Ag Radio Programs for May 25 -31, 2020

Timely Brome Harvest

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. As I was about the county last week I saw a lot of bromegrass starting to head out. Which means that along with everything else happening right now you need to be thinking about getting your brome swathed and baled. So then you're looking at trying to get soybeans planted, if you've got alfalfa then it's needed to be swathed soon and where does that put bromegrass on the priority list. It comes down to how critical is it in your livestock operation and what's more important, protein or tons? Right now, at early heading protein on brome hay can be 10 to 12% or even higher. By the time it is fully headed it' going to be down to 6 to 8% and by the time seed is maturing you are looking at 5 to 6% crude protein. Just be aware that if your brome has mature seeds on it when you cut, you'd better get the protein tested as it will be low! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Sorghum Planting Dates

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I have long felt that most producers wait too long to plant their grain sorghum and they leave yield on the table. Long term planting date studies may agree with me at least to some extent. Long time planting date studies looking at yields from planting dates stretching from late April to early July indicate that planting in early June, basically the first through the tenth, has the highest average yield and least amount of deviation from that average. Planting anytime in May or even mid June CAN yield as well, but there was a lot more variability from year to year. However, once you get past about June 20th you start losing yield in a hurry. If sorghum is still a critical cog in your crop production plans I'd be getting geared up and get it in the ground just as soon as weather and soil conditions allow. Just make sure you get the seed deep enough! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Soil Testing Preplant for Alfalfa

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I was visiting with a producer on a phone call recently who mentioned alfalfa planting. Once we decided it was too late for this spring, so a late summer planting, I mentioned that this gave us plenty of time to pull a soil sample for analysis and for a moment the dead air on the phone line made we wonder if the cell call had been dropped. The producer responded with "Oh my gosh I hadn't even thought about that!" Plans are now being made to get a soil sample collected in the next month or two. Soil pH isn't going to change that fast. If you are thinking of planting alfalfa in August or September, you know where it's going to go. Get out there now and get a soil sample pulled. In all my years of doing this, every single case where a good stand good established and then sat there, it was low soil pH. Test and lime if needed. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Check Your Wheat for Smut

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Right after leaf rust in wheat, one of the diseases that we've known about for a long time is smut. Smut or bunt diseases infect plants at the moment that the seed germinates. But you don't know that plant has been infected until the head turns black with smut spores when the seed should be maturing. Fortunately, seed treatments at planting are very effective in preventing smut. We've known that literally for several centuries. If you have a seed wheat field you need to be walking through it and looking for smut. If you planted treated seed you shouldn't see any, but if you start to see any at all, then you need to make sure that when that seed is saved you first have it commercially cleaned and then commercially treated. While drill box seed treatments are still available, commercially treated seed is more effective! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Pigweeds

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It doesn't matter whether it's Palmer amaranth, tall waterhemp, smooth pigweed or any of the other myriad amaranth species, all of these pigweeds have some interesting characteristics that make it imperative to be aggressive when trying to deal with them in your crop fields. Pigweeds have separate male and female plants. Plants of most species can get huge, over 6 feet in irrigated fertilized fields. The female depends on wind blown pollen to fertilize the flowers. Early emerging plants that are not controlled can be very prolific producing over one half million seeds. Even a late emerging plant can produce 80,000 seeds. They can hybridize with each other as well. It is important that you go aggressively after these rascals with burn down herbicides and then multimode of action pre-emerge treatments. Don't let them get started! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.