

Ag Radio Programs for November 4 - 10, 2019

Too Late for Wheat? Part 2

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Last week I was talking about whether it was too late for wheat and gave my recommendations on late wheat planting. A week later and I'm going to tell you that I think it's probably time to seriously think about NOT planting wheat. The temperature has plummeted like a rock the past ten days and is now running in the low 40s if not high 30s. Looking at the 10 and 14 day forecasts I have no reason to believe it's going to increase much. Wheat is going to be slow to germinate and even slower to get established. Can you still plant it? Sure, but expect a likely 30 to 40% reduction in potential yield. Is that going to be the best use of that field? Sure, you can follow up with double crop beans and add some more potential profit, but might it be better to save the wheat expense and just go to full season beans next spring? I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Late Season Wheat Pests

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Even though we've had some pretty chilly weather we can't yet rule out wheat damage from fall armyworm and army cutworms. If you have a good stand of wheat that appears to be going backwards, let me know.

We can get out there on a warmer sunny afternoon and see what we can find. Fall armyworms do die with colder and colder temperatures. They re-infest crops in our area from moths that fly north in the spring. Army cutworms are a different beast and do overwinter. They can continue to cause feeding damage even on warm days in February and March. Fortunately army cutworms are generally just a foliage feeder and don't clip stems below ground like their cousins do. Thus we rarely need to spray for them unless we have stressed crop conditions. So let's keep an eye out for them and call if you have concerns! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Soil Test Brome and Alfalfa

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. You know that I talk a lot about the importance of fertilizing brome grass and alfalfa. But how many times have you actually soil tested these fields other than, hopefully, before you planted them? We tend to just do an automatic application of 20 to 30 pounds of phosphorus on alfalfa and then 80 pounds of nitrogen, 20 pounds of phosphorus and maybe 15 pounds of sulfur on the brome. It's easy to soil test alfalfa because we don't really need to take profile sample. Go corner to corner of your alfalfa field, both ways and take 15 to 20 samples of the top 3 to 4 inches. Mix it up, take a sub-sample and bring it in. For a true good test on brome, yeah, we need to take a zero to 18 or 24 inch profile sample. Ideally from 5 to 10 locations. Also take surface samples for pH and P₂O₅. Then we can make a good recommendation. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Compaction

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I think that many producers feel that bad compaction in fields occurs when we have conditions that result in ruts in the field. While leaving ruts isn't good, this is actually less damaging than the compaction that occurs under field conditions that we had this fall. It may be a little damp but you're not leaving ruts. Perfect conditions for compaction and no-till makes it worse. All that residue allows us to roll in fields that are still a little too damp. More tires and bigger tires can help, and sometimes we can't avoid it because we have to get the harvest done. Sadly, there are no quick solutions to compaction. Natural processes don't do as much as have been claimed and deep ripping isn't all that effective either. Avoidance is the first step. If you aren't sure that you have compaction, just wait - your next crop will show you where. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Still Time to Spray Bindweed

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Bindweed is one tough rascal. It and musk thistle are two of the last plants to stop growing in the fall. Which means that we have an extended period into the fall that we can treat. As long as the temperature hasn't really gotten below about 15 degrees the plant is still going to be responsive to herbicide treatments. Something quinclorac based is going to be the best for control but anything including 2,4-D, dicamba, Tordon 22K, glyphosate and few others will certainly help. Be sure to read labels for recommended rates and appropriate usage locations. This time of year you also want to wait until a sunny day with the temperature above freezing at the time of application and forecast to be 50 or above during the day. At 50 degrees plants will be carrying on adequate photosynthesis to take up the herbicide. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.