

Rain, soil cover affect wheat tillering

Recent rains were welcomed by wheat farmers across the state, but in some cases the rains caused some concerns. Where the rainfall was too heavy or too intense, seed furrows became filled in with soil and left the seedlings under more soil than normal, said Jim Shroyer, K-State Research and Extension crop production specialist.

"I've had lots of calls about this from western areas. Farmers have seen their wheat seedlings covered up by soil where heavy rains fell and the fields were deeply furrowed by the drills at planting time," Shroyer said. "They want to know if this wheat will still be able to tiller."

The answer depends in part on how much growth remains above the soil surface, Shroyer said.

"Assuming that there are some leaves showing above this layer of new soil in the seed furrows at this time, the plants will still be able to tiller. There may be fewer tillers than normal, however," he said.

Most tillers form in the axils of leaves, which will be at the crown level. The crown normally establishes about a half-inch below the soil surface, regardless of how deeply the seed was planted.

"When the crown is deeper in the soil than normal, it will be cooler and this can reduce the level of tiller initiation activity going on near the crown," Shroyer explained.

Also, if the seedling has been covered with soil, the tiller will have to push through more than the usual half-inch of soil to emerge, he said. This takes extra effort, but is certainly not impossible.

Farmers also want to know if the main shoot and leaves will continue to grow normally where they have been covered with soil.

"Yes, if three or more leaves are present above the soil surface. Any shoots and leaves that make it above the soil surface will grow normally. Potential head size will not be affected by this. If only one leaf is sticking out of the ground (or none at all), however, the plants cannot be expected to develop normally," Shroyer said.

The bottom line is that if the stand is good and there are three or more leaves visible above the soil surface, then there's probably no need to replant just because the seed furrows were filled in with soil, the agronomist said.

"You can probably expect fewer tillers per plant, depending on how deep the crown has been buried. That may reduce yield potential somewhat – but not enough to justify replanting. If the stand has been thinned out, however, or if the plants are buried so that no leaves or only one leaf is visible, replanting may be a good idea," he said.

A few more than 24



There were more than the proverbial four-and-twenty blackbirds in this flock driven down below the bad weather Wednesday to a snack in the field between the Quilt Cabin and Colby Community College along Range Ave.

SHARON FRIEDLANDER/Colby Free Press

On the Beat

COLBY POLICE Monday

12:29 a.m. – Spoke to subject about earlier animal complaint.

11:13 a.m. – Caller reported transient talking to himself in the 1200 block of S. Country Club. Spoke to subject; all OK.

12:21 p.m. – Caller reported a man yelled at her for sitting in vehicle in alleyway awaiting subject. Also received call from owner pertaining to vehicles in alleyway. Spoke to subjects.

1:18 p.m. – Served arrest warrant for Decatur County.

1:52 p.m. – Collision at 840 S. Grant.

4:54 p.m. – Visitors Center called about subject sleeping on bench. Spoke with subject, transient from earlier.

5:07 p.m. – Possible fraud message left on phone.

5:36 p.m. – Collision in the parking lot of Image Makers.

Tuesday

10:42 a.m. – Fight.

10:42 a.m. – E-mail from public works advised of ramp found at Fike Park. City crew picked up.

11:31 a.m. – Caller reported two dogs at large at Country Club Dr.

and Brookside. Dog taken to Colby Animal Clinic.

THOMAS COUNTY SHERIFF Monday

11:01 a.m. – Caller reported vehicle did not stop for road construction on Mingo Road, County Rd. K. Unable to locate from Colby to County Rd. K on K-25.

11:19 a.m. – Caller reported motor vehicle rollover in the 500 block of K-25.

12:49 p.m. – Provided program for students at Colby Community College at 1255 S. Range.

12:50 p.m. – Took inmate from Rawlins County to Norton County Sheriff's Office.

2:34 p.m. – Sheridan County Sheriff's Office advised of cattle possibly loose; heading towards highway northbound U.S. 83 mile 166. Were inside hot fence.

5:14 p.m. – Caller reported semis being loaded while parked on roadway on County Rd. EE north of Rexford. Not found.

Tuesday

11:32 a.m. – Caller reported tractor and grain cart almost hitting his son on County Rd. 27 between M and N. Reckless driving report filed.

Child pedestrian deaths double on holiday

Prepare children to act safely and drivers to take extra precautions on this potentially dangerous night for child pedestrians. On average, twice as many kids are killed while walking on Halloween compared to other days of the year.

"Kids need proper safety instruction before they go out trick-or-treating," says Cherie Sage, director for Safe Kids Kansas. "Many kids will be out trick-or-treating while it is dark when it is more difficult for drivers to see them. There are several easy and effective behaviors that parents can share with kids to help reduce their risk of injury. For example, children younger than age 12 should not be alone crossing streets on Halloween without an adult. If older kids are mature enough to go trick-or-treating without adult supervision, parents should make sure they go in a group and stick to a predetermined route with good lighting."

Drivers need to be extra alert as there will be more children on the streets and sidewalks – and those kids may be focused on gathering candy and the excitement of the holiday rather than being careful while crossing streets. "Safe Kids and FedEx urge drivers to slow down on neighborhood roads to make Halloween more enjoyable for everyone, but also to help save lives," added Sage.

Top safety tips Safe Kids USA recommends for parents:

- Cross the street safely at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks. Look left, right and left again when crossing and keep looking as you cross. Walk, don't run, across the street.

- Walk on sidewalks or paths. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible. Children should walk on direct routes with the fewest street crossings.

- Slow down and stay alert – watch out for cars that are turning or backing up and never dart out into the street or cross in between parked cars.

- Costumes can be both creative and safe. Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers and, if possible, choose light colors. Masks can obstruct a child's vision, so choose non-toxic face paint and make-up whenever possible instead. Have kids carry glow sticks or flashlights in order to see better, as well as be seen by drivers.

Top safety tips Safe Kids USA and FedEx recommend for drivers:

- Slow down in residential neighborhoods. Remember that popular trick-or-treating hours are 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.

- Be especially alert and take extra time to look for kids at intersections, on medians and on curbs. Children are excited on Halloween and may move in unpredictable ways.

- Reduce any distractions inside your car, such as talking on the phone or eating, so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings.

While pedestrian safety is a main concern on Halloween, parents and kids should also be careful when dealing with candy. "While kids never want to wait to dive into their candy, it is best to check sweets for signs of tampering before children are allowed to eat them," says Sage. "Remind children to only eat treats in original and unopened wrappers."

For tips on how to help kids become safer pedestrians on Halloween, as well as throughout the year, visit www.safekids.org and www.safekidskansas.org. Visit our Facebook pages for Safe Kids USA and Safe Kids Kansas.

Kids can touch trucks Friday

There will be an opportunity for kids to "Touch-a-Truck" from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday at the Goodland Wal-Mart parking lot.

Donations of non-perishable food items or small toys are suggested for entry. Blowing the horn and siren is free for children during the first hour.

There will be many large trucks, emergency

vehicles and construction equipment on site for picture opportunities and exploration for kids of all ages.

All proceeds will go to Sherman County Genesis and Toys 4 Tots. Contact Deputy Jason Showalter at the Sherman County Sheriff's Office for information, (785) 890-4835.

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