

Ag Radio Programs for October 1 - 7, 2018

Worms in the wheat

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. With some of this lush growth following the August and September rains, we've had an armyworm explosion over the past few weeks. Armyworms are in that group of critters that turn into millers - bland looking gray to brown little moths. I saw some cover crop fields with populations of 15 to 20 per square foot. Any of the cereal grains that had been planted had been mowed off. While armyworms are generally grass eaters, there were so many and they'd devoured so much of the cereals they were even working on the turnips. It was a tough call but this field was sprayed. It was a tough call because the armyworms were probably 3 to 5 days away from being through feeding and pupating. By spraying the field we knocked the population down and the cereals, mainly rye, will probably regrow just fine allowing some fall grazing to still happen. Depending on the weather we can't rule out another generation in 2 to 3 weeks, just in time for a lot of this wheat to be at risk. I would encourage everyone to be checking their wheat fields as they emerge in the coming weeks. I'd get out there and walk those fields about every three days. If you start to find a lot of clipped off wheat seedlings give me a call and let's find the culprit. Armyworms do not overwinter - they die with cold weather - so once we get freezing temperatures they'll go away in a hurry. But then there's Fall Armyworm that can start up in October or November and does overwinter. And something tells me that this may be their year too. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

What's a good wheat to plant

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Every year I'll get asked what's a good wheat to plant. It's a really frustrating question for me because there's about 15 to 20 things that need to be considered. I understand the confusion and the frustration of the producer because there's dozens of wheat varieties to be found out there. Varieties that have done well for years eventually lose favor as strains of rust diseases shift and an old standby is no longer resistant. New traits come along, yield goals keep getting bumped up. As a producer you need to decide if you want a wheat to graze and plant early. Are you going to be late planting because you're coming in behind soybeans. Do you need a variety with good standability or lots of horsepower so you can produce as many bushels as possible. Not so much around here, but speciality markets can provide bonuses for grain protein or milling and baking characteristics where yield is almost secondary. So the first thing I ask is what a producer has been planting and if they are happy with it. If a variety is still working for you, why change? If you are looking for some new cultivars, here's some to consider over the next couple of years. If you've liked Everest, consider Zenda. If you want a wheat to graze that has Hessian fly resistance consider SY Flint. If you're following corn and are worried about scab, then SY Benefit. But there's also WB4269, or Bob Dole or SY Monument. Most of you have your wheat already and some planted, but we can start planning for next year already. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Watch out for lodging soybeans

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. While the soybean crop was likely within a few days of being lost before the rains started, it doesn't mean we are out of the woods yet. Heat and drought stress in soybeans, early in the season, sets them up to get charcoal rot. I've seen areas in fields that seem to be dying faster than the rest of the field and I suspect some of this may be being caused by charcoal rot. If you hit areas in your fields where the yield is well below other similar looking parts of the field, let me know and we can do a little post mortem checking of the roots and lower stem. Many times there may not be much we can do about charcoal rot but simply knowing it has been a problem may mean some tweaks to the management. Charcoal rot can cause excessive lodging in sorghum but usually doesn't cause additional lodging problems in soybeans. However, we are having increasing issues with *Dectes* stem borer in soybeans and that rascal can cause lodging, some bad lodging. There is no chemical control for stem borer. Crop rotation and avoiding planting soybeans next to a soybean or sunflower field that had a bad problem the previous year can help. Cocklebur and ragweed can serve as alternate overwintering host sites so controlling these weeds can help. Wild sunflowers are not susceptible to *Dectes* stem borer so don't worry about them. For right now though, a little early scouting to look for problems can help target fields that should be picked first to minimize harvest losses from lodged plants. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Fall Bindweed Control

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. While glyphosate may have its challenges with pigweed control, it has proven to be very effective in bindweed control over the past 25 years. No single treatment of any herbicide is going to control well established bindweed. But several consecutive years of effort with any herbicide and you will get bindweed under control. The nice thing about bindweed, if you can call it nice, is that it grows well into the fall and fall treatments can prove to be very effective especially if done several years in a row. In the past we have tended to look at control options using glyphosate, tordon, 2,4-D and Dicamba, often in various combinations. Depending on the year, the weather, the growing conditions and the particular combination of herbicides, producers could expect 20 to 80% control the following spring. 80% isn't bad but if you could do better, would you? A product that has been around for quite a while but hasn't received as much attention as it should is quinclorac, currently being sold as Facet L. Quinclorac either alone or in combination with dicamba can provide 90 to 98% control the spring following a fall treatment. It is even labeled for control of bindweed in grain sorghum. With the August and September rains bindweed is growing good right now and this fall would be a good time to work on bindweed control in crop residue fields, pastures, even around the farmstead. I will warn you Facet isn't cheap, \$24+ per acre, but if you've got a bad bindweed problem, it's a bargain. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Planning your wheat fertilization program

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Have you figured out your fertilization program for your wheat yet? Even if your wheat seed is already in the ground, we still have time to take profile soil tests to get a good picture of what's out there. I know that some fields have a fair amount of nitrogen left over from our drought stricken 2018 crop year even though we did have all that rain in August and September. So let's start there. Ideally we'd have applied phosphorus to meet needs preplant or with the drill as a starter. If your phosphorus levels are borderline we can topdress phosphorus to keep them from falling any lower. Since you're going to be pulling a profile test, hopefully, let's also be sure we're testing for chloride. In the absence of a soil test though, apply 10 to 15 pounds of chloride to your wheat crop. There's a few things we haven't totally figured out with chloride, but it can often help. Now the big one - nitrogen. I feel that all too often we fertilize our wheat for an average yield. We wait too late because we don't want to spend the money on the fertilizer if we don't feel that the crop has good prospects. We fertilize for average and we get what we fertilize for. Folks, the wheat genetics of today have the potential to crack 100 bushels per acre. Sure, Mother Nature doesn't treat us right sometimes, but more often we don't give the genetics the fuel that it needs to reach those yield levels and we often fertilize too late in the year. Let's treat that wheat crop like we do our corn crop and see if it makes a difference. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.