

Ag Radio Programs for February 24 - March 1, 2020

Cold Weather and Wheat

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It got cold about ten days ago. The coldest winter weather we'd seen so far. And hopefully the coldest we're going to see! I've already spoken several weeks ago about the relatively soft level of winter dormancy the wheat has been in so far this winter and the concerns I have about that. So did the 2 and 3 degree mornings we had cause any problems. Fortunately I don't believe so. Remember, we had some wet conditions ahead of the cold and then an inch or two of snow that came down nicely and pretty much stayed in place and didn't move around. Wet soils and even just an inch or two of snow can really temper cold temperatures. They effectively added 10 to 15 degrees to those cold mornings. As far as I'm concerned if the wheat was in good shape prior to that cold, it's still in good shape. Now get it fertilized! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Alternative Forages

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I routinely scour the pages of farm magazines and ag oriented newspapers. I'm looking for those little ads offering the latest or greatest new livestock forage grass or crop. I shudder at many of these because sericea lespedeza, old world bluestem and kudzu were all intentionally brought in for erosion control and livestock forage. And they have all become royal pains as invasive plants. If you are considering planting some species as an annual or perennial forage crop that you simply aren't familiar with, take a little time to look into it. Remember, the people selling the seed are only going to make money if they sell seed so they'll tell you almost anything. I could spend the next two months talking about a different plant species every day and why it might, but probably won't, work for you. Talk to me first and save some dollars! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

How Soon Do I Intervene at Calving

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Experienced cow herd managers do a pretty good job of assisting cows with calving. Some situations you know right away need your attention. Other times you come out to check on the cows and there are calves on the ground all cleaned up and nursing. Those are the easy ones. But then there's quite a few that are in that gray area of how long do I let labor go before starting to help and how much help should you provide. KSU veterinarian A. J. Tarpoff has the following recommendations. Once the cow's water breaks assure that there is progress toward birth within an hour. Progress means the calf is moving through the birth canal. If there seems to be no progress, intervene. If you do intervene try to determine the problem, usually an abnormal presentation, and if you have no luck after 30 minutes, call the vet! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Intentional Pasture Management

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. There is a concept in natural resource management known as benign neglect. A parcel of natural vegetation receives no attention by the owner and that was likely the best thing that could have happened. Humans didn't have a chance to mess it up. But too often we have pasture management by neglect. I'm here to tell you that the outcome of that is seldom a good thing. Pasture management should never be unintentional. We may pay attention to the cattle first and the pasture second, or third or not at all. As long as the cattle are doing okay, that's what matters. Spend some time writing down what your pasture, not the fences and facilities, but the pasture need. Inventory the plant resources as they'll tell you the condition of the pasture. Call on me or the NRCS folks and let's have some intentional pasture management. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

ID First Please

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It doesn't matter if it's a homeowner, a gardener, a farmer or a rancher. If you only knew the times that someone brought in a plant or insect to be identified AFTER they had attempted some form of unsuccessful control operation. The first step in knowing how to deal with a problem or even if it is a problem, is to correctly identify it. Bring that plant or insect or funny looking leaf in to me first. We've had early intervention of potentially serious weeds that have allowed us to stop it before it get's started. We've also had very beneficial forbs in pastures sprayed into oblivion because the pasture manager thought that since it wasn't a grass it needed to be killed out. Mistakes like these are hard to undo. There's an old saying that the beginning of knowledge is in being able to put a name to a thing. Let's put it into practice! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.