

### Alfalfa Weevils

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I love this time of year! I get to be out in fields looking for insects, looking for diseases, or just looking to be looking.

Alfalfa fields got hit a lot harder by those freezes than the wheat fields did. I saw some alfalfa plant stems that got knocked back to the crown. They are sending up secondary tillers. I saw fields that were treated way early in April and now they aren't even close to being ready to harvest and they have weevil back in them. If all the weevil larvae were big I wouldn't worry about it. But I was in fields last week that had big weevil and little weevil and a lot of them.

Those fields are going to need to be sprayed. Bottom line, if your alfalfa was sprayed early in April, you'd better be back out there checking. If your field was sprayed later in April, you still need to be out there looking for weevil larvae! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Are Narrow Row Spacings Better?

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. One of the questions that keeps coming back up in soybean production is 30 inch rows versus 15 inch rows. Is one better than the other? There have been a lot of studies and I'm convinced that half the time the studies are testing the management ability of the operator. Anyway, in K-State tests in yield environments where potential yield was 45 to 50 bushels per acre or more, 15 inch rows showed an advantage. Yield potential below that 45 to 50 bushels seemed to favor 30 inch rows. BUT, the differences in yield were often very low, many times not even significant. Narrow rows will give you canopy faster and help with weed control. The important thing to remember is to use the same population. Plants will be closer in wide rows. The other thing to remember is how drills and planters differ in stand establishment rates. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Pasture Stocking Rates

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Pasture stocking rates seem to be veiled in mystery to many producers. In some cases producers have been stocking pastures at the same rate for 50 years but can't figure out why pastures are losing condition. The carrying capacity of pastures haven't really changed over the years. What has changed has been the size of our beef animal we're putting out there. Putting it in the perspective of one experienced cattleman, his advice was to figure about 175 to 200 pounds of beef animal per acre for a full season. 50 years ago we were putting a 1000 pound cow out there with a calf that would weigh about 450 at weaning. Now we've got 12 to 1400 pound cows and 550 pound calves. We need to allow more acres of grass, not pasture, but grass, for those. I feel that a modern cow and calf need 8 to 9 acres of grass per pair for the season. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Planning for Alfalfa Planting

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I see it every year. A new stand of alfalfa planted in the fall, came up and was looking good but the following spring it's just sitting there doing nothing. Nearly every time that I have seen this I've pulled a soil test and find out that we have low soil pH and often low phosphorus levels too. We can fix the phosphorus levels but soil pH really has to be fixed preplant. Alfalfa seed is expensive. Soil tests are cheap and lime, at least around here, isn't too expensive either. A good stand of alfalfa can last 4 to 6 years. So here's what I'm willing to do for you. IF you are going to plant alfalfa this August or September, get in touch with me and tell me where the field is. I will come out and get the soil test and send you the results, my recommendation and the less than \$15 bill. Then we can lime if needed and get that alfalfa started right! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Wheat Update

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. With that rain a couple of weeks ago and some of the temperatures that we've had wheat is moving real fast. Late fertilized fields are real evident now due to the very short height as the plants move into boot and heading. We appear to have dodged the worst of the freeze damage and the question producers are asking now is whether to treat with a fungicide. Early this week stripe rust was into south central Kansas but few reports of leaf rust. Warmer temperatures will certainly switch the growing condition to be preferable to leaf rust. A fungicide application applied after flag leaf emergence will generally increase yield 10%. More on susceptible cultivars in favorable weather, less on resistant varieties in unfavorable disease weather. You need to monitor disease reports and then decide if a 10% yield bump will pay for the applications. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.