

### Soil Compaction Issues This Spring

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I'm rather concerned that we are setting up for some real compaction issues this spring. Soil is not a solid mass, or at least it isn't supposed to be. Ideally it is 50% soil components and 50% air and water. When soil becomes compacted that pore space between the soil particles starts to get eliminated. These pores are where roots and water normally go. Compaction is easy to make and hard to repair. Many people think compaction occurs when it's really muddy. In fact, the worst compaction occurs at soil moisture levels that you wouldn't expect it to. We're set up to have some real issues this spring. Try to tread as lightly as you can, maybe wait a day longer to get on a field than you think you should and then try to keep all nurse vehicles and service vehicles on the roads or the edge of the field. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Still Time for Dormant Season Herbicides on Alfalfa

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Just about every year, usually about two weeks after the alfalfa has started growing again, someone asks if there's still time to apply dormant season herbicides to the alfalfa. Well, no, it's called a dormant season treatment for a reason. If you get tired of that first cutting of alfalfa, especially on a slightly older stand of alfalfa being full of cheat and mustards then there is still time to get something done about it. There are several products that will do a pretty good job on the cheat and a really good job on the mustards. Gramoxone, metribuzin, velpar, sinbar and even glyphosate can clean up a lot of these as a dormant treatment. As a dormant treatment, glyphosate can be used on all alfalfa, but make sure it hasn't started to grow. If you don't have much cheat, good old Karmex or Diuron can do a great job on the mustards. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Phosphorus Fertilization on Alfalfa

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I don't feel that a lot of alfalfa receives the phosphorus fertilization that it deserves. Alfalfa removes 12 pounds of phosphorus for every ton produced and harvested. A good year of 4+ tons per acre can pull 50 pounds of phosphorus or more out of the soil. Over the life of a stand that can equate to 150 to 300 pounds of phosphorus. Even if you had good phosphorus levels at establishment, those levels can drop in a hurry. Low alfalfa yields will often link back to low soil pH or low phosphorus levels and low soil pH will restrict the availability of phosphorus. Whenever you plant a new stand of alfalfa, always soil test. Once that stand is established, plan on applying 20 to 40 pounds of phosphorus per acre per year, preferably in the dormant season, to make sure you aren't running your alfalfa short on phosphorus! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Does Wheat Need to go Dormant

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It's been an interesting winter so far. If you've been out looking at the wheat you may have noticed that it really hasn't gone, what I would call, HARD dormant. It's still putting on a little growth and late planted wheat is still emerging. Weekend temperatures didn't help with that any at all as well. Which prompted one producer to ask if wheat HAS to go dormant to make a decent crop. The answer is no. Wheat does need cold treatment to be vernalized so that it will switch from vegetative to reproductive growth. The old varieties from the 1950s and before did need hard cold. But as we've moved towards earlier maturing varieties, it doesn't take much cold at all to vernalize the wheat crop. My concern about wheat not being hard dormant, is if or when we have that really cold spell, how much damage will we see? I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Cattleman's Day 2020

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. The 107<sup>th</sup> annual Cattleman's Day at K-State will be four weeks from today, March 6<sup>th</sup>. This annual event is a great way to catch up with the latest information on beef cattle production, talk with commercial exhibitors, review research being done at K-State and catch up with old friends! The morning program speakers are always top notch and this year will be taking a hard look at the global trends in the beef industry. The afternoon is filled with concurrent sessions on beef production and a special section on what's happening with the Mexican beef industry. Registration is \$25 which includes refreshments, the noon meal AND a parking pass to park on campus. If you wait and register at the door its \$35. Registration deadline is February 28<sup>th</sup>. You can register via mail, phone or online. Contact me for details! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.