

2023 Hard Spring Wheat and Durum Tour July 24 -27

Trip Summary

We had 57 people drive or ride with us on this year's tour. At least 30 had no scouting experience but this was another of the most interested and fun groups. Great representation across the value chain with growers, university, media, millers, plant breeders, grain companies, USDA and processors all were represented. We ran 15 cars across our standard routes beginning and ending in Fargo, ND with overnight stops in Bismarck and Devils Lake. Because of guidance from the South Dakota Wheat Commission, we did not send any cars to SD again this year. Just not much wheat grown in the top tier of counties. Corn and soybean fields there now. We used yield formulas supplied by NDSU. We change car 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 our stops and report it to the trade each day after crop discussions. This year's crop tour will be remembered as a crop that was difficult to get planted. There was great variability in plant development with some wheat about ready to cut and other wheat four to five weeks away. Planting was halted by another wet spring. As an observation it seemed that the early planted fields were the lower yielding and the later planted ones looked much healthier. We saw wheat fields that would be harvested beginning in early August and wheat fields in the north that will be harvested in early September. Traditionally, late planted crops yield less than early planted ones. The onset in September of cool and wet weather and the occurrence of early frost in some past years has many of us concerned. Absent that concern, there is some optimism about the high yield potential of this crop if the weather cooperates. Soil moisture levels have been and still are favorable for wheat, although the northern half of ND could use a rain. We were impressed that the expected yields were almost the same across the entire state. Certainly, the best yields will come from the Red River Valley, but the central and west will be close behind. Our daily trip averages were only a few bushels apart. Our actual data is attached in the website. The weather for crop scouting was hotter than we prefer as temperatures were in the low 90s the first two days. The weather has moderated since we left and I no longer think we will see any high temps that could stress the crop. There was a large amount of wheat still setting kernels and this weather is ideal. If we can get just a week or two of this kind of weather the crop will be made. There were no mosquitoes or ticks found. We did encounter lots of hungry grasshoppers in the field margins which is normal in the western areas. This year we saw examples of the normal diseases, but severity was low for all of them. Day one we covered the southern third of ND with parts of western MN. Fields were in various stages of development. Some were ripe, but many were two to three weeks out. Yields reported were high and above average. Day two covered central, NW and NC North Dakota. All the reports revolved around late development and better than average yield potential. Day three from Devils Lake to Fargo saw better crops still. We stopped at 343 fields which is about right for this sized group. 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

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