

Control Volunteer Wheat

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. After a dry July we've had some nice rains. Nice rains in August means that volunteer wheat will be sprouting and growing like gangbusters. There's also more than likely quite a few weeds out there growing also. All of this needs to be controlled. Volunteer wheat serves as what we call a green bridge. It's a bridge for insects and diseases from the previous wheat crop to survive until the new wheat crop gets going in October. Wheat curl mites, Hessian fly, various foliar diseases can all survive and increase when there is abundant volunteer wheat. If this volunteer is immediately adjacent to a new wheat crop, instant infection or infestation. Get that volunteer wheat killed at least two weeks before planting. This can be tillage or it can be herbicides. If it's herbicides, spray 3 to 4 weeks before planting so the wheat can die! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

2018 Farm Bill Informational Meeting

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. As all of you likely know by now, we have a new Farm Bill. The good news is that the 2018 Farm Bill isn't that much different than the 2014 Farm Bill. Signup, I believe, is set to start in September, although the FSA employees aren't even having training until later this month. There was some tweaking done in the 2018 version but a lot of those won't impact our area as much as other areas. The biggest positive change, in my opinion is that at signup when you decide between ARC and PLC, this will only be for 2019 and 2020. For the rest of the bill you'll be able to change annually which relieves a lot of the pressure of trying to look in the crystal ball! I will be holding a farm bill informational meeting on Tuesday, August 27th, 7 p.m. at the 4-H/Sr. Citizen's Building at the Geary County Fairgrounds. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Wrap Up Native Hay Harvest

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We had two or three weeks of good hay making weather, then it started raining again. Those areas that were hayed off in late July are regrowing nicely and looking good which is exactly what we want to see. But there are a lot of seed heads starting to emerge in those native grasses and when that happens you can just guarantee that the quality of the hay is tanking pretty fast. By the time we get to mid August, native hay is barely maintaining enough quality, from a crude protein point of view, to be good for much of anything other than bedding. But the bigger issue with harvesting native hay in late August is the impact on the prairie health. After cutting, native grasses immediately start to regrow. It takes six weeks, to really get food reserves in the plant back to desired levels. So let's not stress the grass any more after last year. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Importance of Good Forage Sampling

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Back in late July I had a producer bring in a few millet plants from a field he'd swathed and baled. We sent the sample in for nitrate testing and it came back at almost 7,000 ppm. First of all a level that high is potentially lethal if cattle go straight to that. Secondly it just seemed like that was way too high given the conditions we've had this year. I suggested to the producer that they get our forage probe and hit about 20% of the bales to get a good random sample. We sent that sample in for nitrate testing and it came back at around 1900 ppm - a level that is safe to use without concern. Every field is going to have hot plants and the producer with the first sample hit some of those plants. We have forage probes at the office that we loan out. If you want to test for quality or just nitrates, take the time to get a good random representative sample! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Sorghum and Soybean Foliage Feeders

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. As we've been saying all summer, it's a buggy year. I doubt that there is a soybean plant in a 9 county area that doesn't have leaves with holes in them. Corn earworms are getting into sorghum whorls and making raggedy leaves. With a few exceptions, I don't get too concerned about holey leaves! But we are coming up on the time in the growing season where we're going to start seeing insects attack the seeds. One sorghum headworm per milo head is enough to justify treating. Soybean podworms can ravage soybean pods. Green cloverworms will probably start getting the fungus any day now. My biggest concern right now is stinkbugs in soybeans. There are a lot of stinkbugs out there and we struggle to know what the treatment threshold should be. If you are seeing a lot of stinkbugs, call me so we can scout and talk about what to do! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.