

Don't Wait Too Late for Weed Control

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Weeds are tricky, sneaky little thieves. Weeds in winter wheat are especially sneaky because many of them start growing in the fall right after wheat seeding and in the beginning are easily overlooked. They sprout, they get a couple of small leaves and a surprising root system and then go dormant. We have several mustard species that are like this. We don't even think about them in the fall and just know that we are going to treat them in the spring when we topdress with nitrogen. The problem becomes that we wind up getting caught by weather in the spring and we treat later than we want and we've already lost a lot of yield. It may be too late for a fall treatment this year but in future years a fall application of an ALS inhibiting herbicide, especially if you've had blue mustard, could give you a substantial yield increase. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Keep Leases Separated

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I run into a lot of leases that are a convoluted mess that entangle pasture leases with haying leases and exchange of services in lieu of payments, etc. The most entangled is where cow herd leases are involved and pasture, either tenant or landlord owned, get meshed up in it. I really do not like to start trading this for that in lieu of payments. I know a lot of people have done it over the years and it has sometimes caused real issues. You can have one lease and still separate it on paper. Tenants should pay rent to landlords for land. Landlords should pay custom farm rates on their share of haying operations. Share fertilizer expenses if it's crop share. If it is a cow herd lease pasture rent should be paid in cash so that expenses can be properly tracked. Keep track of all expenses for future reference in lease negotiations! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Prepping for Calving Season

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Spring calving season seems to have become mid or late winter calving season for many producers which means it may just be 6 or 7 weeks away for some. Well, in these short days of December start getting things squared away so you are ready before calves start hitting the ground. Check equipment, get fresh batteries in all flashlights, clean and fix up all calving facilities, lay in more of a supply of good hay than you think you'll need, Make sure you've got your record book ready for a new calf crop, whatever that record keeping is. We both know that weather can be almost anything during calving season and we saw that last year for sure. The most important thing you can do is to sit down with your vet and lay out a plan of action. Ask your vet WHEN you should call and I'll bet it's earlier than you traditionally have! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Watch Cow Herd Nutrition

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. For many cow herds we are moving into the last trimester of pregnancy which is crucial for that developing calf. There's still time to sort off cows that may be a little thin and feed them extra to get that body condition score raised. Adjust protein and energy in rations up a bit. Aim to have first calf heifers at calving up to a body condition score of 5.5 to 6 and for mature cows shoot for 5.0 to 5.5. Most cow herds I see are in pretty good shape but take time to sort through them and look for those that may need a little extra feed. Work with your vet to develop a sound vaccination program to prepare the cow to produce high quality colostrum. About a week before you think calving is going to start shift to feeding at dusk or later to promote daytime calving. Remember the more you can do now, the better off you, and the cow herd will be! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Is Snow Good For Wheat Crops

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I always enjoy listening to people talk about snow and wheat crops. The way some people talk you'd think that they were talking about some kind of miracle elixir. Well, snow is good for the wheat crop. People used to think that snow carried a lot of nitrogen but many studies over the years where snow was collected and testing showed that there is likely only a pound or two of actual nitrogen in a foot of snow. The real magic of snow comes in the moisture that it holds and the insulation that it provides. Even just a couple inches of snow laying nicely on a wheat field will temper even subzero temperatures at the plant's crown level to just slightly below freezing. Usually when snow melts it happens slowly enough that all that moisture goes into the soil. Yes, snow is good for a wheat crop, but it isn't magic! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.