

Ag Radio programs for January 23 - 29, 2017

Ag Lease Meeting

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. First of all I want to say a big thank you to KJCK, Jerry Brecheisen and Mark Ediger for making it possible to get Ag Outlook back on the air. Please let them know if you appreciate what they have done. I've been saving up good program ideas for several months as we have some catching up to do! Agricultural leases. Virtually every farmer and rancher has them and they are an important part of modern day agriculture. With the current downturn in the ag economy, tenants and landlord are looking to adjust, shall we say, lease agreements. Yet many people don't really understand all the ramifications of the lease agreements that we have. One of the most important considerations, especially in oral leases, is proper termination if the landlord wants to change tenants. Notice must be given in writing, at least 30 days prior to March 1 and setting the termination date as March 1. That is the law! But that is also just the tip of the iceberg. I know it is short notice, but I'm holding an ag lease workshop tomorrow afternoon, Tuesday, January 24th, starting at 2:30 p.m. at the 4-H/ Sr. Citizens Building at the Geary County Fairgrounds on Spring Valley Road. There is no charge for the workshop and you do not have to preregister. If you are a tenant or a landowner, and you have any questions about ag lease law, crop shares or cash leases and how leases should be structured and what should be included in a lease, preferable a written lease, please show up tomorrow at 2:30. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Radon Action Month

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Radon is a naturally occurring gas. It is not a quick and silent killer like carbon monoxide. It is not toxic like that. It is odorless, tasteless, invisible to the naked eye. But it can kill you. It is radioactive and long term exposure to certain levels can greatly increase your risk of developing cancer, primarily lung cancer. By long term exposure we are talking 6 to 8 hours over a 15 to 30 year time span. Radon occurs as a natural breakdown product of rocks and other minerals in our soils. Much of the state of Kansas is considered a hot spot with about 1 out of 3 tests coming back at levels that could require mitigation. Fortunately there are many effective ways to lower radon levels in homes. January is Kansas Radon Action Month and I strongly encourage homeowners to check their homes. Radon levels are generally highest in the basements of homes. Radon slowly filters up into the basement from sump pump areas, cracks in foundations and floors, just all sorts of areas like that. If you or members of your family spend a lot of time in the basement of your house, and you've never checked for radon or it's been more than 6 or 8 years since you last checked, it'd be a good idea to test your home. Radon test kits are not expensive. We sell them at the Extension Office for five and a half dollars. You open the package, hang it up in the area of your house you want to test, take it down after the designated time and send it in for analysis. You may need to do nothing or you may need to retest. Regardless, for the sake of your health and everyone in the family, please check! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Why should you have a written lease

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I hate oral leases. It isn't because I don't trust anybody. It's because Kansas law, while recognizing oral leases as legal and binding, also takes away a lot of control and ability to set limits when you have an oral lease. With an oral lease the validity of it is based on everyone's memory. One thing that I've figured out of late is that I don't remember things like I used to. So with a written lease, you don't HAVE to remember. You go back and look at the lease and can see, yup, I did tell them they could have 30 pairs in the pasture. With a written lease I can designate when the cattle go into the pasture, when they come out, how many head you can have, who takes care of the fence, who treats noxious weeds and brush and who can fish the ponds or hunt the draws. While a landlord and tenant could agree to this in an oral lease, if a dispute occurs the legal system will go back to all those standards that are in place and say that a lease turns over control of the land to the tenant and the tenant can do what they want. Oral leases are annual leases that automatically renew every year unless proper termination notice is given. And the lease will run from March 1 to March 1. A written lease doesn't have to be a 27 page legal document full of language that no one understands. It can be a handwritten lease that both parties sign. It can be a one page typed document that lays out what's being rented, when the lease begins and ends, what the crops share will be or what the cash rent will cost as well as what the tenant can do or can not do. It's all there, in black and white for everyone to see! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Have you thought about growing oats?

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I had a producer in my office the other day wanting to know if he was crazy for considering planting oats. I assured him he was not but did ask him why he'd taken so long to start thinking about that. The era is fast approaching when producers, especially progressive producers will start looking at old crops that we'd quit growing or new crops that up until now you may never heard of. But if you are thinking of some changes, there's a few things you need to keep in mind. First and foremost, what are you going to do with it after harvest? If it's not wheat, corn, soybeans or milo, you probably won't take it to your local elevator and sell it. You need to have a market already figured out before seed, or plant, one is put in the ground. If you're thinking about growing something new, start doing your research a full season BEFORE you start growing it. Thinking now of planting a new crop for this year is likely going to lead to frustration. When you do decide to go forward with it, be serious about it. I know a lot of oats, for example, that get planted in a timely fashion, but then the producer holds off until they are sure they've got a stand to fertilize, which is often several weeks too late. So the crop comes off half baked, if you will, because the producer wasn't fully committed. You are disappointed with the crop because you managed it as if it might fail, rather than going all in and assuming the best. What would your corn crop look like if you didn't get most of the fertilizer down until tasseling? So, start preparing yourself for new crops in the next decade, but do your homework first! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Ag Technology of the future

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I spent the end of last week at the Kansas Agricultural Technologies conference. Leading experts and researchers with ag technologies like nutrient sensor applications, big data, unmanned aerial vehicles and autonomous tractors presented discussions of where technology was headed and what ripples it may make across the agricultural playing field. One of the discussions, and a comment one of the speakers made in passing really got me thinking. What's been the trend in recent years in ag? Bigger and bigger equipment. What problems does that generate? One that I see on a regular basis that is very concerning to me is compaction. Compaction is a problem of soil health that we don't really have an answer to. Why have we gone to bigger equipment? So one person can cover more acres in less time. So what happens when we get to the point that we can create affordable unmanned tractors. Then let's say we make the tractors and the equipment smaller. Instead of one very large tractor pulling a 24 row planter, maybe we have 4 smaller tractors each pulling a 6 row planter. The GPS technology loads up the field, the planting plan is entered, the producer gets the tractor to the field and starts it going. Smaller equipment, less compaction. You could be planting in four fields at once, or have four tractors planting in the same field. If you have a breakdown on your 24 row planter, you are planting zero acres. But, if one of your four planting units breaks down, you've got 18 rows of planters out there still going. All of a sudden, a lot of this technology seemed to make more sense! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.