

2018 Hard Winter Wheat Tour April 30 -May 3

TRIP SUMMARY

We registered over 95 people for this year's tour. One of our biggest crowds ever. In addition to our core group representing the entire wheat industry, we continue to draw participation from around the world. This year we had three countries represented and the award for "who traveled the farthest" went to a wheat trader from Shanghai. We had 24 cars across the six routes we always cover. We started and ended in Manhattan, KS with overnight stops in Colby and Wichita. In addition to covering Kansas, we had scouts and got reports from Nebraska, Colorado and Oklahoma. We used yield formulas provided by USDA/NASS and always have some expertise in each car to train the new attendees. Every car gives a detailed report each evening on their findings compared to previous years. We scramble the car assignments each day, so attendees can meet as many people as possible, along with eating together each night. We are joined each night by local wheat producers, agronomists and grain handlers that offer local insight to our group. In addition to reporting daily yield statistics, each attendee is encouraged to predict the final crop size for Kansas. We take an average of those guesses and report it to the trade. This year's crop will be remembered as dry and late. Below normal rainfall coupled with colder temperatures has left the crop way behind in development. There is lots of concern about needing exceptionally good weather to get good yields. We scouted some disease and frost damage, but the concern is rain and temperatures in the next two months. The crop seems to be wanting to get to grain fill and will be much shorter at harvest. Our reported daily yields appear high. I am comfortable with our production estimate of 243.3 million bushels for Kansas. It looks like our group has individually decided that the crop is damaged, and either used large abandonment, or reduced yield in their estimates. There will be constant attention to crop conditions in Kansas for the next month.

Other negatives- Soils are generally dry and the crop is entering its heaviest water use period. The crop seems to realize its need to hurry and has given up trying to be normal height.

Other positives – There are areas in the East and NC Kansas that seem better. Caught some snow or rains. Crops are really not visibly stressed in Kansas yet.

As in every year, we took a snapshot of the crop as best as we could. Environmental conditions over the next month will determine this crop. All of our route and data from this year's field observations are available on our website as well as information on our next tour in North Dakota.

We also had unsolicited visits by US Senator from Kansas Jerry Moran who welcomed us Monday night in Manhattan. US Representative Dr. Roger Marshall came to both Monday and Wednesday sessions. We very much appreciate the hospitality. Personally, I guessed a number for production on the low side for the first time in years. I got concerned seeing my first field near Abilene rushing to the boot stage at 12 inches tall. Then when I went through Northern Oklahoma I just got a feeling that the stress there will work its way to





Kansas in the next month. We continue to get great media coverage. In addition to the many ag media that joined the tour, I probably spoke to 10-15 radio stations and print groups daily. Great participant feedback and this tour brings value to our industry as evidenced by our attendance.

Respectfully submitted, Dave G Green, Exec VP Wheat Quality Council
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