

MANHATTAN — Three factors are important in determining whether there was damage to the wheat crop from recent freezes: stage of wheat development; temperatures, and wind speed

Whether actual freeze injury occurred would depend on how low the temperature reached, how long the temperatures stayed that cold, temperature gradients in the field, wind speed, canopy density, and other microclimate factors, said Jim Shroyer, K-State Research and Extension crop production specialist. Soil moisture is another factor that can be important in determining freeze injury.

Wheat in much of southern Kansas was in the jointing stage at the time of the most recent hard freeze, the agronomist said.

"In the jointing stage, if temperatures get into the low 20s or lower for several hours," he said, "there can be some injury to the lower stems, the leaves, or the developing head. If it is windy

Attorney General Steve Six reminds Kansas consumers to beware of companies that charge money to help modify your home mortgage.

"In this time of economic uncertainty, Kansans facing foreclosure are being targeted," Six said. "Kansans should be aware that scammers claiming to assist consumers with modifying their mortgage are popping up across the state."

Those who are in the midst of foreclosure or delinquent on their mortgages are receiving telemarketing-style phone calls from companies that offer to help them modify their mortgage, he said.

Usually, this service is offered for an upfront fee of \$500 to \$1000, followed by a larger amount based on the size of the loan modification, typically \$2,500.00 to \$10,000.00. This can cost homeowners thousands of dollars to modify their mortgages – something they can do on their own for little or no cost.

These scams are essentially charging homeowners thousands of dollars for a paperwork service. These companies do not conduct any negotiations and do not guarantee any results. They merely ask you to compile the documents that the mortgage company requires for modifications and send them off to the company.

If a company claiming to be a modification specialist or a foreclosure rescue operation contacts you, remember mortgage companies do not hire modification companies. They have employees that specialize in modifications and foreclosure relief

If you think you have been a victim of any foreclosure-related scam, immediately call the attor-

during the nighttime hours when temperatures reach their lows, this increases the chance of injury.

“The soil may help radiate heat into the canopy and help protect wheat from freeze injury unless conditions are windy. If the soil has a good cover of residue, it will not radiate heat as well.”

If temperatures warm up rapidly within a few days, damage may appear soon, he said. If temperatures stay cool, however, it will take longer to notice any injury.

Symptoms will vary. If the main tillers of a plant are injured, secondary tillers may begin growing and fill out the stand. The wheat may have a ragged appearance because the main tillers are absent, but there may still be enough surviving stems to produce good yields if spring growing conditions are good, Shroyer said.

"If the leaves of tillers are yellowish when they emerge from the whorl, this indicates that those tillers have been damaged," he said.

“Where tillers are damaged at early jointing, they may stop growing and the head will never emerge. Later in the jointing stage, some of the damaged tillers may still exert the head but the head may be partially or entirely blank.”

It's not just leaves in whorl that can be damaged by freeze injury, he added. A hard freeze at jointing can damage the existing leaves so severely that they turn bluish, then bleach out. This results in the field having a "silage smell" after it warms up, the agronomist said.

If the lower stems were damaged by freeze injury, the wheat plants will likely lodge at some point, he added.

“Lodging could also be caused by other factors, however, so it will be important for producers to examine the lower stems on lodged plants to determine the cause,” he said. “Plant may have simply leaned over due to environmental factors, such as a hard rain or high winds, after a freeze and will eventually come back up if the lower stem isn’t damaged.”

For information, contact Shroyer at (785) 532-5776 or jshroyer@ksu.edu.

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