

Next Two Weeks are Crucial

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. The wheat crop has been moving fast and we've actually had some pretty good wheat growing weather. Yes, it's seemed a bit cool, but every day we have with highs below 80 degrees in May and early June are truly ideal for winter wheat. But we are into flowering and we've had some good stripe rust infection opportunities and lots of stripe rust showing up. If you have good yielding potential fields, better than 50 bu/ac, and you haven't sprayed for rust yet, you probably need to get it done before it's too late. We need to protect that flag leaf so we can maximize food for head fill. If you have wheat on corn stubble, there's an added incentive to also treat to control scab. Scab is less of an issue on soybean stubble or wheat on wheat. Rust is flying around out there everywhere and leaf rust will likely show up soon so treat! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Crazy Weather

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We've had some crazy weather the past 6 weeks and we've dodged some real bullets. The tail end of corn planting was a struggle and now we're heading into soybean planting. With more rain. Don't panic about that yet though as we have a pretty good broad window for full season beans. Soil temperatures have been running a bit low - no surprise with the cloudy cool rains that we've been having. What this points out to me is how important it's going to be to have fungicide treated soybean seed and getting some starter phosphorus down even if you seem to have good P levels in your soil. The soybean crop could have enough stress this year with weather, we need to get it off to a good start. This weather may also be making it a challenge to get alfalfa swathed and baled. All we can do is hope for a few day window to get it done! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Soybean Seed Inoculation

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We sometimes have been planting soybeans in fields so long that we don't even worry about whether the seed is inoculated. Have you ever seen a soybean field with poor nodulation. It's a sickly light green and it just looks, well, nitrogen deficient. Because it is! Soybeans need a lot of nitrogen. A 60 bushel soybean crop is going to need 300 pounds of nitrogen. 300 hundred pounds. There may be plenty of little rhizobium bacteria in the soil, but why risk it. One hot dry year out of soybeans can cook a lot of those rascals and the lower the levels in the spring the longer it takes to build back up. Why risk it? Soybean inoculant is cheap, very cheap in a relative way. If you didn't buy seed that was pre-inoculated, use a seedbox treatment. It's not as good as the seed applied inoculant but it's better than nothing. There's no need to risk it! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Identify that Brush

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. In a few weeks we'll be in peak brush spraying time, at least for those who want to be one and done with it. But do you really know if you are spraying at the best time to control what you have? For example, buckbrush, we are really rolling right past the best time to spray it. But sumac is best sprayed the last half of June. For dogwood, the first half of June may be just about the right time. Those three probably amount to most of the challenging species with the exception of hedge and honeylocust trees. So we spray in early to mid June knowing it's a bit late for buckbrush, which isn't too hard to control, maybe too early really for sumac, which also isn't too hard to control, but right on time for dogwood which is the hardest. If you predominantly have just one species, maybe we need to identify it and treat accordingly! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Do You Bale or Buy?

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Next week I'll be talking a lot about the Farm Management Production Cost summaries that I just got my hands on but as a prelude to that I'm going to ask the eternal question of do you bale your own hay or buy it from someone else. There is a certain convenience to having your own hay because then you know what you've got and you don't have to track it down and hope you can find it. BUT, is it an economically wise decision - as in have you ever really looked at the costs? Looking at the dryland alfalfa and brome production from about three dozen farms in north central Kansas from 2020 we find that total expense, including labor and machinery for brome hay was \$125 per ton and for alfalfa it was \$150 per ton. Last time I checked Hay Market report you could buy big rounds of brome for about \$90. Yeah. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.