

Ag Radio programs for October 30 - November 5, 2017

### Alfalfa Herbicides

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. We have a lot of winter annual weeds, like cheat and the various mustards, that can cause issues each spring in our alfalfa. The problem is that producers don't think to do anything until spring when the weeds are actively growing and so is the alfalfa. If you are one of the few producers who have roundup ready alfalfa then it's not a problem, but most of the alfalfa is still conventional alfalfa so that option is out, sort of. We actually have several good herbicides to control many of those common weed problems that we have in alfalfa but we need to apply them in the dormant season. Most of these products are very specific that you have to wait until the alfalfa is dormant in the fall and before new growth starts in the spring. After that chilly end to last week I suspect the alfalfa is going to be pretty well dormant pretty soon, but you need to start making plans for treatment in mid November to mid December. Can you apply these products after the first of the year? Yes, but not while the ground is frozen. What I've seen happen far too often is that the best of intentions keep getting pushed to a back burner and then we've got new spring growth. For the various annual bromes we have several good choices. Metribuzin may be the cheapest but we also have Sinbar and several Velpar formulations. Velpar may not be familiar to many of you but it is a good product. Glyphosate can be used on truly dormant standard alfalfa for control of grassy weeds, just make sure it's dormant. Metribuzin, Sinbar and Velpar are also excellent on many of the winter annual broadleaf weeds. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Marestail Control in Soybeans

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Marestail is one of those weeds that was never really controlled by glyphosate. In fact, once it starts to send up a flower stalk in the spring, or bolting, it is hard to control with anything. Period! Marestail is also somewhat unusual in that it can germinate in the fall and behave like a typical winter annual or go ahead and germinate in the spring and act like a summer annual. Regardless, the best control of marestail is going to occur when the plant is still in a rosette stage. You don't want it even to bolt more than four inches - just get it controlled before it even starts to bolt! So the best control is going to start with a fall treatment - basically anytime from now on through late November. There are a number of herbicides that can do a good job including 2,4-D, dicamba, Sharpen, Canopy EX, Autumn Super, or Valor XT. If you have grasses and other broadleaf weeds, go ahead and add glyphosate to give a broader spectrum of control. These treatments can actually be made clear into early December as long as we have mild conditions - generally considered to be 50 degrees or above for a couple hours after application, and sunny conditions. A metribuzin herbicide can be added to help control marestail through the rest of fall, winter and very early spring. However, none of these residual herbicides are going to get you clear through spring to planting so you'll need a plan in place for next spring. IF you have marestail and don't get it controlled this fall, make plans to apply a spring treatment, similar to what we described for now, in March to very early April. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Start working on lease revisions now

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Even though harvest is still ongoing for many producers and we're still trying to get wheat seeded, it's time for landlords and tenants to start talking about leases for the coming year. Far too many times these discussions don't happen or get put off until far too late in the season. I want these discussions to occur before Christmas for several reasons. If there needs to be restructuring of the lease it gives the parties more time to negotiate and explore options. If an oral lease, or a written lease without specific dates, is going to be terminated, it HAS to be done at least 30 days prior to March 1 IF you want it to be legal in the eyes of Kansas Statutes. I'm not going to get into the details of lease termination yet - we'll cover that in future programs. But what I do want you to be discussing are rental rates if you have cash rent and shares if you have a crop share lease. If your crop share lease hasn't changed in the past 20 years, you really need to talk about it. You need to talk about ALL of it. Are all the yield improving inputs being shared. Landlords and tenants really need to put everything on the table and talk about the lease. In corn and soybean production seed prices, and in the past couple of years herbicide prices, have just gotten crazy. Seed treatments are pretty well accepted as yield increasing, or at least a yield protecting input and really need to be shared. Fertilizer used to be a big part of the lease expense, now seed and herbicide can dwarf fertilizer. Are inputs being shared in the same proportion as the crop is being split. The 60-40 or 1/3-2/3 split of 20 years ago isn't really cutting it today - there needs to be a lot of talk about the entire lease so we can keep it equitable. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Hemlock Control

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I am firmly convinced that we are experiencing climate change and one of the reasons for that conviction is the changing plant populations that we have seen in our area over the past few decades. One of those plants that is showing up more and more is poison hemlock. This is the plant that at this time of year looks like it has a carrot top. It can grow to a couple of feet in height in the fall. Then it overwinters and starts growing early in the spring. It will grow up to ten feet high and is covered with white flowers in the late spring and has a very strong, not at all pleasant, at least to me, musky odor. After blooming it produces seed and dies. As it's name implies it is poisonous if ingested - highly poisonous if ingested. Poison Hemlock seems to be much more common in old livestock pens and corrals, areas that have been disturbed, areas of occasional flooding near streams, but it is increasingly just popping up in all sorts of areas. Unfortunately, the time when it is most obvious, late spring, is also the time when it is nearly impossible to control. The best time to control poison hemlock is in the fall, like right now. Even now, in that ideal time for control, it isn't necessarily easily controlled. If you have a solid stand of it then glyphosate isn't too bad of an option. But if you have grasses or other desirable plants around I would suggest using Grazon P+D which is picloram and 2,4-D, or one of the metsulfuron products like Chaparral, Escort XP or Cimarron Plus. You can also use dicamba plus 2,4-D but make sure you use a thorough soaking spray. If you wait until spring, make sure you use one of the picloram or metsulfuron based herbicides. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Soybean plant lodging

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 text from a farmer friend from another county last week. He was harvesting soybeans and was just seeing a lot of soybean plants that were lodged. At first he was blaming deer on it but the pattern of lodging was not consistent with deer paths through fields. A few questions later I had narrowed it down to an insect issue, the *Dectes* soybean stem borer. This is an insect that many people will never see and even if they did see it, they wouldn't think twice about it as it's just another smallish gray beetle with long antennae. Stem borers overwinter in soybean stubble as a larvae. They pupate in the spring and the adults emerge around the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. The adults mate and the female deposits eggs on the soybean stems right where the leaves attach to the stem. The small larvae hatch and bore into the stem where they will start feeding their way down the stem. Like corn earworms they are cannibalistic so if they run into another stem borer larvae, only one will survive! Once they get to the bottom of the stem, late in the growing season, they girdle around the stem on the inside. This activity won't even be noticed as the stem stays alive as they don't eat the outer layers of the stem where the transport vessels are. But as we move into harvest, and especially if we have wind like we saw last week, these weakened stems will blow over resulting in a real mess at harvest time. We are seeing more and more stem borer activity each year, especially with more and more acres of beans being grown. Unfortunately this is one pest where we have no preventative or rescue treatment available. If you have patches lodged, it's more likely a disease is present and we need to talk! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.