

### Big Round Bale Storage

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Big round bales totally changed hay harvest and utilization. I spent a fair amount of time in more than one summer picking up and stacking bales. But large round balers changed everything. One thing that hasn't changed is that if bales are not properly stored, there can be significant loss of hay quantity and quality over time. Bales will last longest if they are kept under a roof but if that isn't an option, consider a few things. Move them off the field as soon as possible. This is important to not impact the plant survival underneath and future forage production. Place the bales end to end since ends are where moisture gets taken up fastest. Place them in good drainage and for long term storage, consider putting them on crushed rock. Run the rows north and south and rows not touching to avoid shade that won't dry! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## It's Okay to Take A Day Off

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I grew up on a farm. My dad was pretty good at taking Sunday's off - go to church, take a nap, just relax. Unless it was irrigation season, and then there were sprinklers or pipe to move or even siphon tubes to set. Yeah, it was a long time ago!! It's been another long, hot summer. It gets old and it takes a toll, both physical and emotional. Which sometimes makes us feel like we need to work even harder. Which then leads to a vicious circle as you wind yourself tighter and tighter and deeper and deeper. It's okay to take a day off to relax and just spend it with family. Visit friends. Go to a county fair someplace. Maybe go fishing in the evening or just do something you haven't done for a while that has absolutely nothing to do with the farm or the ranch. It may seem silly, but you'll likely find your batteries recharged! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Let's Check on Each Other

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. The past few years have been hard, very hard. I've lost too many friends and acquaintances to suicide. And it hurts.

Everybody has struggles of so many different kinds. We often don't know from looking at them because we hide it, we sweep it under the rug, we laugh it off, but it's out there and growing.

Most of us aren't trained mental health professionals, but we are human beings and most of us can do a good job of listening. So stop in and visit a neighbor or perhaps a friend you haven't seen very much lately. Just stop and visit, about nothing at all. If they start talking about challenges, and how tough it's been, don't feel like you have to fix anything, just listen. Don't laugh it off and tell them it's nothing. But follow up with them and keep checking. And if YOU need to talk, remember 800-273-TALK. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## How To Sample for Forage Testing

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. I am forever talking about forage testing and far too many people don't do it because they just aren't sure how. The Extension Office has a couple of hay probes that make this pretty slick. It's a long tube with serrated teeth and you put it in your cordless drill. Then you run it into the side of a big round bale, or the end of a square bale, big or small. It's got a button release that allows you to quickly detach the probe from the shank and dump it into a small bucket or directly into a plastic re-sealable bag. If you have less than ten bales from a field, do them all. If you have 20 bales, do half of them. You essentially want 10 to 15 samples that you will then dump all together and label it. Bring it to the Extension Office and we'll take it from there. Sample each cutting of alfalfa and each hay field separately. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

## Planting Bromegrass

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Just like planting alfalfa in late August and early September, September and October are good times to plant bromegrass.

Bromegrass is another species that we need to soil test before planting. While not AS sensitive as alfalfa, we do need to raise the pH if it is below 6.0. We also need to make sure we have adequate phosphorus levels and then add 15 to 25 lbs. of nitrogen at planting and unless you have really high soil phosphorus levels, probably 20 to 40 pounds of phosphorus. We are most likely going to drill the bromegrass seed, which would allow us to go no-till, but if you work the field up you can broadcast it with an easyflo and then harrow it in. But the seed has to be IN the soil, not just on the soil. You can also broadcast it on the surface and then plant wheat over the top of it. Use 20 pounds of pure live seed per acre. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.