

### Get Those Bulls Checked

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Before we know it we'll be turning cows and calves out onto pasture and not long after that those bulls will be going into those same pastures to do what it is they do. Hopefully you have had your bulls given a soundness check by now, but if not, there's still time. Once you turn that bull loose he's going to be pretty single minded for the next month or so. You need to have the vet make sure that he is able to get the job done. Are his feet, legs and skeletal structure in shape for the rigors of the breeding season. Are his reproductive organs in good shape and has his semen been evaluated for motility and abnormalities. Those bulls are key to the next round of profits for that cow herd. You don't want to get to this fall and find out that half of your cows are still open. Get your vet involved for a soundness check today! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## When the Calendar and Thermometer Collide

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. This has been an interesting spring from many angles and certainly a later spring than recent years. Last week, when many people were or would normally be starting to plant corn, the soil temperatures were hovering in the low 50s. I normally like soil temperatures to be hanging in the mid 50s before we put seed in the ground. But I was telling producers to start planting anyway and by Friday we had soil temperatures hitting 60. I often say not to pay attention to the calendar and the last couple of weeks were a classic case of when the calendar and the thermometer collide. We were running out of days in April and I knew that once we had a couple of sunny days and more normal temperatures, the soil temperatures would jump. And they did. So sometimes we follow the weather, but keep an eye on the calendar! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Freeze Damage in Wheat

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Today's topic is freeze damage in wheat. Earlier this month there were some nippy temperatures out across the state which has caused a lot of concern. In short, I don't feel that locally we had any freeze damage. Now we will always wind up with a head here or there in low lying fields that shows the fairly typical misshapen heads we expect with freeze damage. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of April it got down into the mid 20s area wide and probably lower 20s in a few isolated locations. But as late as the wheat has been developing, that wasn't enough to cause significant damage anywhere. I know a few years ago, by the first Friday in May we had wheat in full boot with awns sticking out of the boot. We are several weeks later than that this year. The next couple of weeks, as we move into May, will be good with warming temperatures. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Hawks in Fields

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I had a call from a producer last week. He was working a field and he was surprised by the number of hawks that were following him and landing on the ground. These are a species known as Swainson's Hawk. They are a close relative to our Red-tailed Hawk. They winter in Argentina and then come back to the prairies in April. They eat lots of insects, but will also take small mammals and snakes but really prefer insects. They will roost on the ground in the evening often in large loose flocks during migration. I went out that afternoon and there were over a hundred birds on the field and in the air. These flocks are often found out on pastures just after they are burned looking for the remains of anything that may not have survived the fire. Some will stay in Kansas and nest and others will go clear into Canada! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Poison Hemlock Control

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We keep seeming to find more and more poison hemlock showing up in more and more places. To many people, poison hemlock looks like a giant carrot plant. While there is a plant called wild carrot, or Queen Anne's Lace that looks similar, we honestly have very little true wild carrot around here so just assume that it's hemlock. Poison hemlock is poisonous, deadly so if ingested by people or animals. It starts growing in the fall as an easily overlooked little rosette and then in the spring grows rapidly and sends up a seed stalk. It will be dead by early summer. 2,4-D is very effective on small plants especially in the fall as is triclopyr. Larger plants are best tackled with glyphosate. But the real key is to remember where it was and then get back out there in late October or early November and spray the new plants when they are small. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.