**Late Planting of Small Grains**

This year has been a hard one for getting small grains planted. Many areas of the county had near a year’s worth of rain in about a 2-month period right during small grain planting time. This presents a question of when is too late for planting small grains? If you were hoping to get some winter grazing out of your small grains, then yes you are too late. For winter grazing the earlier the better, but somewhere in the October 15th to November 1 range is the late planting limit most years. However, if you are hoping to get a little spring grazing or some silage or hay production then you are probably still ok for another week or two with most small grain species.

Many small grain producers that are only interested in grain will wait until late November early December to plant. This helps lower the chance on insect issues they will have to deal with and other issues increased forage production may have on grain yield. Most small grains for forage production are planted early in order to get good tillering. Tillering is the development of shoots from buds at the base of the main stem. More shoots, more forage. The affect of temperature on tillering is called “Growing Degree Days” GDD. There is more science involved in figuring GDD than I can understand or relay in this article. Suffice it to say most all small grains require a certain period of low temperatures to tiller properly and produce good forage yields.

If you are unable to get your grain planted in the next week to 10 days, I would recommend waiting until February and planting an oat. While oats do require some tillering, they do not have the same tillering requirements of other small grains to produce good forage yields. Spring planted oats will typically still produce good yields of forage for hay or silage. Of course, every year is different, and this has certainly been one for the books, but these timelines for planting small grains for forage should be accurate.

 **Farm and Ranch 8 Hour CEU Program**

If you are needing CEU’s for your Private Applicator License do not forget the upcoming Farm and Ranch Program. The program will be held on Thursday, December 13, 2018. This seminar will offer eight (8) CEU’s for the private applicator license and certificate holders. The approved credit hours are: four (2) General, two (3) Laws and Regulation and two (3) IPM hours. Commercial and non-commercial license holders will be able to obtain all of their needed hours for license renewal with the first 5 hours of the program. This year’s program will be held at Cook’s Fish barn. Doors will open at 7AM with program starting at 7:30AM. There is a $50.00 fee. 8 CEU’s in one day makes for a very long day, be sure to bring a seat cushion. Please call or come by the office to get registered for the event. Comanche County Agents office: 326-356-2539.