

## Ag Talk with Jeanne Early Season Wheat Disease Update

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March is an important month for wheat disease development in Kansas. This statement may surprise some of you, because the wheat is only just greening up in some areas of the state.

As it turns out, February and March are important because we often receive our first reports of disease activity from states to our south. This is particularly relevant for the rust diseases, which often survive the winter in these southern climates.

So far this year there are several reports of rust developing in

Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Stripe rust has been observed in all four states and appears to be spreading beyond the initial foci of infection. Leaf rust has been reported in Texas but not the other states.

The reports of stripe rust and leaf rust from Texas are the most important for us, because weather systems often transport the rust spores from these regions into Oklahoma and Kansas. Varieties such as Everest, Armour, and TAM 111 are being affected in Texas this year. This is similar to

what was observed in 2012 and there are no reports of new races of stripe rust to date.

Bob Hunger, wheat disease specialist for Oklahoma State University, is reporting no finds of rust in Oklahoma as of March 21. Growers in Kansas should be monitoring the situation in Texas and Oklahoma. If the disease continues to develop in Texas or is reported in Oklahoma, we will need to evaluate the need for fungicides to suppress rust development in fields planted to susceptible varieties.



SCRAMBLING FOR CANDY was part of the fun at the Easter Egg Hunt.

# Cold weather rule ended on March 31

The Kansas Cold Weather Rule ended on March 31, and Kansans who are delinquent on electric and natural gas utility bills will be subject to disconnection of service. The rule, in effect Nov. 1 through March 31 each year, provides protection to residential customers who cannot fully pay winter utility bills from companies under the Kansas Corporation Commission's jurisdiction. That protection ended Sunday.

The commission reminds Kansas customers there is still time to contact your utility company to set up a payment plan, but cautions that failure to make arrangements or failure to adhere to an already established payment

plan could result in service disconnection. Reconnection may require payment in full.

The Cold Weather Rule requires utilities to set up 12-month payment plans for customers who cannot afford to pay their full bill. As part of this arrangement, the customer must make an initial payment of 1/12 of the overdue amount, 1/12 of the bill for current service, the full amount of any disconnection or reconnection fees, plus any applicable deposit owed to the utility. The balance will be billed in equal payments over the next 11 months in addition to the regular monthly bill.

The commission adopted the Cold Weather Rule to protect

customers during cold winter weather by providing a reasonable and organized method of paying past due and current bills. The Cold Weather Rule applies only to residential customers of electric and natural gas utility companies under the commission's jurisdiction.

More information about the Cold Weather Rule is available at: [http://kcc.ks.gov/pi/cwr\\_english.htm](http://kcc.ks.gov/pi/cwr_english.htm). Kansans may also contact their local utility company or the commission's office of public affairs and consumer protection at (800) 662-0027.

## Dinner and ventriloquist to entertain in Bird City

You don't want to miss the next Community Club Dinner and Ventriloquist event planned for 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 27, at the Legion hall.

Bird City is bringing in the famous ventriloquist, Greg Claassen who as a young boy developed a determination to learn the skill of "throwing his voice." Through the years of performing since 1980, and as a full time professional since 1998, he has developed national recognition where laughter and good humor have a place.

He has developed his skills to

make just about anything talk. After just six years into his career, he was selected as a national winner in the "Bob Hope Search for the Top" Comedy Competition. Mr. Claassen was a featured performer at the popular family theme park, Silver Dollar City in Branson, Mo., and more than 3,000 business functions.

Mr. Claassen's acts are totally clean and at a level all ages are able to understand and laugh at. His pledge is to never resort to vulgarity, or humiliating stunts in any of his shows.

During his show he pulls members from the audience into his acts and makes them the real stars in a fascinating manner. He spontaneously uses his humor to draw the audience together and take them away from their cares and draws them together for instantaneous healing and relaxation for the moment. His spontaneous act is a demonstration that laughter is contagious.

Tickets can be purchased from any community club member, or call Barbara Waters, 734-2635, for more information.

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