

### Alfalfa Weevil part 1

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. It's not going to be too much longer, unless we have a brutally cold March, until we'll see our first alfalfa weevils. So today and tomorrow, we'll be talking weevil! Here's the interesting news for 2015. Alfalfa Weevil, contrary to rumors and what you may think, has not developed resistance to insecticides. Tests the past 3 years by K-State entomologists have shown, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that all the traditional insecticides are still working as effectively as ever. They have all done a good job of controlling alfalfa weevil, WHEN they were properly applied. Therein lies the problem. When it comes to alfalfa weevil control, there is no systemic action. You have to get the insecticide ON the weevil larvae. To accomplish that you need warm temperatures, 50 degrees or warmer, for several days, to make sure that the larvae are up at the top of the plants feeding. Then you need to apply a lot of carrier, generally the more the better. How much is minimum? I'd say 12 gallons per acre is minimum, 15 is better and to be right honest, 20 gallons per acre would be preferred. Yes, I know that means a lot more time refilling sprayer tanks and fewer days that you can spray. But on cold days the larvae are in the litter and debris at the base of the plants, out of the reach of the insecticide. You also need to hold out and not be in a hurry to spray. Figure three weeks of control. Spray too early and you will get re-infested. Remember warm weather and lots of carrier! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Alfalfa Weevil part 2

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Yesterday we talked about why alfalfa weevil treatments fail. It usually comes down to not getting insecticide on the weevil larvae because it's too cold and the weevil are down at ground level and/or we were trying to get by on very low carrier rates. 12 to 20 gallons of carrier per acre is my recommended range. But now we have that tricky question of how soon to spray. Good alfalfa is valuable - anywhere from \$125 to \$300 per ton. Even at lower prices, early infestations need to be treated when you have 1 larvae per stem. Once it gets up to about 10 inches in height that increases to 2 larvae per stem. At those levels you will see damage readily when you are walking a field. The kind of levels that cause damage that you can see as you drive down the road is more in that 4 and 5 larvae per stem range. When the alfalfa is turning white, you've lost a lot of tonnage already and your production will be off the rest of the year. Early on you will see surface feeding on the leaves, when the larvae get bigger you will see them start to eat shot holes and then entire, or nearly entire, leaves. So maybe you decide, oh the heck with it, I'm going to cut early and not spray. By doing that you get larva pupating under the windrow. If it isn't good and hot, like it often isn't right after first cutting, the newly emerged adults come out, hang out in the field, start chewing off new growth and surface feeding, or barking the stems of the regrowth. When that happens, the stems quit growing and it looks like it's just dry weather. Monitor your fields and when treatment levels are reached, treat! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

Otte.

## Hessian Fly scouting

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Hessian fly are increasing in Kansas. And here's the big news that pretty well blows 80 years of practice out the window. Hessian Flies don't generally go away and quit laying eggs after the Fly Free date. In fact, in recent years, pheromone traps are finding that there are still active Hessian Fly in wheat fields into late November and early December. Certainly planting earlier is going to expose you to more problems, and planting later, like October 10<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, will see less Hessian Fly pressure. If you are going to plant late September or early October, you really need to find a variety that at least has some Hessian Fly resistance. We need more research to know how much insecticide treated wheat seed helps reduce Hessian Fly problems, if it does at all, but for right now, it's going to be all about avoiding problems. Other than planting late, what can you do? For starters, scout your wheat fields as they start to turn looking for problems. Hessian Fly damage is going to look like lots of broken over wheat stems exactly like a light hail storm has gone through. If you are seeing this, then start looking at the base of the stems for the tell tale flax seed stage of Hessian Fly. This is good sign that problems are developing. The second step, regardless, is to control volunteer wheat in August. Hessian Fly and many other insect and disease pests need that green bridge of volunteer wheat. Don't keep it around for grazing - there's better options. When you start to see that green mat after wheat harvest, get out there and spray it or till it to get it under control! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.