

### Nitrates in Sorghum

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. As we move into the latter half of September producers often are getting ready to harvest forages such as sudangrass, forage sorghum or millet for hay or silage. Two things come to mind, or should come to mind with these forages, namely nitrate toxicity and prussic acid. Prussic acid won't be a problem in millet but can be in any of the sorghums including sudangrass. The good news is that mechanically harvesting for hay or silage usually takes care of these problems especially in plants with normal growth. I have taken in several samples of various sorghums in the past couple of weeks for nitrate testing and all of them have come back very low, as in less than 500 ppm, which is well below the concern level of 3,000 ppm. Early season growth took care of the nitrate issues but I'd still not harvest for a few days after a big rain! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Prussic Acid in Sorghum Regrowth

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Yesterday I talked about nitrate issues being low this year but prussic acid is another story. Prussic acid for the most part, is only in plants in the sorghum family - not millet or corn. It tends to be highest in young growth, which is often sought out by cattle and therefore why it's an issue. Small plants or drought stunted plants will be highest and prussic acid can kill fast, as in minutes. Producers often have time to treat nitrate poisoning, prussic acid usually not! The biggest issue I see is when we harvest milo, or there is a light frost that kills the top growth but not the roots and then the plants start sending up new shoots. The grain is gone so we turn cattle out and they go right to those new green shoots. A good hard freeze and about five days of time fixes this problem so just be careful when grazing milo stalks! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Stink Bugs in Soybeans

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I've been receiving a lot of inquiries about stink bugs in soybeans. To me, this insect is the one that I think we really need more research on because it causes a lot more in losses, in my opinion, every year than people realize. Stink bugs are those little green, sometimes brown, shield shaped insects. The immatures are brightly colored almost harlequin looking little bugs. They have a piercing sucking mouthpart. They stick this mouthpart into the soybean pod and developing bean and suck juices out. This causes the bean or even part of the entire pod to die. We don't normally recommend treatment until we have an average of 10 stink bugs per 30 feet of row. Scouting for this rascal can be tricky! As the beans mature they become less of a threat to the crop. I'd continue scouting for a few more weeks though just in case! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Blue Green Algae in Farm Ponds

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Just about once every summer a producer will bring in a sample of pond water, with something else in it very concerned that it is blue green algae. Fortunately it very rarely is. We see lots of plants growing in farm ponds. Everyone knows cattails and what most people call moss is really filamentous algae. The one that is brought into me most often is duckweed. Duckweed is a simple plant that has one or two tiny green leaves and a couple of roots that dangle down into the water. While a nuisance, none of these are really a health problem for livestock and can be dealt with with the proper aquatic herbicides. Blue green algae is actually a bacteria. It'll look like an oily scum floating on the water surface, can be different colors and often has a strong odor associated with it, but for this year, it shouldn't be a problem. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Nutrient Test Summer Annual Forages

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Recently a local producer brought me in some sudangrass they wanted to cut for hay to be tested for nitrates. I've gotten into the habit of when someone wants a nitrate only test we can get quick turnaround at the K-State Soils Lab and I always go ahead and have protein analysis done as it isn't much more than the regular nitrate test. In this case, because of the stage that the sudan was at the protein came back higher than the producer expected. Nutrient quality of forages can vary from year to year, field to field and even variety to variety. Anytime we are cutting forages of any kind for livestock feed I feel it is very important to get quality checked. We have hay probes available for you to borrow and if you bring the sample in to the office, we'll package it and send it off for you. Please take us up on this offer and check you hay! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.