

Oats

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I was talking with a local cattleman recently and the topic came up regarding how to reduce the amount of harvested forage that you have to feed to cattle. One thing that people seem to forget about is using oats as an early season forage crop for some good short term grazing in April and May. April and May often aren't providing us a lot of forage on the bluestem pastures and can be sort of an awkward time. Naturally we're going to have to get some drying weather to make this work, but let's just lay out a scenario that could easily work for the producer that has cattle and grain. Get in as soon as you can and plant a couple of bushels per acre of oats. Apply 75 pounds of nitrogen preplant and another 50 pounds six weeks after emergence. Yes, we're really going to push these oats. Once they have enough root growth to hold the plant in the soil, turn the cattle out on them. OR, go ahead and let them go to boot or even late milk stage and cut them for hay. Studies at the Hutchinson experiment field showed that with this production scenario three to five tons per acre of hay with a TDN of 56% and 10% protein can be produced. I'll guarantee you that that's better than most brome hay I'm seeing tested. Here's the great thing, either way, graze or hay, you've got great livestock forage AND, you could get in there in late May or early June after haying or grazing and plant soybeans or grain sorghum if soil moisture and rain outlook are appearing good. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Sorghum planting rates

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. First of all, K-State Agronomy, starting about 2 years ago, is publishing a great little bulletin called Kansas Sorghum Management for 2016. This 8 page bulletin is chock full of all sorts of information, charts and tables including some of the recommendations for weed control including the newest herbicides available. One thing that I often feel happens is that we waste money on planting way too much sorghum seed. In reality, for maximum yield opportunity, there's really no need to be shooting for more than 80,000 plants per acre and most years you are probably better off at 45,000 to 60,000 plants per acre. Here's the kicker on all of this though. You have to know how much your hybrid is going to tiller. Unfortunately that is not one of those things that you are probably going to find in the list of traits in the seed companies brochures. Many varieties have the ability to tiller extensively. If growing conditions are good and the stand is a little thin, the plants may shoot up two or three tillers each to compensate. If you know that the hybrid you are planting does not tiller well, I'd probably drop enough seeds to kick that final stand up to 60 or 70,000 plants per acre. If though you are using a hybrid that you have seen tiller well, keep that stand count down in the 45 to 55,000 plants per acre range. Keep in mind that some of these populations may look thin to begin with, but if you've got one plant every six inches and no gaps over 9 feet long, in 30 inch rows, you're going to be okay and the stand should be fine. If using a planter, assume 70% emergence and adjust rates as needed. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

Otte.

Soybean planting rates

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I recently mentioned the 2016 Kansas Grain Sorghum Management guide, well we also have them for soybeans and corn. If you want copies of any of these, please stop by the Extension Office. One of the best things that the high price of soybean seeds has done for us is to get people backing off of seeding rates. 30 years ago it wasn't uncommon for folks to be planting 180 to 200,000 seeds per acre. And I'm sorry, but those rates are nuts even in high yielding or irrigated environments. Years worth of population studies have routinely shown that you often don't see much of a yield boost once you get over about 40,000 plants per acre. However, what we also found was that lower populations tended to drop the bottom pods closer and closer to the ground making harvest a real challenge. So, for those reasons and to maximize yield under better conditions, we probably need to be shooting for somewhere between 60 and 80,000 plants per acre which means dropping 80 to 95,000 seeds per acre assuming 85% emergence. Planters may have slightly higher emergence and drills slightly lower, but that's a good average. So what does that mean as for as seeds per foot of row? If you are truly drilling them in 8 inch rows, figure one seed per foot of row. If you are going with narrow rows at 15 inch spacings, then you are probably going to be more in that 2 maybe 3 seeds per foot of row. And if you are going full 30 inch rows you'll be right around 4 seeds per foot of row. I will say that for weed control purposes and to maximize yield potential, I think we need to use narrow rows. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.