

# 2021 Hard Spring Wheat and Durum Tour July 26-29

## Trip Summary

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We had 45 people drive or ride with us on this year's tour. At least 30 had no scouting experience. Great representation across the value chain with growers, university, media, millers, plant breeders, grain companies and processors all were represented. We ran 10 cars across our eight standard routes beginning and ending in Fargo, ND with overnight stops in Bismarck and Devils Lake. We used yield formulas supplied by NDSU. We change cars assignments each day and try to have some expertise in each car to train those inexperienced. We are joined each night by local producers, agronomists and grain handlers to offer local insight. We take an average yield of all of our stops and report it to the trade. This year's crop tour will be remembered by all of us because of drought. Severe long-term drought has greatly reduced the yield potential of the crop. We saw our best wheat conditions along the far eastern and far western areas of the spring wheat region that we toured. Even those areas will not reach average long-term yields. Although the fields were variable along our routes, the worst yield prospects were in the center of North Dakota. With harvest already beginning and soon to expand, there is not much chance of rain helping the final yields. The weather for crop scouting was perfect and the topsoil was dry. There was a haze in the air from distant forest fires. There were no mosquitoes or ticks found. We did encounter lots of hungry grasshoppers in the field margins which is normal in a dry year. This year we saw almost no diseases. Day one we covered the southern third of ND with parts of western MN and northern SD. Fields were in various stages of ripe. All the fields had mostly lost their color. Yields reported were below long-term averages and can be found in our posted results. Day two covered central, NW and NC North Dakota. Central ND was certainly the worst area and my route only averaged 16 bu/acre. Better wheat on other routes brought our daily average to 26 bu/acre estimates. Day three from Devils Lake to Fargo saw better crops but still highly variable and below average. Day three covered NE and EC ND and NW MN. Lots of fields are shorter than normal due to excessive heat and no rain, with many of the soon to be abandoned fields less than 10 inches high. Harvest expectations are better though regarding quality. We were unable to find fields with shriveled kernels. It looks like this crop will be yield challenged but high quality.

We stopped at over 250 fields which is low for us. Covid restrictions continue to limit travel for many companies and the USDA. Two years ago we were over 350 field stops. At least we were able to have a tour this year and hope to get back to our traditional attendance next year.

Our tour is first and foremost a training event. We get people out in the fields who are unfamiliar. They learn about farming, wheat and the spring wheat states.

As in every year our tour took a snapshot in time as best we could. Environmental conditions over the next few weeks will determine this crop. All of our data is available on our website. In addition to the media representatives on the tour, I spoke to all radio and other media that requested. We continue to have great participant feedback and we certainly bring value to the industry as evidenced by our attendance. Respectfully submitted, Dave G Green Exec VP Wheat Quality Council