

Area Crop Report 12/9 – 12/13

Winter Annual Weeds to be on the Lookout For

With November rains bringing much needed moisture to the area, winter wheat wasn't the only thing to benefit. Winter annual weeds such as cheatgrass/downy brome (*Bromus tectorum*), henbit, and feral ryegrass are also benefitting from the much-needed rains. While heavier weed pressure in the spring is of course a concern, the amount of nitrogen being taken up by these weeds now could pose a set-back to a current wheat crop or enhance fertilization rates come spring in fallow ground. As a data reference, Kansas State University research found that the average nitrogen uptake from winter annual weeds was as much as 16 pounds per acre. Fall burndown applications provide an array of benefits going toward spring months, in regards to: cleaner fields equaling less field hours worked, better prepared fields at planting, improved pest management, and one less application pass (and cost) to worry. We would be happy to discuss and assist selecting fall and spring burndown options!



Henbit has opposite leaves, toothed margins, a square stem, and when blooming shows pink/purple flowers.



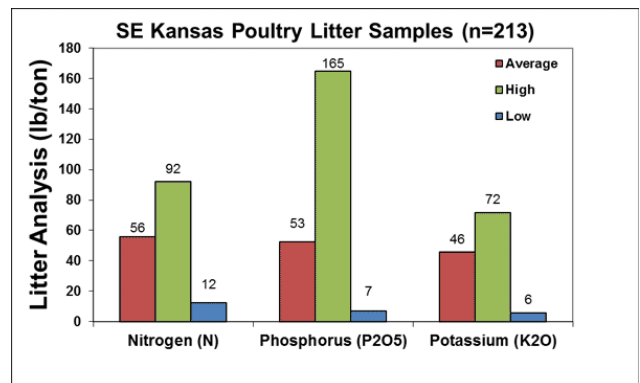
Seedlings leaves unroll from the shoot and are pubescent at the leaf tip and underside. Auricles may be toothed. Mature plants have short, downy hairs.



Feral (volunteer) rye has a membranous ligule, terminal spike with flattened and shorter awns, and flat leaf blades.

Poultry Litter as a Complementary Fertilizer Option

Poultry litter can be an excellent complement to commercial fertilizers. Phosphorus contents are typically high and the driving force, so application rates should be based on P values to also avoid possible surface water contamination. Moisture content and nutrient concentration in poultry litter can be highly variable and depend mainly upon production conditions, storage, and handling methods. Taking manure samples and sending them to a lab for analysis is the best way to determine moisture and nutrient contents for proper application. It's important to be aware of nutrient availability as well. Nitrogen is primarily organic N (up to 75-80%), meaning it needs to be mineralized before becoming plant available. In a first-year application, only about 45-55% total nitrogen (both inorganic and organic) is plant-available. The majority of phosphorus is considered plant-available immediately after application, ranging from 50-100% depending on the manure analysis. Use 100% availability when manure is applied to maintain soil test P in the "optimum." Potassium availability is typically 100% with proper application. With nearby Oklahoma, Missouri, and Arkansas being three of the largest poultry producers in the U.S., litter availability is fairly high with trucking costs relatively low making it an adequate compliment to commercial fertilizers, but not a true replacement.



Results of analysis from 213 samples of poultry manure from Southeast Kansas. Source: K-State Research and Extension

“The art of living is more like wrestling than dancing”