

Weather Damage on Corn

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We had some rough weather last week. Hail harvested some wheat fields and pummeled others. And then it decided to rain like it was going to make up for 2018 in one week! Some corn fields looked pretty rough after that hail but keep in mind that the growing point for corn is still well underground. Even if the hail obliterated all the above ground green of those young corn leaves, you are likely already seeing new leaves coming up. Don't worry about hail this early. But flooded and even just saturated soils are another thing. 24 hours of standing water doesn't concern me on corn. But when that turns into 2 or 3 or 4 days we will start to lose corn quickly. Even where we don't flood out, we are losing nitrogen by the hour. Once it dries out we may well need to look at side dress applications to compensate. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Timing of Woody Shrub Control

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Pasture managers routinely want to know the secret herbicide recommendation for good shrub control. What I'll tell you is that while herbicide selection can be important, timing of that application is even more important. Because it's wet there is a tendency to want to find something we can do right now, but brush control in the pasture is not one of those. We need shrubs fully leafed out before we treat. Right now the brush is still putting out leaves like crazy. The plants are busy pushing everything up from roots. Herbicides applied now are going to be hard pressed to get down to the roots. But by the end of May and the first half of June, the plants will reverse course, so to speak, and start sending food to the root system to replace carbohydrates that went into the new leaves. Treat then for optimal control! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Wheat Fungicides

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. While reports of leaf and stripe rust have been low in Kansas, both diseases have been building up in Oklahoma and spores are blowing north even as we speak. Additionally, the likelihood of fusarium head blight, AKA scab, is elevated this year because of the wet conditions. In fact it is fairly high. I know several producers that have wheat fungicide already lined up and possibly already applied. For foliar disease control you need to spray when the flag leaves are fully emerged. For scab control you need to spray at early bloom stage. Remember, the rust diseases will infect whenever the spores are present and leaves are wet, even if just from a dew. Scab infects at flowering. Because of the price of wheat right now I would only treat the fields that have a realistic yield potential of 50 bushels per acre or more. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Do I Need to Inoculate my Soybean Seed?

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. There are certain things in life that I feel are no brainers. Wear your seat belt, don't stand outside when there's lightning and inoculate your soybean seed before planting. Soybean inoculant is relatively cheap. Many things can greatly reduce the existing level of inoculum in the soil including hot dry soils and over saturated soils. We've had both in the past 18 months. Low levels of the proper Rhizobium bacteria in the soil will reduce your soybean yield because soybean plants will be slow to nodulate which is necessary for nitrogen fixing to occur. To me, it just isn't worth the risk to save a couple dollars per acre and not inoculate. Seed box inoculant is better than nothing but seed applied inoculant will always give you a better yield response. If you didn't buy pre-inoculated seed, then at least use the drill box treatment. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Do I Need Starter Fertilizer on my Soybeans?

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Historically we have used starter fertilizer on corn and wheat but not on sorghum and soybeans. But we aren't living in the past and I strongly feel that soybean producers need to be using starter fertilizers especially in springs when conditions may be tough, as this year seems to be shaping up. If you are using a 2x2 placement then you should be good to go. Yes, it may slow you down in planting but could well be worth the extra time. It may be fun to not apply fertilizer on 2 or 3 rows for a few rounds and see if you can see the difference. If your equipment applies fertilizer in the seed furrow you need to be careful as soybeans are far more sensitive to nitrogen and potassium fertilizer salt than other crops. If you are using just a phosphorus fertilizer source without nitrogen I would not expect any impact on stand establishment. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.