

FOCUS on South Plains Agriculture

Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Lubbock
1102 E. FM 1294, Lubbock, Texas 79403

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Slow Growth in Winter Wheat

Concerns have been expressed noting that wheat planted Nov. 10-20 and later seems non-existent in some cases. Upon close look the wheat is there, it has germinated, but it isn't growing much. Until the past few days we have not had prolonged excessive cold, but in general weather has indeed been below normal. The National Weather Service reports that December 2009 was the sixth coldest on record for Lubbock.

When conditions are dry in the field then wheat is much more susceptible to freeze injury, and we can expect that some leaves will die off. But moisture is fairly good this winter, and we don't have dry conditions in most of the area. The dilemma for too many of our wheat acres in the South Plains is that farmers don't or can't get it planted until later (mid-November, and especially December) hence the wheat any farmer has planted, especially if planted after mid-November this year (but often not an issue in other years) is going to be much more likely to have reduced growth and establishment. Not that it is 'injured' per se, but it sets it back. A preferred minimum soil temperature for wheat to germinate is ~45 F although sprouting will occur at about 40 F (but more slowly of course). That is why we see in the long run that wheat plantings after about Dec. 1 have a long-term reduced grain yield of ~25% vs. plantings say in late October, a more optimum time (~Oct. 20).

What about ground cover?

It is not there and probably isn't going to catch up for the later-planted fields in the region to protect against major winds occurring in January and February and possibly March as well. If producers are concerned



about having enough cover for seedling cotton in May, then I am not concerned about that at this point if their wheat or rye has germinated. They will likely have to wait longer to terminate it, which means more soil moisture use closer to planting. Seedling wheat that gets shaved off at ground level by the wind and blowing sand/soil will come back as the growing point is below the ground.

The document 'Freeze Injury on Wheat,' <http://lubbock.tamu.edu/othercrops/pdf/wheat/freezeinjuryonwheat.pdf>, contains a chart showing for young wheat, germination to 1-2 leaves, that temps of 5-15 F could set the wheat back, but the document only discusses spring freeze injury. Know that our common wheat varieties in the South Plains--TAM 111, TAM 112, Jagalene, Dumas, etc.--are grown a couple hundred miles to the north so it is not an issue of particular variety demonstrating susceptibility to the cold conditions we have had for the region.

In the Texas AgriLife Extension Service wheat variety trial north of Lockney, the no-till ground was planted Nov. 9 with seed at best in the firm ground 1/4-3/8" hence seed at this depth is susceptible to the fluctuating temperatures on the surface. I looked at it at 31 days (Dec. 10), and most seedlings were emerged only 1/4", but I think it will be OK. It is just going to look bare out there for a while, but fortunately--with standing cotton stalks, remaining wheat residue from the 2008 grain harvest, and a clay loam soil--blowing will not be an issue. The same trial planted Nov. 10 south of Seagraves on a conventionally tilled field was off to a much quicker start, already a couple of leaves by ~Dec. 13 with good stands. CT

2009 Grain Sorghum & Corn Hybrid Trial Results

Numerous hybrid trial results for the Texas High Plains are now posted on the Texas AgriLife Research Crop Testing website, <http://varietytesting.tamu.edu> Reported tests include:

Irrigated grain sorghum
Dryland grain sorghum
Irrigated forage sorghum
Irrigated sorghum/sudan for hay
Irrigated corn grain
Irrigated corn silage

For more information about these High Plains tests contact extension agronomists Calvin Trostle, Lubbock, 806-746-6101, ctrostle@ag.tamu.edu, or Brent Bean, Amarillo, 806-677-5600, bbean@ag.tamu.edu

High Plains Regional Oilseed Workshop, January 13, Lubbock

The High Plains Oilseeds Workshop conducted by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service is set for 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Jan. 13 at the Texas AgriLife Research and Extension Center at Lubbock. From I-27, use Exit 11 then go east 0.6 miles.

The program will provide information on the potential for various alternative oilseed crop options for the region, including sesame, safflower, sunflower and winter canola. In addition, industry representatives for each group will be updating their producer contract production opportunities for 2010. Extension crop production budgets will be presented for each crop.

The workshop is free, but attendees should pre-register by noon, Jan. 12 to reserve lunch. To pre-register and for more information call the AgriLife Extension office in Lubbock County at 806-775-1680, cmbrown@ag.tamu.edu

Upcoming January & February Extension Crop Meetings

The following is a list of known January & February Extension programs and meetings in the region. A varying amounts of CEUs are available at all programs. Call or e-mail for specific meeting time, location, and topics.

Jan. 14-15, New Mexico Hay Association, schedule and topics at www.nmhay.com, Ruidoso Convention & Visitors Center, contact

NMSU-Clovis, 575-985-2292,
marsalis@nmsu.edu (Texas CEUs available)

Jan. 18, West Plains Ag Conference, South Plains College, Sundown Room. **Levelland**, 8 AM-afternoon. Hockley Co. Extension, 806-894-3159, ksiders@ag.tamu.edu

Jan. 19, Drip Irrigation Workshop, **Brownfield**. Terry County Extension, 806-637-4060, srussell@ag.tamu.edu

Jan. 19, Southern Mesa Ag Conference, Movie-Land Theater, north of U.S. 180 west of U.S. 84, Lamesa, 8 AM-4:45 PM. **Dawson County** Extension, 806-872-3444, jwyatt@ag.tamu.edu

Jan. 20, Caprock Crop Production Conference, Jan. 20, **Floyd County** Friends Unity Center, U.S. 70 between Floydada and Lockney, 7AM-5 PM. Floyd Co. Extension, 806-983-4912, jwwagner@ag.tamu.edu

Jan. 21, Llano Estacado Cotton Conference, Bailey Co. Coliseum, **Muleshoe**. Bailey County Extension, 806-272-4584, cpreston@ag.tamu.edu

Jan. 26, Alternative Crops Workshop, **Gaines Co.** Party House, between Seminole & Seagraves, 8 AM-12 PM. Gaines County Extension, 432-758-4006, tmillican@ag.tamu.edu

Jan. 27, Crop Risk Management Workshop, **Olton**. Lamb County Extension, 806-385-4222, tbeyers@ag.tamu.edu

Jan. 28, Profitability Workshop, **Morton** Activity Building. Cochran County Extension, 806-266-5215, jmolloy@ag.tamu.edu

Jan. 29, Risk Management Workshop, **Muleshoe**. Bailey County Extension, 806-272-4584, cpreston@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 2, Sandyland Ag Conference, **Gaines Co.** Activity Building, Seminole. Gaines County Extension, 432-758-4006, tmillican@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 2, Briscoe Co. Crops Workshop, Silverton. **Briscoe Co.** Extension, 806-823-2522, rncarr@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 3, Commercial Turf & Ornamental Workshop, **Lubbock**. Lubbock County Extension, 806-775-1680, bbaugh@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 5, New Mexico State/Texas AgriLife Oilseeds Workshop, NMSU Ag. Science Center, **Clovis**, 1-4 PM (MST). NMSU, 575-985.2292, angadis@nmsu.edu; Texas AgriLife, 806-746-6101, ctrostle@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 9, Llano Estacado Corn Conference, Castro County Exposition Building, **Dimmitt**. Castro County Extension, 806-647-4115, enino@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 9, Southwest Farm & Ranch Classic Farm Show Extension crop workshop, **Lubbock** Civic Center. Lubbock County Extension, 806-775-1680, cmbrown@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 10, South Plains Ag Conference, **Brownfield**. Terry County Extension, 806-637-4060, cbishop@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 10, Cottonseed Variety Meeting, **Farwell**. Parmer County Extension, 806-481-3619, bhenderson@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 10, Hale/Swisher Crops Conference, Ollie Liner Center, **Plainview**, Hale County Extension, 806-291-5267, sadair@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 11, Cotton Production Meeting, **Lamesa**. Dawson County Extension, 806-872-3444, jwyatt@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 22, Cotton Production Meeting, **Tahoka**. Lynn County Extension, 806-561-4562, breyolds@ag.tamu.edu

Feb. 23, Cotton Variety Selection, Cotton Outlook and Fertilizer Management, **Brownfield**. Terry County Extension, 806-637-4060, cbishop@ag.tamu.edu

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