

Cold Weather Update

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Well, that was fun, he says rather cynically. We went just a few hours shy of 14 straight days below freezing. During that period we also had 64 hours of below zero and over 240 hours below 12 and 210 hours below 10. There will be some wheat damaged, but mainly it's going to be wheat that was planted late or ended up being planted shallow. Looking at the soil temperature data for the heart of that cold weather (last Monday and Tuesday) though, the coldest it got at 2 inches was only 24 degrees. Wheat that was planted at the proper depth and had gotten some decent growth likely suffered little if any damage. Had we not received those precipitation events the very end of December and January, that got good moisture in that top soil, it would have been much worse, and that little bit of snow made a big difference as well! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Weeds Will Likely Explode Early

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I have laughingly been telling my gardening friends to just hang on and not let spring fever get to them so they jump the gun. But this spring, after two weeks of bitter cold, it's going to seem like those winter annual weeds and the early spring weeds will have exploded here in just a few weeks. Part of that is the fact that the harsh cold really just froze everything to the ground. But days are getting longer and with soil temperatures now warming up those winter annuals are already cranking up to grow. In wheat, don't get caught too late. Small weeds are always much easier to kill than even medium sized weeds. The other one that's going to likely catch people by surprise is maretail. It's going to start shooting up seed stalks before long. Plants still in rosette or shorter than 6 inches are easiest to control with burn down herbicides. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Time to Stop Cut Stump Treatments

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It may be a shock to you, but trees and shrubs are already breaking dormancy and pushing sap up the plant. Before the cold snap I saw maple trees with swelling buds. Silly trees! On a bigger scale, what this means is that it's time to stop with the cut stump treatments on trees and shrubs. From July through early February the plants are either pulling sap and food reserves down into the root system or they are totally dormant and herbicides applied to freshly cut surfaces manage to work their way down into the root system. But now, the sap is rising in these plants. You will get some control or partial control, but applying a herbicide to a cut surface now is like a fish trying to swim upstream. Everything is just going against it. It may get there, but it's tough. For now wait until late summer for more cut stump treatments. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Remember March 15th FSA Deadline

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. With everything that's been going on for the past few weeks it may be easy to forget that producers have an important deadline coming up at the FSA office. March 15th is the deadline to sign up for program choices for the coming year. I know many of you have likely already made your designations because you've been calling and asking me my opinion. I'm still standing by my earlier thoughts that wheat leans every so slightly towards PLC and everything else towards ARC-CO. One of my ongoing concerns is the climate center's continuing forecast of above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation through the summer. If it doesn't happen and we have normal yields, it likely won't matter because neither option will probably pay. BUT, if we have a drought then that yield protection may well pay for this year! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Climate Outlook

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I mentioned yesterday about the climate prediction centers outlook for the 2021 crop year. The Climate Center makes predictions spanning rolling three month periods. Right now we can look at the March April May period and the April May June period and so on clear out over a year. They then show whether there are trends towards being above or below normal temperature and rainfall or equal chances it could go either way. They also assign some probabilities to those. If it's equal chances then everything is 33%. Right now, on through early fall, we are looking at STRONG probabilities of being above normal temperatures. While the near term also shows a slight probability of below normal precipitation it then moves into the equal chances of being above, below or normal. It's going to continue be an interesting year! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.