

Sugar Cane Aphids in Kansas

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Word came out last week of sugarcane aphids being found in Kansas. Last Tuesday, July 30th colonies were found in a field in Sumner County. That's on the Oklahoma border by the way. This is not unexpected. The good news is that populations in Texas and Oklahoma have been light this season, a good part of that is likely due to high amounts of aphid resistant sorghum being planted. And the fact that it was almost into August before the first aphids were found is good news also. The later they show up in the state, the less time they have to cause a problem. Start walking your sorghum fields and look for leaves that have a lot of shiny honeydew on them as that's a good way to spot them. If you find any that are suspect let me know so I can come on out and follow up to confirm and to count populations to see if control is needed. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Pre-emerge Weed Control in Alfalfa

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. A lot of times we don't use pre-emergent herbicides in fall planted alfalfa. Naturally, if you're using roundup ready alfalfa you probably don't need to, but for all others, I would give it strong consideration. We basically have two preplant herbicides, Balan and Treflan HFP. Both need to be applied before planting and incorporated within 4 hours of application on Balan and 24 hours with Treflan to provide activation for control. There are a couple of options to apply to seedling alfalfa after it is emerged but before the weeds are up. And of course we don't make nearly enough use of dormant season treatments for controlling cheat grasses and mustards. Like I said, you may not need them but they are an option. But certainly make sure that you soil test and apply lime and or phosphorus if called for by your soil test. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Probably no need now for corn fungicides

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. About the last half of June we were watching the corn crop with great anticipation. It looked good, if it hadn't drowned out, and yield potentials were great, still are, but we were also having perfect weather for leaf diseases like gray leaf spot. Then July hit, the rain stopped and to be right honest, disease pressure plummeted. It is most crucial to protect the leaf integrity from tasseling up through dough stage. By now, most corn fields, other than some really late planted ones, are well into the dent stage and physiological maturity or black layer, is not far away - I'm sure some fields are already there. At this point there is nothing to be gained from fungicidal treatments as the corn plant is essentially just drying down. Rain at this time as helpful to keep test weight up but the need to protect leaf integrity is dwindling fast! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Sericea Control Time

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I've had quite a few plants brought in to me and photos sent to me asking if it is sericea lespedeza. In many of the cases it hasn't been but I applaud the concern and thank you for checking. But there is a lot of sericea out there and from now into September is a good time to be treating it. It's growing pretty good from the rains earlier this summer and any additional rains are going to create ideal conditions for our late summer treatments. For our late summer treatments we are going to find the best results with herbicides containing metsulfuron. Triclopyr or Remedy is okay in late summer but the metsulfuron products will be preferred. This would include, but not limited to, Chaparral, Escort XP, generic metsulfuron, Cimarron Plus, Cimarron X-Tra and Cimarron Max. It's also important to apply with plenty of water. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Liming for new alfalfa

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Soil pH isn't very crucial for some crop species and extremely crucial for others. Crops that are somewhat perennial, like alfalfa and brome grass, both of which we'll be planting soon, have a very high need for soil testing before planting. Nutrients, even phosphorus, we can apply on the soil surface and the plants will take them up. But lime has to be incorporated at least 3 to 4 inches deep, preferably 6, so that it can interact with the soil particles and neutralize soil acidity. Acid soils cause phosphorus to be chemically tied up and unavailable to the plants. Legumes, like alfalfa, depend on nitrogen fixing bacteria that really don't do well or like acid soils. Without fail if someone calls that a new stand of alfalfa doesn't look good, I will pull a soil test and it will be acidic. Save time, soil test now and lime if necessary! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.