

Custom Rates Survey

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Two of the most popular pamphlets that I hand out annually or people ask for are the Bluestem Pasture Rental Rates and the Custom Rates Booklet. Because of changes over the past 20 years to financing, Kansas Ag Statistics do not do these surveys anymore, but fortunately K-State and KS Dept of Ag picked up the slack. This year it's time for the Custom Rates survey and corresponding publications. The thing about both of these reports though is that they depend on surveys of producers like you. No surveys equals no publication. And they are only as accurate as the information you provide in the survey. If you received the survey, or the link to the online survey, PLEASE fill it out. If you didn't receive the information then contact me and I'll get you the link or if you prefer a paper copy of the survey, we can get you that too! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Brome Nitrogen Rates Based on N Cost

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. The optimal rate of nitrogen fertilization is dependent on the crop being grown, the value of that crop and the price of the nitrogen fertilizer. Now, never confuse optimum agronomic rate with optimum economic rate. They are not the same thing! I have a coworker who has put together a good table for brome grass showing optimum application rates given varying nitrogen costs and brome hay values. At the current time given brome hay value of about \$90 a ton and nitrogen at \$1.10 a pound, you can only justify about 60 to 70 pounds of N per acre. That doesn't say anything though about additional fertilizer in the form of phosphorus or sulfur. In the absence of a soil test, and there's still time to get one this year, I generally recommend 25 to 30 pounds of phosphorus and 15 pounds of sulfur per acre. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Get Cut Stump Treatments Finished

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Late summer, fall and early winter is a good time to use a cut stump treatment to control large trees. A cut stump treatment is exactly like it sounds. You cut off a tree and treat it with a herbicide to kill the root system. It works well in the late summer and fall because the tree is actively taking nutrients down into the roots for overwintering and spring growth. The tree takes the herbicide with it, even though it has been cut off and away you go. You can do cut stump treatments anytime of year, but they work best in the late summer and fall for the reasons I noted. In a few more weeks trees will start heading towards springtime growth. The movement of sap up into the tree happens way earlier than most people realize. In fact it's already happening on warm days. If you are still doing cut stump treatments, get them wrapped up soon! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Winter Water Access

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. We get so wrapped up with winter weather, calving cows and keeping them fed that it's easy to almost overlook water. Many cows are in pastures that have a water source. But it's crucial to check that every day, especially on some of those bitter cold days we've seen this winter, to make sure that there is still available water. If cattle are without water for not very long, problems can start to develop. In the summer cows will drink a gallon and a half of water per 100 pounds of body weight per day. In the winter that does drop to a half gallon to 3/4 of a gallon per day but that can still be 6 to 12 gallons of water a day per head for big mature cows. Quality of water is also crucial. If you are using a natural source, like a spring or well, as opposed to a rural water system, it may not hurt to routinely test it for nitrates! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Back to Basics

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. This year, perhaps more than any in recent times, it is crucial to get back to basics in crop production. What the heck does that mean? Well, it means we take a little extra time NOW to go through every step of our plan. We soil test every field so we don't have to apply any fertilizer not needed by this year's crop. We go over our sprayer and make sure all the spray tips are the same size and appropriate for the herbicides being applied, in fact maybe we replace them all. We also review labels and make sure we are using the appropriate rate and are applying it with 20 gallons per acre of carrier. And we slow down a little bit. It means we check the planter over to make sure we are planting the number of seeds per acre we think we are. This is a waste not want not kind of year and to be certain that holds, check everything, twice! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.