

Ag Radio programs for June 29 - July 5, 2015

Prairie Hay

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I had a call the other day, well, actually it was a text, from a producer that wanted to know if it was too early to start cutting prairie hay. What a novel question I thought to myself. In all my years I don't think I've ever had someone ask me if it was too EARLY to be cutting hay. The quick response is no, it isn't too early from a hay and plant management point of view. I mean, you can harvest June 1. Early harvesting hurts nothing but your yield. From a wildlife management point of view, cutting the first of July does run the risk of hurting certain songbird production as they many of them are ground nesters and are liable to be lost during a haying operation. If that is your concern, harvest August 1st. Harvesting July 1 vs August 1 is only going to reduce production about 15% at the most. BUT your protein is going to be much higher with a July 1st cutting. Cutting July 1 will usually tack on 2 to 4 crude protein points. Once you get to August 1st you've lost a lot of protein for not that many more pounds of hay. Here's the other thing about an early July cutting; your hay meadows will have just that much more time to recover so you'll have a healthier stand of grass. Native grasses need about 6 weeks of growth after summer cutting to get their root reserves rebuilt. The native grasses really shut back carbohydrate translocation around mid September so you honestly don't want to cut much later than August 1 because the grass won't be able to recover. So, between now and August 1, mow hay! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Hemlock Control

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Often, the time that a weed problem is most visible, is not the time that we can get good control. Poison Hemlock is one of those weeds. Right now it is very visible with its tall flower stalks, white flowers, obvious purple splotches on a light green stem and a very pungent odor. This weed has been growing in coverage over the past 25 years and is now being seen everywhere. While it is poisonous, deadly poisonous to livestock and people if eaten, it is fortunately not very palatable to animals. Most people get in trouble in the fall or winter because they think it's wild parsnip or wild carrot, dig it and eat the root. Bad mistake! Right now the hemlock is finishing blooming, producing seed and then dying. It won't do you any good to treat it right now and it's quite honestly rather hard to kill at this time. What you want to do though is to write down where the spots are and then plan to treat in mid to late October or late March though early May. Like all biennials, or winter annuals it starts growing in the fall, over winters and then really starts to grow the next spring. You want to catch it in the rosette stage in the fall or before the seed stalk gets very tall in the spring. I'd recommend a mid fall treatment with a follow up treatment in early April. This is one weed where you will need to pull in the heavy hitters. Recommended herbicides include, Grazon P+D, Chaparral, Escort XP, or any generic metsulfuron product, and Cimarron Plus. With all of the products, follow label directions or mixing rate. Most of them also call for a spray adjuvant, so make sure you don't forget that! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Kansas Ag Mediation Service

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. There is a group of wonderful folks at K-State called the Kansas Agricultural Mediation Services or as I like to call it, KAMS. They have been around, in one form or another, since the farm crisis of the 1980s. Unfortunately they are often too well of a kept secret and I'm trying to change that. KAMS is in place to help farmers and ranchers with confidential legal and financial issues. While they can help resolve disputes between ag producers and their creditors, they are more than just that which is what I want to talk about this morning. In the past few years you would probably have to be hiding under a rock not to have heard at least some discussions of farm succession planning. If you want to pass your farm on to the next generation, it isn't as simple as it used to be. There's financial issues, there's legal issues and then there's the big one, emotional and people issues. A majority of well meaning ag land successions fail because the people factor hadn't been worked out. Which generation is going to make what decisions and how does Dad, or even Grandad, let go to let the next generation start taking over the true management of the operation. KAMS has resources to help. For those who attended the succession planning workshops last winter, there will be trained succession planning facilitators available to meet with your family, for a fee of course. These facilitators will help guide your family through the steps of succession planning. For those who didn't attend those workshops, have hope. The KAMS office is in the early stages of planning another round of those meetings. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm

Chuck Otte.