

### Managing High Nitrate Feeds

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, and I'm going to keep repeating this, a meeting is set for Wednesday evening, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. at the 4-H/Sr. Citizens Center on managing high nitrate feed stuffs for cattle. K-State Extension Cattle Nutrition Specialist Dale Blasi and I will discuss high nitrate feeds, what we've seen from testing this year and how you can manage it with your cattle herds. Feed sources with high levels of nitrates aren't necessarily unusable, they just have to be managed very carefully. Pregnant animals are going to be the most sensitive to elevated nitrate levels so extra caution needs to be exercised in meeting their forage needs. Dilution with lower nitrate feeds is how we normally utilize the higher sources but that often requires grinding and mixing of roughage resources. With a little bit of planning, time and care, we can get cattle adapted to higher nitrate levels. Just how high of nitrate levels they can handle I will leave to Dale to discuss on the 5<sup>th</sup>. But in the meantime, I would be checking my various forage sources especially corn, sorghums and sudan. I wouldn't expect native hay to have an issue as the normal nitrogen levels in native prairies is quite low. Bromegrass could be an issue but as of yet no one has brought me in a sample that was high. Be very leery of weedy areas though as several common weeds, like pigweed and lambsquarter are well known to accumulate extremely high nitrate levels and we have seen that already this year. Management is important, but we have to know! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Controlling Weeds in Stubble or Fallow Fields

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Between wheat fields that weren't double cropped and corn fields that were harvested for forage we've got a few bare or nearly bare acres out there. Or we had. With recent rains I've noticed a fair amount of green coming up in those fields. What you do with those fields over the next couple of months should dictate what you do with them. One of the things to keep in mind, and I mentioned this earlier this summer, is that we may have herbicide carryover in fields, especially if there were normal amounts of longer acting soil residual herbicides like atrazine and some of the sulfonylurea products. If, after these rains you don't see much coming up in those fields, it either means you don't have much of a seed bank, OR, you still have active herbicide out there. If you do have a lot of weeds coming along don't let them get too big. With some of the herbicide resistance issues we are facing we can no longer let any weed get really big and expect control. We can't rely on just one herbicide with one mode of action. We really need to be using herbicide combinations with 2 or 3 modes of action, or go back to bare ground tillage. Sort of a brutal choice there. If you are going into a field with wheat this fall then focus on glyphosate plus 2,4-D or dicamba. Watch the recropping intervals however once we get into September. We also have some far less familiar products that can be used to provide residual control ahead of wheat planting. Sharpen is probably the most well known. Read labels first though! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Old World Bluestem Control

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I went inspecting some highway roadsides last week with a producer who was thinking about getting a permit for hay harvest on the roadside. As we drove the stretch of road we just kept coming across patch after patch of old world bluestem. The final decision was that he didn't want to mess with it and risk getting that old world bluestem started in his pastures. But I was honestly quite surprised by the amount of old world bluestem that was heading out. It looks like we've gotten just enough rain in the past few weeks to get it growing good which is a good indicator that now would also be a good time to initiate some control. Old world bluestem, sometimes called Caucasian bluestem, other times yellow bluestem because this time of year the leaves have a very pale green to yellow look, is a non-native invasive grass species that is a very low quality forage. It tends to thrive and spread readily in dry climates or in droughts. The best selective control we have for old world bluestem is Arsenal with the active ingredient Imazapyr. At heavier rates Arsenal is non-selective and sometimes used as a ground sterilant. But we find that at 1/4 to 1/2 pound per acre it is pretty effective on old world bluestem while native grasses and forbs will survive. They will be stunted but normally come out of it the next year. Going in this time of year I'd go with the half pound rate. You can also treat in late spring and early summer. If you take that approach, I'd use the 1/4# rate applied twice, 8 weeks apart. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Late Summer Cover Crops

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 acres that were planted to corn that have now been whole plant harvested for forage due to the drought. What are your plans for those acres? If you aren't going back in with wheat this fall, have you thought about planting a cover crop on them? There's a lot we're still learning about cover crops but one thing that we know for certain is that cover crops will help to immobilize nutrients, like nitrogen, and keep them from leaching out the bottom of the soil rooting profile especially if it starts raining and we start to build up some soil moisture levels. Even if you aren't going to graze the cover crops this fall or winter, just the nutrient and soil stabilizing capability can be a big benefit. There are many different cover crop blends that you can plant, but you could go in with something like triticale or even oats. While some producers use cereal rye, that always makes me nervous if we don't get it terminated in a timely manner. You could use wheat but that makes me nervous due to insect and disease potential issues. Bottom line is that we have been getting some rain, the temperatures have moderated and I think we could get a cover crop planted and up in pretty short order. If you want to graze it then there are other considerations of what to plant. But the sooner you get that cover crop planted the sooner it will be up and going helping to grab on to residual nitrogen and keeping it in place. And with the need for cattle forage right now, it could be some cheap keeping for this fall! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

## Start Working on Wheat Fertility Plans Now

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Wheat planting season will be on us before we know it so that means we need to be getting all the preparatory work done now. You've probably already gotten your seed ordered but where are you on your fertility plans? Well below normal rainfall over the past 12 months greatly increases the likelihood of there being residual nitrogen in many fields, especially if you are going to plant wheat into a corn field that was harvested for forage. There are literally years worth of studies that show a very high correlation between soil test nitrate levels and wheat yield the following year. Low soil nitrate level fields respond extremely well to applied fertilizer and fields with 80 to 100 pounds soil nitrate level were unlikely to respond to additional applied fertilizer. Essentially, every pound of nitrogen in the soil is a pound of nitrate fertilizer you do not need to apply. But you just can't assume that there is residual nitrogen out there. To really know what's out there you need to do a 24 inch soil profile nitrate test or at least an 18 inch profile. I spend one whole summer in college drilling holes in corn fields down to 48 inches so I know how much fun those profile tests aren't. But if you think about the potential savings in fertilizer that you may not have to apply, that thirty or so minutes you spend getting that sample is worth it. Just a reminder that we now need two different samples if you are doing a profile test. One from the top 3 to 6 inches and one of the whole 24 inches. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.