

### Wheat Status Checkup

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Well, we've had some warm weather - that's a nice change. A lot of the snow has melted except for a few piles here and there. So what's the status of the wheat crop? I don't have a clue because really, it's still pretty dormant! I'm sure we'll see a little bit of cold weather damage even if we don't have anymore really cold weather this winter. By early January, the wheat crop was pretty well at maximum dormancy and we had several nice rounds of snow to provide a little cover during that coldest period of time. In fact at the Agronomy farm in north Manhattan, on those nights when the air temperature was hitting five and six below zero, the two inch soil temperature was a balmy 29 degrees! It's amazing what a little bit of snow can do for ya. In contrast, at the Scandia experiment field when it was also hitting 5 and 6 below and there was no snow cover, 2 inch soil depths were around 9 or 10 degrees. It doesn't take much snow to provide a lot of protection! I am a little concerned that with the warm weather we've been seeing of late that wheat is going to start to break dormancy. Wheat can break dormancy and then go back dormant several times during the winter. Unfortunately each time it goes through this cycle it just can't go quite as dormant thereby losing just a little bit of it's winter hardiness. But as long as it doesn't go from 70 to minus ten in 48 hours we should still be okay. But on the plus side, we just don't grow as much wheat as we used to! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Crunch Time on Ag Leases

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. With the deadline for termination of ag leases almost upon us I want to cover a few final questions that always come up. If you and your landlord and tenant agree on terms, you can sign a new lease at anytime or come to mutual agreement. If you are getting a new tenant for your land, you don't have to have them lined up by January 30<sup>th</sup>.

You can go clear up until spring crop planting time to make those agreements, but remember that in absence of a written lease stating otherwise, the new lease will still expire March 1<sup>st</sup> of next year. Landlords just have to remember that to properly terminate an oral lease notice must be in writing, 30 days prior to March 1<sup>st</sup> (i.e. January 30<sup>th</sup>) setting the termination date as March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Pasture leases are treated the same as crop leases. If you have an oral agreement then the tenant get's to have the pasture again this year unless you serve notice in the previously mentioned fashion. If yo have a written lease for the pasture, which I strongly recommend, then the dates in the lease dictate the terms and most pasture leases end in October or November, although if it is an oral lease, technically they can have the pasture 12 months. Which is why I strongly advocate a written lease for pastures. Again, if the two parties agree on things, an oral lease can be just fine, but if there is disagreement and it winds up in court, the courts are going to defer to the conditions of the Kansas Ag Lease laws and they won't really care what each party may or may not have said. Putting it in writing isn't due to lack of trust in anybody, it's just protecting both of you just in case! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Don't Forget About sorghum

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I grew up with grain sorghum, I worked five years on a grain sorghum breeding program in fact my master's degree is in grain sorghum breeding, so yes, I have a soft spot in my heart for milo! But grain sorghum is not a flashy crop. It never has been and it never will be. It has spent much of its time in Kansas crop history being the Rodney Dangerfield of crops - it just doesn't get any respect! I've heard more than one crop producer refer to it as a noxious weed. But producers need to remember that it can fill a role in many crop rotations. Last year was a classic case of where it yielded very well! If producers put the time and effort and management into grain sorghum that they did in beans and corn, they might be pleasantly surprised at the results. When used in a three or four crop rotation, you will find that you don't have near the weed issues that we used to have when it was wheat and sorghum in rotation. And we have some new herbicide resistant hybrids starting to show up on the horizon to make grass control easier - no, don't worry, glyphosate resistant sorghum is not in the works so you'll still be able to control shattercane with glyphosate. Sorghum can handle higher temperatures and drought stress probably better than any other crop we have so if global warming is happening, keep it in mind. If you are growing sorghum, let's get a good management plan in place that starts with earlier planting and lower planting rates. For those who do still grow sorghum, we have a new sorghum production bulletin, Kansas Sorghum management in 2014, pick up a copy! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK,

I'm Chuck Otte.