

Ag Radio Programs for October 15 - 21, 2018

And then the rain came...

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I think we've all seen those forecasts before where they are predicting broad areas of heavy rains only to have them amount to little or nothing. We had those big rains in early September which really sort of shocked me so when the first of October rolled around and they were talking 4 to 8 inches of rain over a several day period I just sort of shrugged it off with a yeah, like that'll ever happen! But it did and the timing wasn't exactly the best! Well, it looks like we've got a shot at some sunshine and drying weather for a while so hopefully we can get cranking soon on soybean harvest. We're already likely a week behind where we'd like to be which may well put us into a bind for planting wheat after soybeans. That may be made even trickier if fields don't dry very quickly and we end up rutting up some fields that we wanted to plant wheat in. The question has already been asked of me, more than once, of how late we can plant. It's pretty obvious to me that we'll be planting a fair amount of wheat in early November, assuming we get good enough conditions to get the soybeans out. Wheat seeding rates need to go up to 100 pounds per acre after October 20th. After November 1st push that to 120 pounds per acre, but do not go any higher than 120 pounds. Once we get past about the middle of November we're really rolling the dice. Sure, we can plant clear into January and still have a crop, but I question the wisdom in that. After mid November, let's consider options. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Prussic Acid

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I sent out an email late last week to my ag email list talking about concerns of prussic acid as we start moving in around the end of the growing season. Any sorghum, and that includes sudan, sudex and even Johnsongrass, can be potentially lethal with prussic acid. As sorghum leaves freeze the cells rupture and release hydrogen cyanide into the plant cells. So for several days after a freeze hard enough to burn leaves, the risk in sorghum is quite high regardless of the size of the plants. Normally after about five days, seven if cold and cloudy, the hydrogen cyanide has escaped into the atmosphere and the plants are safe to graze again. If the freeze was hard enough to kill the entire plant, then that's the end of the risk. However, if it was not a hard enough freeze, I generally feel a couple hours of 25 or lower is necessary for that, then plant is not killed and it will more than likely start to send up new shoots. These may be out of the leaf whorls on the stalk or out of the base of the plant. Regardless, these new shoots will be very high in prussic acid. If cattle find these new shoots, and they will, they can be poisoned very quickly. If it stayed warm enough long enough these new shoots would get big enough where they wouldn't be a risk, until another freeze came along. We are basically rolling dice at this time of year to have cattle on any class of sorghum out in the fields. Get them out and hold them out until the plants are dead. But remember, this is NOT a problem on corn or millet, only sorghum. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Teff As a New Forage Crop

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Every once in a while a new crop comes along that catches producers interest. I'm going to talk about one today and another one on Friday. Teff, T-E-F-F is a warm season annual grass from Africa. It is one of the ancient grain crops and is often touted for it's health benefits. But it also has been used as a forage crop. It is a fine stemmed fine leaved grass with a fairly shallow root system. It doesn't like cold soil, probably even less so than sorghum. It's fairly drought tolerant but can also tolerate floods. The seed is tiny. 150 teff seeds equal one wheat seed. Most producers plant it sometime in June - which means it could be a quick forage crop following wheat harvest. Seeding with an air planter has worked well for producers. First harvest can be less than two months after planting with subsequent cuttings in 40 to 45 days given rainfall. It probably needs 50 to 100 pounds of nitrogen. It is very high quality and can produce 2 to 3 tons of dry forage, possibly more, per acre. Protein content of the hay responded nicely to nitrogen applications in Oklahoma studies (I've found no studies from K-State, hopefully they are working on it!) ranging from 10 to 16% primarily based on stage of growth. We had some teff grown in the county this year so it will produce here. I'm waiting to get some forage test results back to see how well it did. It's grown as far north as Michigan so I'm quite comfortable with it as a forage crop in Kansas. If you'd like more information on Teff, give me a call! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Sample for SCN this fall

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Soybean cyst nematode, or SCN, is a soybean production issue that we don't have a lot of experience with yet. We do have fields that have tested positive for SCN in the county, but the levels were low enough that we haven't seen production issues. But as we grow more and more soybeans, the nematode levels will increase and then we will start to see issues. SCN issues will show up as low yielding areas in fields that don't seem to match anything else. SCN will stunt plant growth and often leads to increase SDS, sudden death syndrome problems in fields. I think we need to start sampling soybean fields on a regular basis. The best time to do this is in the fall after harvest. You can do this anytime this fall that the ground isn't frozen. To me, soil sampling for SCN is far easier than for fertility. Walk a W or a Z pattern across the field and stop at 18 to 24 locations and pull a quick sample from the top 6 inches. Take it right between plants within the row. Put these samples in a bucket and then mix them up really well before taking out a sub-sample. Fill up a one gallon re-sealable bag. Don't freeze the sample or expose it to excessive heat. If the soil is really wet when you do this leave the sample bag open slightly to allow moisture to escape. Mark the bag and bring it into the office. I'll take it over to the plant pathology lab. Testing for SCN is a substantially longer process so don't expect quick turn around. There is a fee for this but it is important to test and monitor for this pest. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Is industrial hemp a crop for you?

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. You are going to be hearing more and more about industrial hemp production in Kansas. Here's what I'm going to tell you - don't feel like you have to be the first one in the area to grow it. The markets are still developing, the production techniques are still being worked on, there's a whole host of issues that need to be dealt with. In fact just this week the county extension agents had our first training session on industrial hemp. With recent changes in Kansas laws we will likely see our first research trials being planted in 2019. Kentucky may be one of the leaders in industrial hemp research and they've only been doing it for 5 years. Just to be clear here, we are talking industrial hemp which is a far different crop from marijuana or as it is often now called, cannabis. We aren't looking to produce product for Colorado. Industrial hemp can not have THC content high enough to produce the intoxicative effect of cannabis. In fact there are limits that are very strict for hemp to be considered hemp. Industrial hemp is grown for fiber, oil and CBD. CBD is a compound in hemp that is currently being researched for a whole host of medical benefits. I've always said that the easiest way to control a weed is to grow it as a crop and then you'll find all sorts of problems with it. There's a lot of research that needs to be done so we better understand cultivars for planting, fertilization rates, how to best harvest it - fiber may be the biggest interest right now. And then there's weed control. Lots to learn. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.