

Ag Radio programs for November 16 - 22, 2015

Proposed Private Pesticide Applicator Rule changes

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. For as long as any of us can remember, private pesticide applicator licenses have been a fairly straight forward matter of take a test once every five years, pass it and get your license. And as a reminder, a private pesticide applicator license is required if you are applying restricted use products to land you own or rent. If you are using general use products, no license is required. The EPA has proposed some changes that may trip up a bunch of folks if they are enacted. We are still in the comment period, through November 23rd, but running out of time if you do want to make some comments. Here are the big changes that are being proposed. A nationwide minimum age of 18 to be certified would be enacted. Currently we have no minimum age in Kansas. Private applicators would have to renew their license every three years instead of every five years that we now have. The test would now be a closed book test. We currently have an open book test. There would also be a training requirement in addition to the test. You would have to have somewhere between 6 and 9 hours of training or what they are calling continuing education units. I'm assuming that this during the three year period but the problem is that what's in the proposed language and what it comes down to in practice are often two different things. I know a lot of the farm organizations have been actively working against these changes but if you'd like to make comments, contact me to find out how. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Fall Wheat Problems

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We have a couple of potential problems with the wheat crop that producers should be on the lookout for. I have not seen these yet in the area, but that doesn't mean they aren't out there. The biggest problem I've seen so far is simply spotty emergence due to dry soil. The rain we had the end of October has started to fill in some of those blank areas in fields, but it's slow going. We need to be on the lookout for feeding by two different pests right now. The first one has been around for a while and that's the army cutworm. It overwinters in residue and in the soil and will get active whenever the weather is warm enough, basically sunshine and 45 degrees or warmer. If we get into an extended warm spell anytime in the fall or late winter, this pest can cause problems. If you notice foliage just disappearing, let's start scratching around at the base of plants looking for caterpillars. The second pest is winter grain mites. These tiny pests are around every fall, and while tiny, they are distinctive with their black bodies and red legs. They will feed when the temperature is between 40 and 70 and right now is probably their peak feeding time of year. This generation will be laying eggs over the next month and these eggs will hatch in February and March. Heavy feeding damage will cause a lot of yellow leaves especially when the wheat is under soil moisture stress. So if we're going to see issues, this is the year that we'll see it. The good news is that while the stress can be quite noticeable, treatment is rarely needed and good growing conditions will take care of everything. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420

KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Asian Ladybird Beetles

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Well, I thought we might manage to avoid them this year, but recent warm and sunny afternoons have shattered that illusion. I'm talking about the Asian Multicolored Ladybugs or what we've started calling now days as just the Asian Ladybug. As their name implies they are not native to Kansas but were imported in the 1970s to control insect pests. In their homeland of China, these ladybugs inhabit tall rocky cliffs in the winter, crawling into cracks in the rocks. In the absence of these rocky cliffs, they feel that the next best thing is our homes. Sadly, most of the ones that come into our homes die during the winter because of the dry air in our houses. They can leave stains on walls and drapes, but other than that, they are merely an annoyance. Oh, they do bite also - but in fact all ladybugs bite, these just seem to be more prone to doing so probably because of the salt on our skins. On warm sunny days in the fall and winter they tend to swarm on the sunny sides of houses, just like those lovely boxelder bugs do. They'll come into our homes and fly around the sunniest windows during the day and our lights at night. Inside the home, a vacuum sweeper may be your best defense. Make a periodic cleaning of the windows on days when they are active. Make sure the house is sealed up as tight as possible to keep them out and then spray the outside of the house, especially around the foundation, windows, doors, anywhere there are cracks, with one of the synthetic pyrethroids. While not eliminating all of them, this will help reduce the numbers. At least until next spring. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.