

Wheat Seeding Delays

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Statewide wheat seeding has been lagging well behind long term average due to some rains, which so far I don't think most of us are complaining about. While I've seen a fair amount of wheat out of the ground and looking good, albeit a little bit on the pale side, I know that we're starting to lag behind normal locally as well. I'm not too concerned, yet, about late planting of wheat but if we get much past about the 25th of October, which often happens when planting wheat following beans, then there will be a need for some adjustments in your planting plans. Later planted wheat produces fewer tillers with smaller heads. To compensate we need to plant more seeds per acre and likely increase fertilization rate somewhat. Optimum planting date for our area is from now through about the 20th or 25th of October. Every week after that we need to increase planting rate 15 to 20 pounds per acre, depending on seed size - basically increase seeding rate 250,000 seeds per acre per week. But you should probably cap that out at 120 pounds of seed per acre. As the planting date moves later soils grow cooler and phosphorus becomes less available. Increase phosphorus fertilizer rates 20 to 30 pounds per acre, even if no phosphorus is called for by soil test. Consider going with a phosphorus only fertilizer in direct seed contact. And of course, a fungicidal seed treatment from here on out should be a no brainer. You may not be able to get back to 100% of the yield of wheat planted in the optimum time window, but you should be able to get close with these adjustments. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Removing Cattle from Native Pastures

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I know a lot of pasture owners can get sort of cranky if cattle are late getting off of pastures. Most likely they are afraid that the pasture will be damaged by leaving cattle on too long. I can't help but chuckling at this because damage to pastures doesn't occur with late removal in October or even November. Damage to pastures from overgrazing occurs in August and September. Even in years of extended warmth, like this year, native grasses are pretty well going dormant by the first half of October. The grass plants are drying down and changing color. As the green leaves the plant so does the photosynthesis capability that produces food. The plant is busy storing carbohydrates during August and September. That is why intensive early stocking doesn't hurt grass stands. The cattle are pulled off in mid July and the plants have a couple of months to recover. The same thing goes for hay meadows. We mow them in late July through early August, and the grass plants have 6 to 8 weeks to regrow and replace lost root reserves. Burning pastures in late August to control sericea works because the grass immediately regrows and since it is new growth it goes dormant later giving it time to recover. If pastures are going to be hurt by grazing, it's going to occur long before October. By now, you can leave the cattle in there without damage as all they are eating is basically dead grass. It may not leave much fuel to burn next year, but it's not hurting the food reserves at all. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Culling Cows

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Twig Marston used to be an Extension Beef Cow specialist and he was a good one. Then he went to the dark side - he moved to Nebraska and became an Extension Administrator. Anyway, he always talked about using the Four O's rule when it came to culling cows. The Four-O Rule was simply an easy way to remember the highest priority for deciding which cows to cull. The four O's were: Open, Old, Ornery and Oddball.

When you get right down to it, that's a pretty good set of priorities. Now, as I was talking about a few weeks ago, you may not want to take these gals to the sale barn immediately, but select the ones to cull and then move them into a separate area. A cow that's open is a free loader. She may have been your best cow the past three years, but with per cow annual cash costs of over \$700, you can't afford to keep pets that big around! Old goes without saying - sometimes old and open correspond but other times you just have to decide if that cow that's had 15 calves still has the legs and feet and teeth and everything else to get to number 16. I'm not going to tell you how to do that one - you're on your own. Ornery is my personal favorite. And I guess we need to figure out where to draw the line between being a good protective mother and just being, well ornery or maybe even dangerous. If the same cow has chased you back to the truck for three straight years, I think it's time for her to see the sale ring. We aren't getting younger and we don't move as fast as we used to, so we don't need that risk. Oddball is a good way to justify that one cow that just doesn't seem to fit or that you just get a funny feeling about. So choose your O's and get busy culling! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Treating Musk Thistle

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 things that has changed over the past 30 years has been musk thistle. It used to be an annual fight to get this rascal under control. Fall treatments with Tordon 22K, spring treatments with anything we could get our hands on. Huge patches that were totally out of control. Now days I will see an occasional musk thistle, maybe two or three in close proximity. But to see a stand of musk thistle that you can't even walk through requires a trip to Missouri to see. I think the credit for this can go two ways. First of all, a great many of you have spent a lot of time over the years spraying, digging and chopping musk thistle. And that does make a difference. But we've also had some help in the form of two insects that were released in the 1980's for biological control. The rosette weevil and the head weevil have both helped a lot in getting musk thistle numbers knocked down. But that doesn't mean we can slack off yet! Musk thistle seeds have that nice little downy sail or parachute, take your pick, and they can fly a long ways. With the rains we had earlier this month any musk thistle seed that's out there has likely germinated and is growing good right now. Keep a quart trigger sprayer of weed killer in your truck or four wheeler. As you are out and about and see a musk thistle rosette, just stop and give it a shot of weed killer. If you find an area with quite a few rosettes, make a note, stick a flag in the ground, do something so you can get back there later when you have more than a quart sprayer of herbicide. We can keep this pest down, but we have to stay vigilant at all times! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Soybean Cyst Nematode Sampling

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. As if you need one more thing to think about or to put on your list, add sampling for soybean cyst nematode or SCN. We are sort of in the gray area here for SCN. Areas to the northeast and southeast have long been fighting SCN. It was less than ten years ago that we got our first positive test back for Geary County. As far as we know, we aren't building up big damaging populations, yet. But it's one of those things that we need to keep an eye on, especially given the big buildup in soybean acres that we've seen in recent years. If you have a field that has tested positive just go out and walk a Z or W pattern through the field and collect 18 or so samples from 6 to 8 inches down. You can use a soil probe or a sharp shooter to do this. Mix the soil up well and pull out a one pint sample for SCN testing. And while you've got that dirt, pull out another one pint sample to run through the soils lab! If you haven't ever tested the field or you've had a negative test then target what we'll call potential hot spots or high risk areas. Those areas would include field entryways, consistently low yielding areas - use your yield maps to help demarcate those spots, any basic low spot especially if there's an area that floods regularly or has flooded recently. Check areas along fence lines or any known high pH areas. Basically many of these areas are spots where SCN contaminated soil could have been deposited on the field. Soil can come in on equipment, or with flood waters. They can even blow in from neighboring fields. Anyway, once you get your samples, bring them in to the office and we'll get them over to the college for testing. There's a slight charge for the test, but it's worth it to know! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.