



## .....STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSES MOUTH

Duane A. Lienemann, UNL Extension Educator, Webster County

October 10, 2015 Edition

Most of the soybeans are out and farmers in our area are really focused on getting the corn into the bin. I have heard reports all over the board on yields in both dryland and irrigated fields. Of course a lot of that depends on what the field was in last year and if you were blessed with moisture at the right time this year. One thing is for sure, we in South Central Nebraska have not had to contend with wet soils during the harvest, and in fact it is rather dusty out there. That is part of the reason that some farmers are a little late in getting the wheat planted this year. The other factor is the availability of good clean seed wheat in our area. Most farmers have had to go outside of their usual suppliers to secure the seed they wanted. There is of course some wheat that was planted early, if they had the seed. I have been getting questions from farmers on timing of planting and in particular because there may be some late planting of wheat. Let's take a look at some factors.

There are several other reasons for planting early. One is to get adequate ground cover to avoid erosion from wind or water. Another is to get adequate plant growth to assure winter hardiness. A third reason is to quicken maturity the following summer and avoid excessive heat stress. However, it is also a given that planting winter wheat too early lengthens the time when environmental conditions (warm temperatures and moisture) are favorable for development of fall season diseases such as wheat streak mosaic, barley yellow dwarf, and leaf rust. Disease-vectoring insects such as aphids and wheat curl mites have more time to transmit diseases if wheat is planted too early. Then on the other hand planting too late gives little time for wheat to establish itself before cold winter temperatures set in. This can result in weak plants that are vulnerable to attack by diseases in the spring. Therefore, it is recommended that winter wheat be planted during the recommended date range for the respective wheat growing regions in the state.

It should be noted that the normal Hessian Fly-free date for planting wheat, for instance Webster County is September 27-29; so we really are not that far past that time. The date is after flies lay their eggs. Many follow that date and for good reason. Other reasons for delaying planting include avoidance of wheat streak mosaic virus, Russian Wheat Aphid, crown and root rot, and too much fall growth. Excessive fall growth causes excessive moisture use and stress. But now we are getting close to the optimum time for planting wheat. What do we do?

The best bet is to follow the guidelines that Robert Klein, Extension Western Nebraska Crops Specialist, has laid out in an article that can be found at: <http://cropwatch.unl.edu/Delayed-Wheat-Seeding> Last but not least; be sure to use certified seed wheat that has been treated to increase seeding success. The seed treatments need to thoroughly coat the seeds to give good results and should be applied with quality seed-treating equipment. One word of advice. If you are enrolled in the Farm Program be sure to check with FSA for Federal Crop Insurance purposes for planting! There are different dates for counties for FSA qualifications for the Farm Bill provisions. You can find your final planting date for FSA at: [http://www.rma.usda.gov/fields/ks\\_rso/2015/final/newheattext.pdf](http://www.rma.usda.gov/fields/ks_rso/2015/final/newheattext.pdf)

**PLC and ARC Payments:** I know a lot of farmers are starting to think about the payments that many will receive from their decision on the 2014 Farm Bill. Payments are scheduled to go out to farmers in the next few weeks. This may not shock anyone, but it is worth noting, that as I understand it, farmers will take a 6.8% cut in their farm-program payments because of federal sequestration rules. Payments under PLC and ARC for 2014 will be cut 6.8% no matter when a farmer went to a Farm Service Agency county office to sign up. The cut covers several USDA programs, including the Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs. It also affects marketing loans, and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. You will get less dollars than you think. What is the reason for this? Here is what I found.

Federal budget sequestration was passed by Congress in 2011 and officially kicked in during 2013. The legislation detailed specific percentage cuts for mandatory and discretionary federal programs. USDA detailed some of the programs cut in 2013, but that was prior to the passage of the latest version of the farm bill. Ideally, a new list will be generated to provide full details of all the affected programs. The good news is that in 2013, the USDA did state that Conservation Reserve Program payments were not affected by sequester cuts. So your CRP payments should not be affected.

Speaking of payments....it looks like there will also be some disparity in those payments, so you may want to be braced for that. We are finding that payments could vary based on county revenue formulas. For instance in Nebraska, some checks will run \$20 an acre, others closer to \$80 an acre in large part because of the local variation in 2014 yields. The shift to county-based calculations for the new farm safety net highlights how aid is supposed to be targeted to those in need. For most producers, it means bumper 2014 county yields offset the decline in prices, so they won't meet the threshold for farm payments. But for farmers who operate in more than one county, this bureaucratic technicality will likely be frustrating. At issue is that program payments will be determined by your "administrative" county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. For growers with farms in multiple counties, that rule means Agricultural Risk Coverage-County checks will not be paid at county rates where the ground is located BUT where records are housed. Also a formula for blending irrigated and non-irrigated acres may also contribute to some payment disparities. I know this applies to several counties in South Central Nebraska, so you may want to stay tuned for the latest in the Farm Bill saga!

The preceding information comes from the research and personal observations of the writer which may or may not reflect the views of UNL or UNL Extension. For more further information on these or other topics contact D. A. Lienemann, UNL Extension Educator for Webster County in Red Cloud, (402) 746-3417 or email to: [dlienemann2@unl.edu](mailto:dlienemann2@unl.edu) or go to the website at: <http://www.webster.unl.edu/home>