

### Net Farm Income is Down

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I was reading an ag newsletter last week and saw a shocking graphic. In comparing average state wide net farm income for 2016 to 2017 against the average for 2011-2013, net farm income was down in most all states. Okay, that's not shocking but what was a bit concerning was how much. All north central states were off over 50% with the exception of Missouri and Wisconsin which were only down 45 and 49%. Given the drought that hit the area last year I don't expect 2018 to be much better. Yes, Kansas farmers average net farm income was down 66% between the two periods. What it shows is that looking for wise management decisions that will save dollars, or at least not waste dollars, will be very important in 2019. 2018 is behind us and we can't change it. But let's move ahead making good decisions! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Dicamba Trainings

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We are getting more clarity on the subject of the required dicamba trainings that applicators have to take if they want to spray soybeans postemerge with dicamba. The Kansas Department of Agriculture, who is responsible for this decision, has determined that training of potential applicators is to be done by the registrants meaning the companies that sell the three special dicamba products.

Furthermore, training will NOT be done by K-State Research and Extension staff. Online training later in the year should also be an option. While we don't have any training sessions scheduled for Geary County yet, there are three in the region that I'm aware of. There will be one in Abilene on January 31<sup>st</sup>, one in Clay Center on February 6<sup>th</sup> and one in Salina on February 7<sup>th</sup>. For more information on these, give me a call! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Cow Leasing

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. One topic that comes up a couple times a year is leasing a cow herd. The variations are many but usually the cow owner is supplying the cows and all supplies and the tenant is supplying the labor. One thing that often complicates the issue is if the tenant is supplying feed or pasture. This can make things more confusing. One of our ag economists plugged this basic scenario into the cow lease spreadsheet and essentially came up with a figure that the tenant would get 10 to 15% of the cow herd depending on if the cows were home raised or purchased. Naturally if the tenant is supplying some of the feed that can change things. Also to be taken into consideration is herd size as this impacts labor time per cow. The cow lease spreadsheet is available to the public and is fairly easy to work with if you use Excel. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

May need to adjust wheat topdress rates

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. As we headed into fall wheat planting it was pretty well accepted that there was a fair amount of carryover nitrogen in many fields due to normal cropping applications followed by drought. We even had soil tests done in early August that showed large amounts of residual nitrogen. But as the summer, fall and winter moved on and soil has remained wet we are now finding soil test results coming back without the amount of nitrogen that we thought we might have. There's still above average residual nitrogen but the continued wet weather has caused some N to leach out the bottom of the profile or other forms of nitrogen loss, including denitrification before the soil cooled down, have happened. You may want to soil test in February, even if you did last fall, before applying your topdress to see if you need to adjust rates. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Cold Weather Cattle Management

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We've had some rounds of wintery weather and the cattleman's worst case scenario of bouncing temperatures have been the rule. As I talk to many livestock specialists that one thing that all of them talk about is the importance of cattle having a dry spot to lay down. For cowherds it may be easier than for feedlot cattle, but having a dry space close to feed supplies is a universal key to helping cattle survive this weather. There's nothing we can do about the yo-yo weather and the health issues that it causes. But when the temperatures do nose dive we want to make sure that cattle, especially those calving or soon to be calving cows have a little extra energy. A lot of that crop residue we're feeding right now was corn that had no grain in it. Energy values are low so a few pounds of grain or cubes a day can certainly help! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.