

Farm Bill

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Well, the ongoing saga of figuring out the 2014 Farm Bill continues. Early last week, just as we were all anxiously awaiting the preliminary report for January marketing year average price contribution, the National Ag Statistics Service threw us all a curveball. NASS announced that they will no longer be publishing monthly preliminary prices, they will only publish final monthly prices. Whether this is just until Farm Bill signup is over or not, I guess we will find out in April or May. But as it is, we don't have much more information on potential payments than we did a month ago EXCEPT we do know the final December prices and there were some changes compared to preliminary prices. Corn's final December price was increased a penny to \$3.78. Soybean price increased a full dime to \$10.30. Grain sorghum was up a pretty good chunk at \$4.10 but wheat took a big hit dropping from \$6.53 to \$6.11. Marketing year average price is still a wildcard but even with that big drop and K-State's projected MYA Geary county still is without an ARC-CO payment. We're getting closer but prices would have to drop some more. Right now grain sorghum has the best chance to trigger a PLC but it's still up in the air - we'll be waiting for the January prices and January is traditionally a big marketing month for fall harvested crops. Corn is still a toss up also but soybeans are looking doubtful on whether there'll be any payment on those. The wildcard right now seems to be Grain Sorghum demand from China! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Cattleman's Day 2015

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Cattleman's Day is an annual event that occurs the first Friday in March at Kansas State University. This annual gathering allows you to hear the latest research, information and trends in beef cattle production and utilization not only at Kansas State University but across the country. The 102nd annual Cattleman's Day will be March 6th at Weber Hall. In traditional fashion the keynote address is from an individual prominent in the beef industry. This year, that will be someone prominent in the beef consumption industry as Bob Langert, McDonald's Corporation Vice President for Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability will discuss a sustainable beef industry from the consumer's perspective. Whether we like it or not and regardless of the jokes we may make about the average consumer, ultimately what they see as the food industry is going to dictate an awful lot to everyone involved in producing beef. If you don't like their view, you need to start getting involved in correcting that view and vision. Of course there will be other presentations - a talk on the reintroduction of Zilmax, an address on Animal Welfare and the consumer and a very intriguing discussion of sensory attributes and beef flavor. What is it that we find so enjoyable about eating a piece of beef? There'll be additional full breakout sessions in the afternoon addressing reproduction management, beef production management and the regulatory environment. Pre-registration is available now at \$20 per person, registration at the door is \$30. Registration can be done via mail or online. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

Otte.

Oats/Niche Farming

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Some people will tell you that I can be a bit of a conflict between old and new. I think producers get so caught up in big scale production, they sometimes forget to look at what I like to call niche farming. Niche farming is nothing more than setting aside a small amount of your production capacity to meet small scale speciality product markets. This may mean baling up a cutting or two of alfalfa or one hay meadow as small square bales. Sure, you aren't going to use these small squares to feed your 200 cow herd, but what about the folks with horses or a few sheep or goats. How about baling up a bunch of small squares of straw for the gardener or pet bedding market? More work equals higher price and higher profit. When it turns this time of year and with the weather we've been having, my thoughts often turn towards oats. Sure, very few folks grow oats any more, but have you checked to see but what there may be a local market for horse owners or small scale livestock production? Oats are going to do best when they are planted mid to late February. You need to plant the oats and then treat them like they are a real crop instead of planting them with the idea that it's going to fail, and I'll only fertilize and spray weeds if it looks like they are going to do anything. If you take that approach you are probably going to have a self fulfilling prophecy of a failed oats crop. Another consideration would be barley, but spring barley doesn't work here and it's too late for winter barley. For more information on raising spring oats, give me a call at the Extension Office! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.