

Shriveled Kernels

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Several wheat producers have been talking about shriveled wheat kernels in this harvest. Shriveled kernels are not normally directly due to frost or freeze damage. With freeze injury the seed simply doesn't set. Shriveled kernels are the result of the plant dying before a kernel that was set has a chance to completely develop. This could be in a late developing tiller. It could be from plants dying out due to flooding in saturated soils or plants that died prematurely from take all disease. Any kernel that wasn't pretty well formed and filled by the first week of June was probably shut down by high temperatures in the first half of June and didn't finish filling which results in a shrunken kernel. Increased fan speeds will blow some of these out the combine, BUT keep in mind that these then become a source of volunteer wheat! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Heat and Herbicides

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. It's summer and it's been hot. Even if we get decent rains and have good soil moisture, weeds are going to act differently to herbicides depending on the temperature. When it's hot and dry to the point that weeds are not growing and are wilting, herbicide control will be very poor. Most herbicides are going to work best on weeds that are actively growing. Even when there is good soil moisture it is best to avoid spraying in the heat of the day. For starters, herbicides like 2,4-D and dicamba will volatilize with warmer temperatures and that can lead to non-target damage. It is best, in most situations to spray first thing in the morning. We normally have cooler temperatures and plants are carrying on photosynthesis and other internal activities which will facilitate optimal movement of the herbicide with better control. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Plant Tissue Analysis

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Soil testing tells us a lot about potential nutrient deficiencies but plant tissue testing can add some valuable additional information especially with corn and soybeans. It's a little early to do tissue testing in soybeans but we are coming up on a critical time for tissue testing in corn. When corn is getting close to tasseling we can take the first leaf below the uppermost developing ear at green silk. Randomly gathering 25 leaves can give us a good feel for overall nutrient status of the plant. Or, taking samples from problem areas and normal looking areas can allow us to compare and try to pinpoint nutrient issues. In some cases we can correct mid-season but other times we have to wait for the next crop. Plant tissue testing especially in conjunction with good soil testing can give us a very good picture of what we need to do! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Southern Corn Rust

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. While common rust in corn is very common and not really of much concern, Southern Corn Rust is a concern and really likes hot days, warm nights and high humidity. It hasn't been found in any Kansas fields as of late last week. It has been found in Texas and Louisiana and southerly winds could get those spores here in a hurry. The last two years the first positive fields were found on July 11 and July 15. It's best to start scouting before it gets here so you have a good idea of when it gets here. Then while we are waiting for the spores to arrive, check the southern corn rust rating of your hybrids. Susceptible varieties will benefit most from spraying. Timing of sprays will be crucial and after about early dent treatments aren't likely to do much good. And fungicides applied at tasseling or silking for gray leaf spot will help with rust! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Keep an Eye on Pastures

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Mid July is an important time to perform a pasture evaluation. Depending on rainfall and temperatures we can see abundant grass or thinning grass. If grass resources are getting thin in mid July then reducing stocking rate may be crucial. The critical time for the grass is August and September. That's when the grass plants are starting to build up root reserves for next spring. If the grass is just getting reduced to nothing in those months then we are headed towards problems with increasing weeds. Double stocking works because the grass is grazed heavy up through mid July and then is allowed to rest the remainder of the season. This is also why we encourage getting native hay cut by early August so the grass can rest and recover for the rest of the summer. But start with a pasture evaluation in the next two weeks! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.