Ag Radio Programs for October 22 - 28, 2018

Stress

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I've been talking to quite a few crop producers recently. It's been an incredibly stressful year and for those who aren't involved in agriculture, or grew up on a farm or ranch, you may not understand this. I remember my father watching a November snow storm roll in with most of his milo crop still in the field worrying if it was going to still be standing after the snow melted so he could get it harvested. I remember his frustration when crops were good and prices weren't. And I remember those times when crops weren't good and neither were the prices. In the past 5 years prices have gone from record highs to incredible lows. A drought that started last fall went through until mid summer and now has turned into ridiculous flooding rains. As we are hopefully drying out it doesn't mean that the stress and the weight of it all is any less. If you wake up in the middle of the night and can't go back to sleep because you are thinking about harvesting and planting and loans at the bank and a hundred other things, you aren't alone. If you start feeling suffocated by it all, you aren't alone. There's many others that are feeling the same thing. That overwhelming feeling of helplessness has hit everyone at sometime during our life. But there are people that can help. Call me at the Extension Office. I saw it in my Dad and I know how incredibly heavy that weight is. If you don't want to talk to me, there are others. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week 800-273-TALK. Because talking is better than anything. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Starter fertilizer on late planted wheat

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. There's no two ways around it. We're going to be planting wheat into cold and wet soils. Early last week soil temps were below 50 degrees. Great if you want to apply anhydrous ammonia, not so great if you want to plant wheat. Soil temps were warming up as we went through the week, but we're still planting into cold and wet soils. We could wind up with a very warm November and get good growth, but there's things you need to be doing for wheat planted from here on. Last week I talked about the importance of increasing seeding rates as we get deeper into fall. Later emerging wheat plants will have less tillers and the heads will be smaller. We try to compensate by getting more plants out there to get more tillers, hence more heads. Regardless of soil test phosphorus levels I would also start adding phosphorus based starter fertilizer with the seed. Phosphorus availability to plants becomes less as the temperature drops. It's some sort of a chemical and physics thing. Regardless of soil test level, I'd try to get 20 to 30 pounds of phosphorus with the seed. You want to be careful on P source though and not get very much or any nitrogen in direct seed contact. Use 11-52-0 or 18-46-0 or straight phosphorus 0-60-0 but remember no more than about 10 pounds of nitrogen in direct seed contact. Lastly, you really need to be planting seed that's been treated with a fungicide. Even if you have to use a drill box treatment, it's better than nothing to protect those young plants! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Fall Musk Thistle Control

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Musk thistle is not the problem that it was back in the 1980s, but it is still a problem. It is still a noxious weed and it can become pretty thick in some areas if you don't keep on top of it to control it. Fall is an excellent time to treat musk thistle and since it is a very cold hardy plant you can often treat it clear up into early December. Musk thistle is going to be most common in areas that have thin stands of vegetation with bare ground. Given the lack of normal growth in many pastures I feel that the situation exists that we may have more musk thistle this fall. I rarely see thick enough stands of musk thistle any more that require pasture wide spraying. In fact, as the pastures go into winter dormancy and start to brown out, those musk thistle rosettes can become really obvious. You can mix up some spray in a sprayer on your 4-wheeler and start spending nice fall days cruising the pastures and spraying musk thistle rosettes. In the fall, especially late fall, 2,4-D may be a little weak. If you do use 2,4-D use the low-volatile ester formulation. There are better options however. The always popular Tordon 22K will give excellent control at the 10 ounces per acre rate - that's ½ ounce per gallon of water for small batch mixing. Aminopyralid alone or with metsulfuron will also give excellent control. Aminopyralid is sold as Milestone, ForeFront HL or GrazonNext HL or the combo product is better known as Chaparral. Use Milestone at 4 or 5 ounces per acre and Chaparral at 1.5 ounces per acre. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Pre-harvest soybean losses

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We thought we were about to lose the soybean crop and then it started to rain. Yield potentials have been looking really good. Then along came 4 to 6 inches of rain just as the beans were getting about ready to harvest. Then let's just add a little insult to injury and have two inches of snow to hasten lodging issues in everything! When beans are basically nearly dry enough to harvest and we have soaking rains, like a weeks worth of wet weather like we saw, the probability of shattering of the pods increases dramatically. The wetting and subsequent drying of those pods causes those pods to shrink and swell and that leads to them popping open - what we call dehiscent - and then we wind up with soybeans on the ground. Hopefully by now you are back into fields. Since there are so many factors that can influence how fast a variety shatters, you need to be scouting your fields and get to those fields that are shattering worse as soon as possible. Cultivars can make a difference as can fertility, disease and insect pressure. In fields that are shattering badly, slower combine speeds can also help reduce shattering losses but it can drive operators a little crazy. If you want to know how much you may be losing to shattering, or maybe you don't want to know, simply take the time to start counting the number of beans on the ground. Taking all the calculations out of it and cutting straight to the chase, an average of four soybeans on the ground per square foot equals one bushel per acre lost. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Keep testing those forages

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. As the season winds down, we've still got a lot of forages around the area that probably need to be tested. Lately we've been getting more samples brought in that we are also running protein on and the results are really interesting. We have several forage probes that are coming and going out of the office on a regular basis. It sure helps to make sure that you're bringing in a good representative sample. The most frequently asked question is how many bales to sample and do I need to sample each field separately. On the last question first, yes, each separate cutting from a field, if there's more than one, and each individual field. So many factors will influence nitrates and protein that you can't assume that any two sources are alike. We're talking less than $15 a sample for nitrates and protein. It's cheap insurance and with the protein test you can do a better job of matching feed sources to nutritional needs of your cattle. How many bales? If you have less than 50 bales in a source, then pull samples from 5 or 6 of them and put it all together. If you have more than 50 bales, sample 10% of them. I think in most situations you're not going to have more than 100 bales so that means you're only coring about 10 bales. Go in from the side, not the end so you are sampling across the windrows not with them. Dump the samples into a bucket, mix it all up and then pull out a one gallon plastic bag to bring into the office. Then you'll have the data you need to mix up a good ration! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.