs." I immediately thought, wait a minute, ARC and PLC - isn't that what we just spent December thru March having meetings and educational consultations about? Well, yes it was, but all of those meetings led up to decisions on whether or not to update yields or reallocate base acres and then the election of the particular program or programs that you were going to utilize for the different crops on the different farms you were involved with. Those elections were made and are what you will now use through the end of the program whenever that is. NOW you get to actually enroll in those programs for both 2014 and 2015. It's a formality but you have to do it. In fact you will have to enroll every year through the life of the farm bill. If the farm is rented on shares and the tenant does not have power of attorney, then both the landlord and the tenant will need to sign the enrollment form. If it's a cash lease, only the tenant needs to sign the enrollment form. But remember that you have from now until the end of September to get signed up. Some interesting results from the election period - 96% of soybean farms and 91% of corn farms signed up for ARC as did 66% of wheat farms. In the southern states, over 90% of rice and peanut farmers chose PLC. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Pre-harvest weed control in wheat

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Well, guess what happens to wheat fields when you have a lot of rain in May and early June? Correct, you get weeds! We're still trying to get a lot of the wheat and the fields dry enough to harvest and here come the weeds and in some fields we are talking big weeds. So the choice is going to be whether you just fight with the green succulent weeds in the harvest process and get the wheat out, or try to get in and spray the weeds and then go through the post application waiting period until you can harvest. On the short end of the spectrum we've got the herbicide Aim which acts quickly to desiccate weeds, even relatively big weeds, but be aware that weeds can start to regrow 2 to 3 weeks after treatment. The good thing about Aim is that the pre-harvest waiting period is only 3 days. From there we go to dicamba, glyphosate, metsulfuron and 2,4-D. All of these are going to act much slower. Metsulfuron I don't feel is a viable option as it takes a long time to kill weeds and pre-harvest interval is 10 days. Dicamba and glyphosate also work slowly but at least the waiting period is only 7 days. I often feel that you aren't even going to see any activity from glyphosate for about a week. 2,4-D, like dicamba and glyphosate works slowly and has a 14 day harvest interval. Aim requires wheat to be mature, the others can be applied at dough or hard dough stage. Bottom line is that unless you have a field that is solid green with weeds I'd be hesitant to use a herbicide. Fight through the weeds and get the crop out as quick as you can. Oh, and for the record, paraquat is not labeled for this use. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK,

I'm Chuck Otte.

Weed Control in Wheat Stubble Fields

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I recently talked about killing weeds before wheat harvest, now I want to go into a topic that I find very conflicting. That is post harvest weed control in wheat stubble fields. The advent of things like glyphosate and even some of the residual herbicides have made it possible to keep stubble fields very very clean. While it is important to control that volunteer wheat at least a couple of weeks prior to planting, I think we have sometimes gone overboard. A lot of those weeds and grasses that grow in the mid to late summer in our wheat fields are things like foxtail and crabgrass, or kochia, lambsquarter, even ragweed. These are all plants that have a lot of little seeds and can often have a lot of little insect pests on them. These are plants that produce food for quail and pheasants and prairie-chickens not to mention a myriad of little songbirds. Small juvenile birds of all these species eat a lot of seeds and insects when they are available. The weeds growing in wheat stubble fields all across the great plains have historically been important food sources for many of our gamebirds. Many sportsman and others have been quick to point the finger at turkeys or this or that or the other. The big impact on populations has been changes in habitat, extreme weather and loss of food sources including weed seeds and insects in crop stubble fields. Sure, we can keep those fields very clean, but there is also something to be said for letting a bunch of those weeds and grasses go, until we get into the early to mid September time frame. Go ahead, focus on other things and go a little sloppy. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.