

Insects in corn and wheat

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I've been spending a lot of time in recent days looking at bugs in wheat and corn, primarily aphids. Specifically we have seen an explosion of English Grain aphids this spring. This is literally an unheard of situation and we are treading on new territory here as we don't really have any Kansas treatment threshold data. The good news is that in the wheat fields that I have been in we are seeing a lot of ladybugs and other beneficial insects that should start taking care of the problem. With that said, English grain aphids do develop a lot more honeydew when they feed than do most of our other aphids. This could cause a problem in wheat heads come harvest time. One field that I had looked at had a lot of honeydew building up, you could see heads glistening in the sunlight, but then a half inch rain a day later had pretty well washed the heads clean of the honeydew. So the biggest risk is not yield loss from the aphids feeding damage, but a mechanical issue with gummy/sticky heads at harvest time. 20 to 25 aphids per head is the estimated treatment threshold and so far we've only seen high counts of 15 to 16 per head. As the wheat starts maturing, the aphids are now moving into the corn fields. While the numbers may be concerning, we are currently not recommending treatment. The building numbers of ladybugs and other beneficials should be moving over into the corn with them plus smaller corn is going to be protected from seed insecticide. Keep an eye but don't panic, yet. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Effective Brush Control in Pastures, Part II

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Continuing on last week's theme of brush control in pastures, let's talk about herbicides. Everyone wants to just have to worry about using ONE herbicide. Unfortunately, different species respond differently to different herbicides. My all around preferred product, for the more common species like buckbrush, sumac and dogwood, is going to be triclopyr and preferably in combination with 2,4-D. You can buy a premix called Crossbow or mix your own using Remedy, or one of the many generic versions now available, plus 2,4-D. If you are mixing in a large sprayer for use with a hand gun use 1.5 gallons of Crossbow per 100 gallons or 3 quarts of 2,4-D and 1½ quarts of Remedy per 100 gallons. I know quite a few producers are using Grazon P+D with is picloram (Tordon) plus 2,4-D. This product does work well, but remember that picloram is very mobile in soil water and can run downhill where it can be taken up by the roots of desirable plants so just use with caution. Anything that contains picloram will be a restricted use product. For really tough stuff, you can mix Remedy with Grazon P+D. It gets pricey but it really works. A newer product out there is Surmount which is picloram and fluroxypyr. This has good activity on many weeds and brush and can also be used as a foliar spray on cedar. Then there's also Milestone which is great on locust trees and crownvetch. We have many products available, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Identify what you are trying to control and then pick up a copy of our Chemical Weed Control bulleting for more options. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Controlling Large weeds in Roundup Ready soybean fields

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. One of the basic tenants of weed control is that small weeds are easier to control than big weeds. It doesn't matter if you are pulling them by hand, hoeing them, using a cultivator or treating with herbicides, a small weed will always be easier to control than a big weed. Once Roundup, now glyphosate, came along, and especially the roundup ready technology, we all got a little bit lax on watching weed size because glyphosate worked so well. But as is often the case, great success brings on changes. Weeds that were easily controlled by glyphosate were decreased and weeds not so easily controlled flourished. So now we find that in our soybean fields we are dealing with far more marestalk, velvetleaf, sunflower, cocklebur and various amaranths, also known as pigweed or waterhemp. Granted, some of these were never well controlled by any herbicide in soybeans, but it has gotten worse, in some cases due to glyphosate resistant weed populations. In most cases, soybean producers need to be using tank mixes of glyphosate and other herbicides to make sure we're going into a weed free seedbed. Some of these tankmixes may include 2,4-D or dicamba which then mean advanced planning to get by the pre-planting wait period. Another technique simply involves using the full rates of glyphosate and other herbicides. We try to get by applying as little of a herbicide as possible and this often doesn't bode well for us. Bottom line, know what you are fighting. Bring the best products to the fight, develop a plan that involves pre and post planting options and then execute that plan! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.