

Early Intensive Stocking for Cow/Calf?

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. For years we've known that using early intensive stocking with yearlings could increase pounds of beef raised per acre by up to 25%. But we'd never really looked at it with cow calf herds before. Recent research at Hays, using a 1.45 stocking rate which would be about one pair for 5½ acres versus 8 to 8½ acres normal rate can improve calf performance and leave the cow in better body condition. But here's the kicker. You need to wean the calves in late July or early August and then get the animals off the pasture to let the pasture recover. That's a big change that you need to think about. If you stock heavy and leave them on all season, you will have a wreck before long. But early weaning and selling in August may give you better returns as you're selling before the traditional market dip in October. Something to think about! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Buckbrush and Sumac Control

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I talk with a lot of pasture managers who complain about poor brush control in their pastures. And the problem is that they aren't putting together an organized plan and often trying the Swiss Army Knife approach of one treatment for everything. Two of our brush species, buckbrush and sumac, are both pretty well controlled with a treatment of straight 2,4-D at 2 qts per acre. But here's the kicker - for pastures that weren't burned this year, buckbrush should be getting treated right now. Sumac shouldn't be treated until the last half of June. For pastures that were burned, don't spray until 6 to 8 weeks after new shoots come up from the ground. Remember that for foliar treatments you need to mix at the appropriate rates, and do not use any additive, like diesel fuel although a surfactant can often help improve sticking and control. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Fusarium Head Blight

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Fusarium head blight, also known as scab, is a fungus disease that infects the seed right at flowering. The seed becomes a worthless tombstone and high levels can cause severe discounts in price at the elevator and may even cause the load to be rejected as scabby wheat can have a mycotoxin that causes all sorts of problems. Infection only will happen if it is rainy during pollination. Hmmm. We can get some level of control by application of triazole class of fungicides somewhere between the beginning of flowering and 50% flowering. At the current time much of our area is in a high risk zone for fusarium. Some of the wheat is already past being able to be helped by fungicides. For other fields, there's still time. Again, as with the leaf diseases, I'd only treat if the yield potential for that field is above 50 bushels per acre I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

2018 Farm Year in Review

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Over 1,000 Kansas farms are members of the KS Farm Management Association. All of the numbers for 2018 have now been crunched and all six associations had better accrual net farm income in 2018 over 2017. Statewide it was up about \$34,000 per farm, but as I said a few weeks ago, most of that was because of tariff relief payments. But we also know that averages can be deceiving so let's break this down a little bit. Statewide, 21% of the farms lost money. 6% lost more than \$50,000. Another 25% made less than \$50,000 in 2018. In 2018 average family living expense was \$70,000. Add the numbers up and 46% of the farms did not make enough to pay family living expenses. Another 17% of the farms made between 50 and \$100,000, so some of those fell short also. Yes, it's tough times on the farm right now! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Wet Soils and Corn

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It's wet. We've had corn in some places standing in water for two weeks now. That corn is toast. Evaluating damage is a tricky thing. For small corn, less than growth stage V6 (and we don't have any that big yet) it can only survive 2 to 4 days of flooding. Chances of survival increase dramatically if the growing point was not submerged for more than 48 hours. After 48 hours of standing water soil oxygen is depleted. Even if the corn survives you can expect yield reductions up to 33% just from that flooding. There's also the chance of all sorts of diseases moving in to plants that were submerged. Then there's the nitrogen fertilizer issue. In saturated soils with standing water you can figure 3 to 5% nitrogen loss per DAY dependent on the weather. Warmer conditions will be on the higher end of that range! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.