



K-STATE
Research and Extension

Extension Agronomy

eUpdate

01/22/2026

These e-Updates are a regular weekly item from K-State Extension Agronomy and Kathy Gehl, Agronomy eUpdate Editor. All of the Research and Extension faculty in Agronomy will be involved as sources from time to time. If you have any questions or suggestions for topics you'd like to have us address in this weekly update, contact Kathy Gehl, 785-532-3354 kgehl@ksu.edu, or Dalas Peterson, Extension Agronomy State Leader and Weed Management Specialist 785-532-0405 dpeterso@ksu.edu.

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1. Pre-Plant Herbicide Applications for Kochia Control

Now is the time to finalize plans for kochia control. In western Kansas, kochia is among the first summer annual weeds to emerge in the spring. Recent research suggests that kochia can begin emerging in early February, with most kochia emerging by late April. Kochia seedlings have been observed as early as February 7 in southwest Kansas.

Good control of the first dense flush of kochia is essential for obtaining a good crop yield. Early-emerging seedlings use the limited spring soil moisture in dryland production fields. Kochia seedlings emerge in dense populations, making adequate herbicide coverage difficult (Figure 1). In addition, glyphosate-resistant kochia is prevalent across western Kansas, making kochia control even more challenging. For these reasons, it is important to apply preemergence herbicides in late winter or early spring to control kochia before it emerges. This article will be the first in a series discussing specific options for various cropping scenarios.



Figure 1. Emerged kochia seedlings in a fallow field. Photo by Sarah Lancaster, K-State Extension.

Herbicide program components to effectively manage kochia at germination

To successfully manage kochia, an herbicide program needs two components:

1. a very soluble and effective herbicide that can be incorporated with very little precipitation, such as dicamba; and
2. an herbicide that has longer residual activity, which will require perhaps 0.75 inches or more precipitation for adequate incorporation, such as atrazine.

Precipitation events during late winter are often too small to activate longer-lasting residual herbicides, but dicamba may control kochia for 4 to 6 weeks until atrazine is incorporated.

The best time to apply herbicides for kochia control is **prior to kochia emergence**, generally January through the first week of March, but this depends on weather conditions. Later applications, for example, at the time of burndown, are more likely to occur after kochia emergence, which increases the risk of control failure (Figure 2). Fall-applied treatments can help ensure timely application; however, they are not likely to control later flushes of kochia effectively (Figure 3).

Other herbicides with good preemergence kochia activity include: mesotrione (Callisto, others), metribuzin (Sencor, others), saflufenacil (Sharpen), sulfentrazone (Spartan, others). Be sure to check product labels for crop-specific planting intervals. For example, sulfentrazone requires a 10 to 18-month rotation interval to corn.



Figure 2. EPP/POST herbicides applied March 10, 2015 for kochia control at Tribune, KS. Kochia at cotyledon stage. Graph by C. Thompson, K-State Extension.

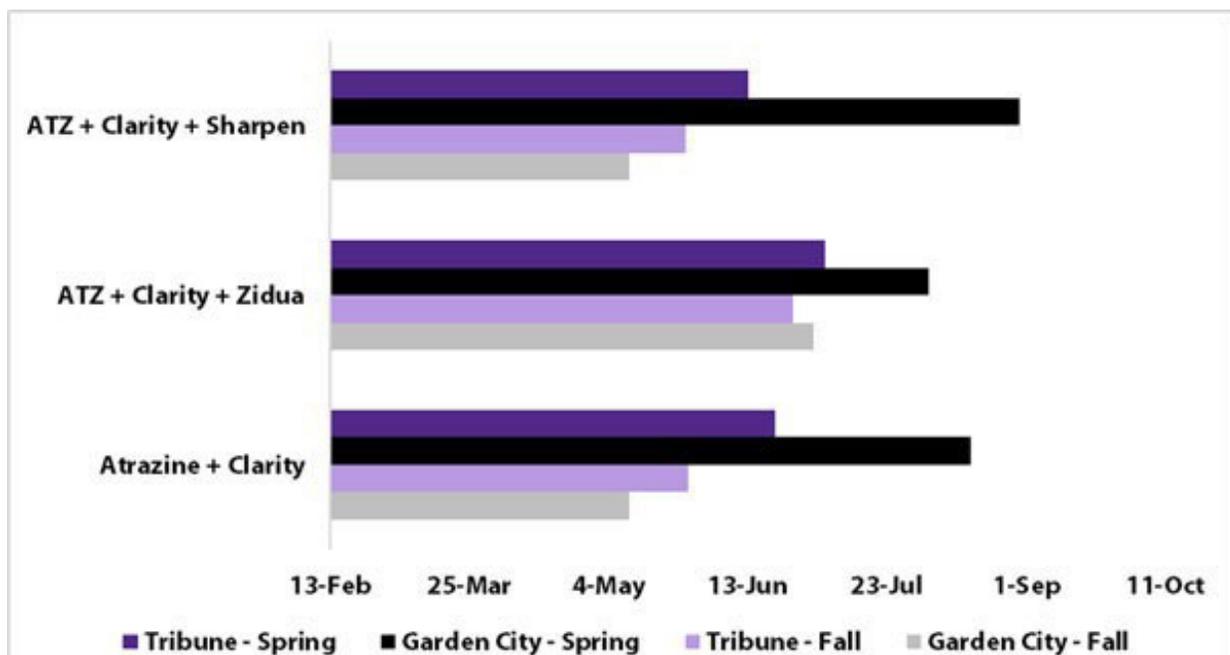


Figure 3. Duration of anticipated kochia control greater than 80% following fall (December 4) and spring (February 23) herbicide applications at two locations during 2015. Data from Vipin Kumar, K-State Extension.

The use of trade names is for clarity to readers and does not imply endorsement of a particular product, nor does exclusion imply non-approval. Always consult the herbicide label for the most current use requirements.

For more information on controlling kochia, see the [2026 Chemical Weed Control for Field Crops, Pastures, Rangeland, and Noncropland](#), K-State publication SRP1194.

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2. Building Better Cover Crops: K-State Joins \$10M National Effort

Winter canola possesses many of the same benefits as other common cover crop *Brassica* species, including an aggressive taproot, nutrient cycling, and overwintering biomass. The potential exists to increase the use of winter canola as a cover crop *Brassica* across the U.S. and to improve the plant traits that make it a capable cover crop, utilizing the germplasm pool under selection at K-State.

The K-State canola breeding program serves as a co-principal investigator on a National Cover Crop Variety Improvement and Seed Production Program, funded by a \$10 million USDA Sustainable Agricultural Systems grant, and led by the University of Missouri Center for Regenerative Agriculture. This nationally coordinated effort will catalyze more rapid and effective progress in meeting demand for regionally adapted, high-quality cover crop seed of five different cover crop species.

Take Our Survey

The MU Center for Regenerative Agriculture invites farmers from across the U.S. to complete a short online survey to better understand the types of traits and characteristics producers value most in their cover crops. The results of the survey will directly inform future cover crop breeding and variety testing research, as well as outreach efforts, to help meet the needs of farmers across the country.

The survey will take approximately 5 to 15 minutes and is completely voluntary. All types of producers are encouraged to participate, including both those with and without cover crop experience. Survey findings will be shared through presentations, publications in peer-reviewed literature, and farm media outlets. If you have any questions, please contact Etienne Sutton at etiennesutton@missouri.edu.

Follow this link to complete the survey: https://missouri.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8oJnvCLDdrNHKi

Mike Stamm, Canola Breeder
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3. Registration is open for the K-State Agronomy Science and Solutions Virtual Conference

Make plans to join us online for the **2026 K-State Agronomy Science and Solutions Conference: Research to Results**, a two-day virtual program designed to connect the latest K-State agronomy research with on-farm decisions.

Date and time

- **February 3–4**
- **11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (CST) each day**
- **Online via Zoom**

Each day will feature **four 30-minute presentations** from K-State specialists and collaborators, focused on practical strategies for crop production in Kansas. This conference is designed to address the full spectrum of Kansas crop production, with content relevant across all major crops. Planned topics include:

Tuesday, February 3

- Turning Farm Data into Decisions – Deepak Joshi
- Controlling Perennial Weeds – Jeanne Falk Jones
- Tilling Strategically for Soil Health, Crop Yield, and Weed Management – Logan Simon
- Managing Soil Fertility when Budgets are Limited - Dorivar Ruiz Diaz

Wednesday, February 4

- Irrigation Management – Tina Sullivan
- Spray Water Quality Effects on Weed Management – Jeremie Kouame
- Optimizing Residual Herbicides – Sarah Lancaster
- Soil pH and Soil Health – Peter Tomlinson

Participants can register for **one or both days**:

- **\$20 per day**, or
- **\$30 for both days**

You can register and pay online at <https://commerce.cashnet.com/KSUAGRONEXT> or by scanning the QR code below. Registered individuals will receive the Zoom connection information via a separate email.



Certified Crop Advisers (CCAs) can earn 0.5 CEUs per presentation, totaling 4 CEUs if attending all sessions over both days.

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4. Great Plains Cotton Conference set for Feb. 19 in Pratt

Cotton producers, consultants, and ag professionals across Kansas and the surrounding Great Plains region are invited to attend the **7th Annual Great Plains Cotton Conference** on February 19, 2026, at the K-State Pratt County 4-H Building in Pratt, Kansas.

This one-day program will feature timely, research-based updates on cotton production, marketing, policy, and technology. Attendees will hear from university specialists, industry experts, and producers on topics including cotton policy and the Cotton Trust Protocol, harvesting practices to maximize lint value, marketing opportunities and risk management, weed management and herbicide resistance, soil fertility, insect scouting and management, and emerging UAV applications in cotton production.

The conference begins with a welcome reception on February 18 at Club D'Est (202 S. Main in Pratt) at 5:30 p.m.

Registration begins at 7:30 a.m., with the conference program starting at 8:15 a.m. and concluding at approximately 4:45 p.m. The agenda includes presentations from Kansas State University, Oklahoma State University, USDA-ARS, the National Cotton Council, and industry partners. A panel discussion on UAV technology will explore how drones may shape the future of cotton production in the region.

Lunch will be provided and sponsored by Phytogen, with opportunities throughout the day to visit sponsor booths and connect with industry representatives.

The conference is made possible through the support of numerous sponsors, including AgLogic Heartland Soil Services, Kansas Cotton Association, Next GINeration, Inc., Northwest Cotton Growers, Phytogen Cottonseed, Plains Cotton Cooperative Association, Southern Kansas Cotton Growers, TAMA USA, TEVA Corp, and Thrive Ag Services.

Conference details:

- **Date:** February 19, 2026
- **Location:** KSU Pratt County 4-H Building, 81 Lake Rd., Pratt, KS 67124
- **Registration:** 7:30 a.m. at the door
- **Program:** 8:15 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.

Producers and agribusiness professionals interested in staying current on cotton production practices, research advances, and market opportunities are encouraged to attend this annual event.

Logan Simon, Southwest Area Agronomist
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5. K-State Soil Fertility Schools for North Central and Northwest Kansas – Jan. 28 and 29

Producers and ag professionals in north central and northwest Kansas are invited to attend the **2026 K-State NC/NW Soil Fertility Schools**, a series of regional programs focused on helping growers make the most of their fertilizer investments. These schools will provide practical, research-based guidance on optimizing nutrient management decisions in a time of tight margins and rising input costs. Topics include: maximizing fertilizer dollars, application methods, products that best fit tight budgets, alternative sources of soil nutrients, residual nutrients, and soil sampling and testing.

The programs are designed to give attendees actionable strategies they can apply immediately to improve nutrient efficiency and profitability.

Three locations are available to make attendance convenient:

- **Colby – January 28, 9:30 a.m. to Noon**
Thomas County 4-H Building, 1100 West Cedar Street, Colby
Lunch following, sponsored by Nutrien Ag Solutions.
Contact: Helen Giefer at 785-460-4582
- **Kensington – January 28, 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.**
First St. Johns Lutheran Church, 332 N. Adams Street, Kensington
Supper following, sponsored by Trinity Ag, LLC.
Contact: Sandra Wick at 785-282-6823 or Cody Miller at 785-543-6845
- **Great Bend – January 29, 9:30 a.m. to Noon**
Barton County 4-H Building, US N281 Highway / NW 60th Road, Great Bend
Contact: Stacy Campbell at 785-628-9430

There is no cost to attend, and each school offers 2.5 Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) credits.

Registration is requested by **January 23** for any location and can be completed online by scanning the QR code on the flyer below or by contacting the local Extension offices listed above.

2026 KSU NC/NW Soil Fertility Schools

Join us at any of the locations in NC/NW Kansas to learn about optimizing your fertilizer applications!

2.5 CCA credits applied for. Additional questions contact your local Extension Office.

COLBY: January 28

9:30 am - NOON

Thomas County 4-H Bldg.
1100 West Cedar Street, Colby
Helen Giefer - 785-460-4582
Lunch following sponsored by Nutrien Ag Solutions.

KENSINGTON: January 28

3:00 pm - 5:30 pm

First St. Johns Lutheran Church
332 N. Adams Street, Kensington
Sandra Wick - 785-282-6823
Cody Miller - 785-543-6845
Supper following sponsored by Trinity Ag, LLC.

GREAT BEND: January 29

9:30 am - NOON

Barton County 4-H Building
US N281 Highway/NW 60th Road, Great Bend
Stacy Campbell - 785-628-9430

TOPICS WILL INCLUDE

How to make the most out of your fertilizer dollar; Application methods; Products that fit best in tight budgets; Alternative sources of soil nutrients; Residual nutrients and Soil sampling and testing.

NO COST TO ATTEND

Registration is requested by **January 23** for any of the locations **ONLINE** at:



Scan the QR code or contact the locations to register!

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This institution is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Language access requests and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means of communication (e.g., Braille, large print, and American Sign Language), may be requested by contacting the event contacts (Helen Giefer, Sandra Wick, Cody Miller or Stacy Campbell) prior to the event (January 28-29) at the numbers listed above. Requests will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information, will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request. Kansas State University is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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