

Ag Radio Programs for October 29 - November 4, 2018

Wheat Planting/Replanting Considerations

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We have some wheat that was planted in late September that looks pretty good. But we had some wheat that got buried from some of those heavy early October rains. Bless those little wheat plants, they are trying to make it through all that washed in soil but some of them aren't going to be able to make it. The same traits that brought us those semi-dwarf wheats and their good standability also brought us shorter coleoptiles and a limited ability to emerge from deeper soil depths. So do we replant, assuming it dries out quickly or do we just ride with what we've got? We generally feel that we need 900,000 plants per acre to provide maximized, or perhaps optimized yields. So we need to know uniformity of the stand that did make it and the plant population that got established. If you had standing water and now have no stand, that's easy. Replant if you can get it in before about November 15th, unless it's a fairly small area, then it may not be worth messing with. If you have areas with uniform stand but a thin stand, then start counting plants. If you have at least a 50% stand then you are better off to just let it go. Wheat has a great ability to compensate for thin stands. As to how late it's worth going for just the original planting, thanks to a late soybean harvest, it comes down to agronomic considerations and crop insurance program considerations. We're into the gray zone now and after November 15th it's the "no zone". For both factors, I'd call Nov 15th the end! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Alfalfa - Last Cutting Considerations

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. It used to be very simple - you'd cut alfalfa the last time in early September, we'd have a hard freeze around mid October, which ended the growing season, you swathed or grazed the left overs on the alfalfa field - everything was good. Then we started getting stranger and stranger weather in the fall. Alfalfa would keep growing until early November. You aren't sure when to take that last cutting. Then we add in a really weird drought that breaks in early August and alfalfa that had been sitting around doing nothing for much of the summer starts growing like crazy. We snuck in a cutting in mid September, and now it's still growing and looking really tempting. The best scenario is that when we finally have a hard enough freeze to stop alfalfa from growing there is 12 inches of growth on plants. Worst case scenario is that when we have that hard freeze it's just a couple of weeks after the alfalfa was cut and there was only 4 or 5 inches of new growth. The plant goes into winter dormancy without having it's root reserves fully replenished. At this point, if you have a lot of growth on those alfalfa fields you just need to ride it out. We are probably just a couple of weeks away from a freeze hard enough to put the plants into dormancy. Let's wait until that happens and then you can swath what's left or put a fence around it and graze it. Grazing can be a good way to help reduce overwintering weevil eggs also. But please don't be cutting any alfalfa in the next couple of weeks! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Fall Marestalk Control

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Yeah, I know, fall harvest isn't even done and I'm talking about doing some fall weed control. As the amount of no-till has increased over the past 20 years, marestalk has become a bigger and bigger problem. Pre-no-till marestalk was a novelty. Fall or spring tillage pretty well took care of it. As we started to move to no-till we relied more and more heavily on glyphosate, but glyphosate was never very effective on marestalk. We know that using herbicides to control marestalk is nearly impossible once it starts to bolt in the early spring and gets more than about 4 inches tall. Which means we are best off to hit it after harvest. Because of the lack of taller shade, marestalk is a bigger problem in soybeans than corn. For fields that are going to soybeans next spring fall treatments can be made well into December as long as we have mild temperatures at the time of treatment. In many cases, waiting until November can often result in better control as more of the weeds have germinated at the time of treatment. There are several herbicides for marestalk control including 2,4-D, dicamba, Sharpen, Canopy EX, Autumn Super and Valor XLT. Adding glyphosate will also give you a broader spectrum of control and help with those winter annual grasses. Including a metribuzin, Valor, or Classic containing herbicide will also provide residual control on into early spring but is NOT a replacement for your traditional spring applied residual products which are really needed for pigweed control. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Sorghum May Not Be Dead

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I received quite a few calls last week about turning cattle into frosted sudan or forage sorghum fields. It's been long enough since the frost so that prussic acid in the standing forage is long gone. That doesn't bother me in the least. What concerns me was what I was finding in sudan fields last week. As I started digging around at the base of those plants I was finding that the bottom inch or two of the stalk and the crown and roots were still very much alive. On nearly every plant that I dug up and looked at I could find new shoots starting to emerge from the base of the plant. The biggest shoots I found the middle of last week were about 2 inches tall. The questions one has to ask are how big are those going to get before we finally get that frost that will kill them, how likely are the cattle to find those shoots, and how much will it take to kill a cow. Those new shoots are very high in prussic acid. It won't take much of that kind of material to kill a cow. The cooler weather is going to slow the growth but I know that there are more new shoots coming. As cattle are out grazing in those fields, we both know that they will nose around looking for the lushest growth. Before you turn cattle back out into those fields I would spend some time walking through the field checking for new shoots at the base of those plants. If you don't see any, then the plants may be dead and you're safe to graze it. But if you find very many small new shoots coming up, I'd want to hold off until a harder freeze arrives! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Safety on the highway

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I'll probably keep preaching this until I retire or die. But drivers on our roadways, all drivers MUST be more cautious around farm equipment on the roadways. I was coming back into town last week on K-18 and saw a combine heading west with a car behind it that was trying to get around. They kept pulling across a double yellow line. They did it at least three times, jerking their vehicle back into their lane as traffic came towards them. A county agent friend from Georgia sent me a photo of one of his producer's tractors. The farmer was making a left turn into his farm driveway when a vehicle tried to pass him, crossing a double yellow line. Fortunately nobody was hurt but the tractor was destroyed. Didn't do the F-150 much good either. If you are on a roadway and find yourself behind any farm equipment, just slow down, back off and be patient. That vehicle has the same right to be on that road as you do. If more than 3 vehicles get backed up behind it, then the operator does need to pull over and let the vehicles around WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO. That usually means at the next road or driveway. At 15 miles per hour the longest you are likely going to be behind that vehicle is 4 minutes. In reality less. Just calm down, relax and wait patiently. If you pass on a solid yellow line, you are breaking the law. If you cause an accident, you will get a ticket and you will be responsible for damages. And someone may be seriously hurt. It happens all too often so please, PLEASE be patient! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.