

Another Round of Cold

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. The weather roller coaster, or merry go round, take your pick, continues on. We had another round late last week with some precipitation this time as well. Was there any damage? I highly doubt it. While we did have some warm days, there has not been that much wheat growth yet. About the time the soil temperature starts to crank up we get cold weather or some cold and wet precipitation which drives it right back down. This, fortunately, has kept wheat development somewhat slow. The next two weeks do concern me a little bit as I'm seeing numerous warm days. In fact the next two weeks is all looking above average. The additional benefit we've had this last round was wet surface soils. Wet soil can temper the cold weather a whole lot better than dry soil. And the snow cover - that's just like a blanket protecting the plants! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Marestail in Soybeans

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Marestail was never well controlled by glyphosate. But we were using enough other herbicides and tillage that it didn't seem to be much of a problem. Glyphosate simply made everyone aware of what a pain it was to control. As we move into planning and then planting for soybeans - this is the time to get marestail controlled. One of the problems with marestail is that it starts to bolt in April and once it starts to bolt it is nearly impossible to control with herbicides. What you need to do in late March or early April is to get it burned down. Dicamba is very good at marestail burn down and by treating in late March you have plenty of time before planting. There are many residual products you can use with dicamba to keep things clean until planting including Classic, FirstRate, Valor, Sharpen and similar products. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Look for Herbicide Premixes

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Name a popular herbicide and I can probably find a popular press article that talks about how it might be hard to find this year. Before you panic too much, consider seeing if you can find premixes that include glyphosate. There are quite a few out there depending on what crop you are planting. Premixes with glyphosate include the likes of Enlist Duo, Sequence, ThunderMaster or Flexstar along with others. Glufosinate, or Liberty, is being used more and more and can be found in premixes like Intermoc with S-metolachlor. In fact S-metolachlor can be found in a lot of different premixes. We all get in a certain pattern and buy a certain product and often don't look at what else is out there. Which is a good reason to pick up a copy of the 2022 Chemical Weed Control handbook and explore some of the other options! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Banking Phosphorus

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Some soil nutrients, like nitrogen, sulfur and chloride, are very mobile in the soil. They move down through the profile of the soil with every rainstorm. They can literally be here this year and gone next year. Phosphorus however, is a stable nutrient. There's a lot of chemical reasons for this that I will not go into. But what it means is that you can build up phosphorus levels in the soil and what isn't used by this year's crop will be available for next year's crop. This allows us to bank phosphorus or build it up in the soil at times when phosphorus is less expensive and then use it in years like this when phosphorus is very expensive. Essentially it takes 18 pounds of P_2O_5 per acre ABOVE what the crop uses to raise soil test phosphorus levels 1 ppm. This year, especially, is a good year to test your fields and use that banked phosphorus. I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.

Band or Broadcast Phosphorus?

This is Ag Outlook, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County Extension Agent. Yesterday I was talking about how phosphorus doesn't move through the soil like nitrogen does. Which then leads the question of whether surface applied phosphorus really does any good? This question has become even more critical as we've moved to more and more no-till farming. It wasn't an issue when we disked, field cultivated or plowed fields regularly. Many newer planters do have the ability to band phosphorus beside and below the seed level at planting, but do we need to do that? For the most part, broadcast and banded phosphorus are both effective IF fields have nominal levels of phosphorus meaning at least 20 ppm. Phosphorus moves very slowly into the soil, but plants develop roots right at the surface that are good at using that broadcast P. But if soil P levels are below 9 ppm, it really needs to be banded! I'm Chuck Otte and this has been Ag Outlook.