

Ag Radio Programs for December 3 - 9, 2018

Time to give up on wheat planting

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It's time to give up on planting any more wheat. The snow that arrived right after Thanksgiving pretty well put the nail in the coffin of wheat planting. We were already well past the recommended time frame. Soil temperatures are now below 40. Wheat will germinate very slowly. Tillers will be few and heads will be small. You'd be better off to plant it to oats in February than still trying to plant wheat. You could still follow up after oats harvest with double crop soybeans or if you needed livestock feed, follow the oats with teff or sudan. Or just switch it around and wait until April or May and plant corn, soybeans or milo. Just make sure that you don't have herbicide residue issues. But to still consider planting wheat, especially given the wet and cold soils, just doesn't make sense. Look at your options and save some frustration. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Why narrow row beans improve weed control

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. The best weed control in any crop is to have a strong stand of the desired crop that is growing well. Competition, and especially shaded ground, are some of the best weed control mechanisms we have. When I talk with homeowners about a crabgrass problem in their lawn it is always because there is bare soil. Many weed seeds need sunlight to germinate or germinate better if they are exposed to sunlight. Crop fields are no different. Soybeans in 15 inch rows have an advantage over 30 inch row beans primarily because of canopy or ground shading. At V4 growth stage, that's the 4th trifoliolate leaf, narrow rows will have 66% canopy versus 42% for the 30 inch rows. That 24 percentage points more coverage is going to account for a lot of weed control. So work hard to control early season weeds and then get that canopy closed! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Would crabgrass work as a summer forage?

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Something that we rarely hear of around these parts is using crabgrass as a summer forage option. You go into Oklahoma and northern Texas and it's a very common forage often growing in rotation with wheat or other winter cereals. We probably don't hear a lot about it because we have so much summer pasture available. But it is an option. In Oklahoma they plant wheat in September, start grazing it in late October and through the winter and spring. Then graze it out or hay it, terminate it in April with herbicides and sow crabgrass which they can usually start grazing in 45 days. The beauty of this system is that once you get the crabgrass established, you don't normally have to reseed as it produces enough seed on it's own in late summer. Oklahoma has a good bulletin on using a wheat crabgrass rotation that I can print for you. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Soybean nutrition needs

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Last week I was talking about soybeans being a very heavy feeder of nutrients, something we often haven't taken into consideration. I talked about nitrogen last week, but what about some of the other key nutrients?

Soybeans removed 0.8 pounds of phosphorus per bushel of grain and 1.4 pounds of potassium. A 60 bushel soybean crop is pulling 48 pounds of phosphorus and 84 pounds of potassium.

Additionally, if you start to have problems with sudden death syndrome in beans we know that high phosphorus soil test levels reduce SDS severity. We really need to be paying close attention to phosphorus and potassium soil test levels as we grow more and more beans. We are mining these nutrients and someday we'll need to pay the piper. One last nutrient, sulfur. We should be applying 20 lbs of S annually to beans. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

What forage analysis do you need?

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We ran a lot of forage samples through the Extension Office this year, mainly because of concerns, rightfully so, over high nitrate levels. 75% of those samples we sent to K-State for nitrates only or nitrates plus protein. The other 25% went to a commercial lab for a full analysis. While the nitrate testing was crucial from a safety point of view, and knowing protein helps, if you are serious about formulating cattle rations you should be getting a full test that includes total digestible nutrients and net energy. You'll also get acid and neutral detergent fiber. All of these can then be used to optimize formulation of a good ration. Add in calcium and phosphorus, especially in cow herds and you've got about all that you need for putting together a good ration. If you have questions or need assistance, give me a call! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.