

### Bromegrass Fertilization

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We are into the second half of February. Bromegrass has already started breaking dormancy - of course that cold weather recently slowed it down some, but the roots are starting to get active and it's time to fertilize IF you didn't last fall. All too often I really feel that the failure of bromegrass to respond to fertilizer like we think it should comes down to the fact that we didn't get it fertilized in time. I really feel that a November or December application is the best way to go with bromegrass. Even though the plant is starting to slow down at that time the roots are actively taking up nutrients and storing them in the roots and crown for later use. The second best time frame, in my opinion, for fertilizing bromegrass is January or February assuming that the ground isn't frozen. Remember, we need to get the fertilizer into the soil so it can be taken up by the roots. To get fertilizer into the soil requires rain or snow to carry it into the soil or at least to the soil surface. If I could arrange one thing with brome fertilization it would be to fertilize on a late December, early January morning and then have 6 inches of snow on top of it in the afternoon. The problem we run in to is that a plan to fertilize in January or February all of a sudden becomes March because of frozen soil or snow and then March turns off rainy and now it's April and it's realistically far too late then to get fertilizer down to where it'll do any good. So if you haven't fertilized your brome yet, get it done soon! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Cash Rental Rate updates

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. The only things more volatile than cash rental rates the past couple of years has been the price of land and the price of crude oil! Cash rental rates are one of the hardest things to come up with. Everyone wants to know but nobody wants to tell! There are two survey's that come out every year that give us some clue of what's happening to rental rates. Every fall the Kansas Ag Statistics Service issues the results of their survey. It made a bit of a stir when it came out because it showed Geary County non-irrigated cash rental rates averaging \$84.50 per acre. While it seems a little high for some ground in the county, it's equally low for other fields! Remember though that this survey is only as good as the data that landowners and producers responded with. The second source of information is an annual report done by economists at K-State. This is a calculated rate based on actual production costs, commodity prices and average mix of crops and shares from producers in each region of the state. It's actually a very long and detailed calculation but keep in mind that it is based on numbers from Kansas Farm Management Association members actual records. It does not take into account local demand or other external factors. It looks at costs, shares equivalents and commodity prices. Where the NASS survey gave us \$84.50, the calculated rate came out at \$66.20. So which one is correct? They both are. And they give us a pretty good range of rental rates to start working from. Every farm is different and the rate that you pay needs to be carefully negotiated. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Why Are You Burning?

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Last week we had a great prescribed burning school in Alta Vista. Lots of good discussion on all aspects of prescribed burning occurred during the day. There was one comment made that just keeps popping up in my mind and that has to do with developing the prescription. When we think of a prescription we often think of going to the doctor and getting medication. The doctor checks your symptoms and your past history and then based on all of this information, and knowledge of the various medications, a prescription is written out for you. Well, that isn't really so different than what we are doing. We call it prescribed burning, but have you ever sat down and developed your own prescription for burning your pastures? You start with the symptoms. What is it that you are trying to address with the burn? Are you trying to control cedars or other brushy species? If so, when will you burn. Are you burning to improve livestock performance? If you are running yearlings or stocker cattle than that is an appropriate reason to burn. If you are running cow calf pairs, burning isn't going to improve their performance in the least. And the list can go on for several pages. Once you have developed the list of symptoms you want to address, then you can start working through the rest of the prescription. When are you going to burn? If you want to control cedars, you can burn anytime now. You just keep continuing on through the process of why, when and how. By the time you've got through the list, you have a very well developed burn plan. So start on your prescription today. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.