

David G. Hallauer  
Meadowlark Extension District  
Crops, Soils & Horticulture

### ***ARC/PLC Decision Date***

This is your friendly reminder of the March 15<sup>th</sup> deadline (don't wait until the last minute – signatures may take time) for making your annual election between Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC). Things have changed since the last election, and its time to make a decision once again on the program of choice to best fit your operation.

Some important points to 'recap' the programs. First, the 2022 election will apply to the 2022 harvested crops. Second, that marketing year for fall crops is September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023 (the wheat marketing year is June 1, 2022 to May 31, 2023). In short, your decision is going to be made using prices that may/may not be similar to what we see today.

To summarize what to expect out of enrollment in one of these programs, think in terms of how prices/yields may vary during the marketing year. For example, if commodity prices remain above reference prices and county yields are average or above (a great scenario, actually), no PLC or ARC payments would be seen. If commodity prices remain high but yields are below average (county level yields), no PLC payments will be made, but ARC County payments might. If yields stay average or above, but prices drop below the reference price: PLC payments will be made, but ARC-CO payment aren't likely – unless prices are *very* low. If yields are below average at the county level and prices fall below references prices as well, PLC will pay and ARC-CO payments will be made as well (though they may not be as large as PLC).

While what you choose is based on a different market than in the past, the same selection principals remain: if you want primarily protection against falling prices, PLC is a good option. If you want to protect against revenue losses (price *and* county level yield factors together), ARC-CO might be your preference. Analysis by KSU Ag Economists to help in your decision making process can be found at: <https://www.agmanager.info/crop-insurance/risk-management-strategies/arc-or-plc-question> with commentary to help explain the ins and outs of each program and links to price projections and a decision making spreadsheet tool as well.

### ***Tree Starting Success***

If you go to the effort to plant trees, you want them to be successful. One practice you can implement to help attain that success is weed control around those young trees.

Research by three KSU Horticulture Specialists showed the value of weed control by a comparison of pecan and redbud seedlings started under different conditions. One had bare soil (maintained with herbicides around it). A second had the area under the tree mulched three inches deep. Three other treatments allowed different grass species (fescue, bluegrass, and Bermuda) to grow around the base. All were watered and fertilized appropriately. The findings?

No differences were found between bare soil and mulch, but all three treatments where grass was allowed around the base showed reduced growth as compared to treatments with no basal competition. Tree and turf species differences did emerge, but all pointed to this: grasses must be controlled under a newly transplanted tree to get the best possible growth. A good rule of thumb suggests control to a minimum of three feet from the trunk.

Tree planting time is just around the corner. Start planning for success now.