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### **Another Round: More Problems from Fall Armyworm**

This second round of fall armyworm feeding has not only caused more injury to already stressed stands but added some complications to the potential recovery process as well. If you're ready to 'move on' from feeding injury sooner than later, keep a few things in mind.

First, is the stand dead/dying or just dormant? That's one of the toughest questions to answer as we move forward. There's a chart shared at grazing schools showing when 90 percent of a grass plant's leaf area is removed, root growth stops for two to three weeks. In short, post feeding recovery may take more time than we'd like, making decisions this fall tough.

After significant fall armyworm feeding injury a few years ago, the K-State Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab and Frontier Extension District Agents Rod and Ryan Schaub looked at roots from damaged stands. See what they learned at: <https://youtu.be/VKXFPK3IX1k>. In short, if the roots held soil, they likely still had some life in them. If not, there was cause for concern. NOTE: these digs were done post dormancy so time will be needed before we can apply these findings to the current state of our stands. Still, it's a good reference to keep in mind for later evaluations.

Second, consider previous herbicide applications. Many herbicides require a plant back interval prior to reseeding. Whether applied with fertilizer this spring or included with an insecticide pass this summer, plant back intervals are important. This KSU eUpdate article is a good reference:

<https://eupdate.agronomy.ksu.edu/article/herbicides-for-cool-season-hayfields-and-pastures-damaged-by-fall-armyworms-661-3>.

Finally, what is the planting window for your intended forage? The window for planting cool season grasses typically closes around mid-September. That doesn't mean planting later won't work, but the intent of a planting 'window' is so a forage has time to germinate and grow to a point where it has ample leaf area to replenish root reserves prior to dormancy. If it does not reach that leaf area needed (three to four leaves minimum), it may lack enough root energy to survive the winter and grow next spring. Knowing there may not be much to harvest next year if we wait until a spring planting window, it may be tempting to try and seed yet this fall. If you do, keep in mind these late season seeding risks. For a list of planting windows, see the Kansas Crop Planting Guide: [https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/download/kansas-crop-planting-guide\\_L818](https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/download/kansas-crop-planting-guide_L818)

None of the decisions about repairing damaged stands are easy. Multiple factors are at play and damage is going to be unique for every situation. Check out these resources (available in print form from any of our District Offices) for tips and drop me a line if you want to visit about fitting it all together. In the meantime, keep scouting. The last round of feeding didn't occur all at one time and this one won't either.