



Representation of our Members State and Federal

I am writing this update from Washington DC. The SD Wheat Growers Association was in attendance at the Winter meeting for the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) on January 23rd – 26th. They have provided an excellent lineup of speakers covering a variety of issues, along with committee work for: Environment & Research, and Domestic Trade Policy. During our three-day meeting we also traveled to the Hill to speak with Senators and Representatives about the Farm Bill and specific state issues.

While in the Environment and Research Committee several speakers address the group.

- NRCS Update - Julie Hawkins, Acting Associate Chief for Programs
- FSA Update – TJ Wilson, Deputy Director, Conservation Division
- Renewable Fuels Update – Luis Copeland, Senior Director of Carbon Solutions, Bunge
- Pesticide Issues - Insecticide Strategy Plan
- Agriculture Labeling Uniformity Act
- Treated Seed Comment Period & FIFRA
- Grower Legal Advisory Group

And in Domestic & Trade Committee included a Farm Bill Update:

- Josh Tonsager, with Chair Stabenow, Senate Agriculture Committee
- Trevor White, with Chair Thompson, House Agriculture Committee

Farm Bill Discussion

a. Review Crop Insurance Proposals

- FSA Update – Administrator Ducheneaux Policy Update
- Transportation Issues

a. Commitments in the Columbia Basin Restoration Initiative, Michelle Hennings, Washington Association Wheat Growers

Before we set off for the Capital, we heard directly from Senator Stabenow and Senator Boseman. Over 300 meetings have taken place, to come to a consensus, between the House and the Senate. Today we are still without a Farm Bill.

Our first visit took us to Senator Thune's office, where we discussed the need for crop insurance as our top priority. The Senators understands only too well the needs of ag producers back home. And our visit with Senator Rounds went much the same way. Discussion with Senator Rounds included Foreign Ownership of Ag Land issues, and the ad-

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Twelve Years of Dedication by Commissioner Terry Hand



Commissioner Terry Hand has served for 12 years on the SD Wheat Commission from 2012 to 2024. He was appointed by Governor Daugaard and during his appointment he has served as Chairman twice. As Chairman his role is to guide the Commission to complete their mission statement: to stabilize and improve the South Dakota wheat industry through research, market development and education.

In 2019, representatives from the Taiwan Flour Millers Association (TFMA) signed letters of intent to purchase wheat and other U.S. grown commodities over two years. The millers are part of a biennial Taiwan Agricultural Trade Goodwill Mission demonstrating Taiwanese consumer preferences for high quality U.S. agricultural products. The wheat delegation members first stopped in Portland, Seattle, Idaho, Oklahoma and South Dakota, before travelling to Washington, D.C., for events

While in South Dakota, the Commission hosted the trade team to the Cronin farm and stopped by the Oahe Grain elevator. "Hosting a trade team is an excellent way to create relationships, to encourage positive trade relations," said Terry Hand.

In 2023, US Wheat sponsored 16 trade teams to the United States – a record number of teams in the last 13 years. Prior to this year, US Wheat hosted an average of 11 trade team visits per year. Not only did they break records in 2023, they also welcomed the first team of high-level Chinese buyers to the United States since 2014, and the first EU team since 2015.

In addition to market development, the Commission financially supports research on new wheat varieties. The main goal of the SDSU hard winter wheat breeding group is to develop high-yielding wheat varieties with resilience to biotic and abiotic stress and provide end-use quality for the milling and baking industry. SDSU lays as much emphasis on wheat quality as on yield, according to wheat breeder Sunish Sehgal.

Sunish Sehgal, associate professor and SDSU winter wheat breeder, was honored by the Wheat Quality Council with the 2023 Millers Choice Best of Show Award for the second consecutive year. The honor annually recognizes the wheat breeder of the variety that is most well-liked by U.S. millers participating in the WQC's evaluation program.

Sehgal earned the award for two SDSU candidate varieties, SD18B025-8 and SD15007-11. The SDSU varieties ranked the best among 28 new varieties entered in the WQC's evaluation program from 12 universities or private wheat breeding companies. Millers from across the nation tested the varieties, grown across several locations, to determine the winner.

The Commission works with the SD Wheat Growers Association to provide education for producers across the state by sponsoring District seminars and the Ag Horizons Conference. SDWGA provides a variety of informational programs from financial advantages to growing wheat, management practices of wheat, and marketing strategies.

On behalf of the Wheat Commission, SD Wheat Growers Association and producers of SD, we would like to thank Terry Hand for his dedication to the wheat industry!

Backgrounder: Environmental Regulations

Like the owners of other small businesses, agricultural producers must comply with a wide variety of federal regulations. Since farmers are typically landowners or caretakers of land on behalf of their landlords, many of the regulations they interact with are related to our nation's natural resources – soil, air, water, and wildlife habitats. Agricultural producers have a serious stake in the quality of our environment, but they also know the costs that come with duplicative regulations and new initiatives that would force them to change practices with dubious return on the investment.

Farmers understand the importance of clean water on their farm, in their communities and across the country, but need clear, predictable regulations that allow farmers to continue to manage their operations in a productive manner. NAWG opposed to the new definition of Waters of the United States (WOTUS) that went into effect March 2023 and supports the action taken by the Supreme Court in the Sackett Case, however there is still not clarity or consistency in WOTUS regulations.

Crop protection tools are needed to protect the wheat crop from pests and disease, but also to implement conservation practices such as conservation tillage. NAWG supports the regulation and use of pesticides under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA). EPA-approved, science-based nationwide labels provide growers with certainty about the products they use, but recent actions in some states has caused concern with our members. Growers need reaffirmation from Congress that while states have authority to regulate the sale and use of pesticides within their jurisdiction, they cannot impose labeling or packaging requirements in addition or different from the scientific conclusions of the EPA. To that end, we support H.R. 4288, the Agricultural Labeling Uniformity Act, bipartisan legislation reaffirming federal pesticide labeling uniformity and prevent state and local governments from adopting inconsistent labeling or packaging which would disrupt commerce and access to these vital tools.

There are efforts underway to improve the Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation process for pesticides. The EPA and other federal agencies are working on updated processes that may include mitigation practices and technology changes on farming operations. We must ensure that the mitigation required by farmers is workable for the varied farming operations across the country.

NAWG Talking Points:

- Any WOTUS regulation should be clear, predictable, and easily understandable by farmers.
- NAWG supports H.R. 4288, the Agricultural Labeling Uniformity Act, reaffirming federal pesticide labeling uniformity and prevent state and local governments from adopting inconsistent labeling or packaging which would disrupt commerce and access to these vital tools.
- NAWG supports a reasonable, workable Endangered Species Act consultation process for pesticide registration and review.

For more information, contact Keira Franz

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Economic Conditions in Wheat Country

The Farm Bill Provides Needed Certainty:

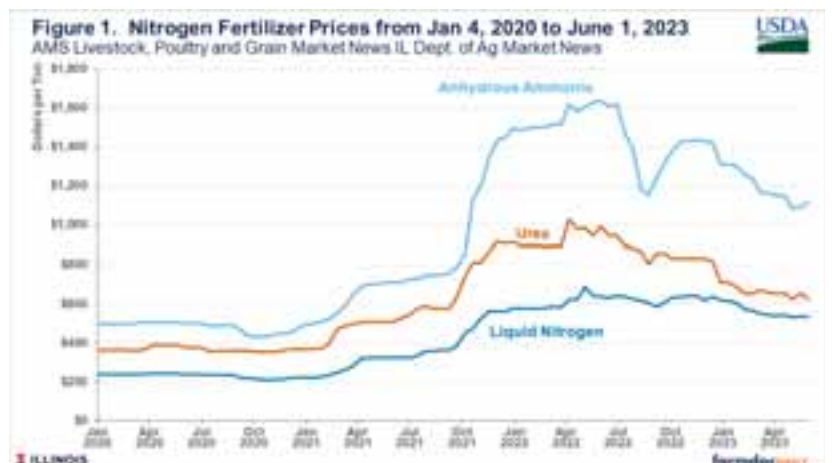
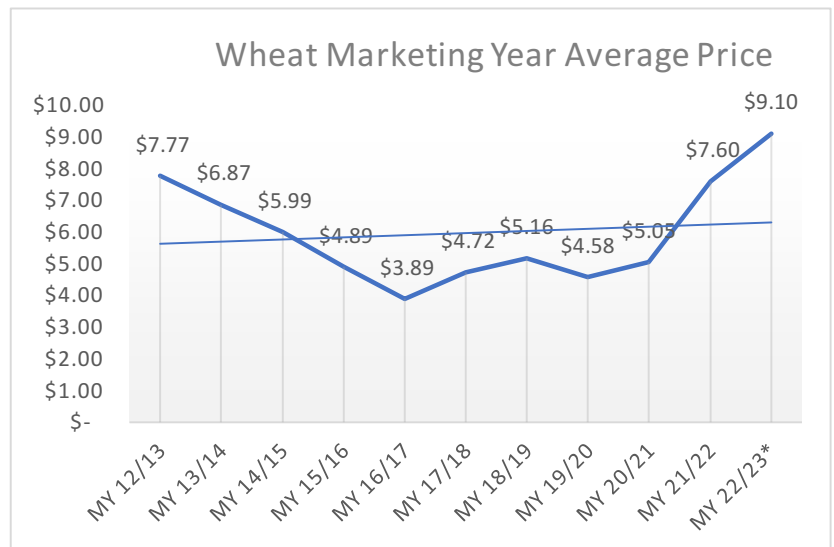
- The 2018 Farm Bill passed with historic bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. As Congress works to reauthorize the Farm Bill, continued improvements, stability, and certainty are needed to maintain a functional farm safety net.
- The 2022 Crop Year saw hard red winter wheat producing one of the lowest total yields in half a century thanks to droughts while drought conditions continue to be a concern throughout much of the wheat producing regions.
- Wheat growers look forward to working with you in opposing efforts to undermine the Farm Bill through other legislative vehicles and as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) continues its implementation of disaster aid for calendar year 2022.

Wheat Prices:

Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine, wheat markets underwent unprecedented volatility. In 2022, winter wheat prices soared from \$7.32 in February to \$13.45 in mid-May, then crashed to \$8.19 in early July. Futures prices have stabilized since then, and markets have factored events in Ukraine into their forecasts. As a result, wheat farmers are expected to see 10-year high Marketing Year Average Prices for 2023, which allows farmers to hedge against future economic downturns and inflationary input pressures.

Inputs:

Similar to the unprecedented volatility in wheat markets, input prices have seen record-high prices. For example, fertilizer has increased in price for two years, nearly doubling, while prices for natural gas, crop protection tools, and diesel have seen similar increases over the past two years. These increases in cost force farmers into difficult decisions in managing their farming operations. Thankfully, wheat prices have helped farmers manage these increased prices, but challenges remain.



Representation

(Continued from Page 1)

vantage of keeping control at a Federal level with CFIUS an interagency committee authorized to review certain transactions involving foreign investment in the United States and certain real estate transactions by foreign persons, in order to determine the effect of such transactions on the national security of the United States. Representative Johnson was not in session but was provided a plaque from NAWG for his work on the Committee on Agriculture.

State Legislation

A look at legislation closer to home, session is in



Left to right – President Doug Simons, Producer Terry Hand, Caren Assman, SDWGA Executive Director, Senator Thune



President Doug Simons represents SD Producers on the NAWG Board



Plaque awarded to Representative Johnson for his work on the Agricultural Committee

its third week and there are only two days left to introduce legislation. The Foreign Ownership of Ag Land is a bill that has seen challenges last year and again this year, primarily because similar law has been on the books since the 70's. There is a real concern for the lease portion of this bill because it affects our livestock groups and some small grain variety breeders. At the writing of this article, it looks like a compromise has been reached and the Ag Groups of the state will be neutral on the bill.

The other major issue that has surfaced are the three Eminent Domain bills. They have just been transferred to the House Energy and Commerce committee and await a hearing date. These three bills are tied into the two Carbon Pipeline issue which is also waiting for their first hearing. We will have a follow up in our next issue of the Wheat Advantage.



President Doug Simons, Senator Rounds, Caren Assman, SDWGA Executive Director, Producer Terry Hand



Meeting with Senator Thune about the Farm Bill



CEO for NAWG Chandler Goule, Senator Stabenow, Senator Bozeman

Source: South Dakota State University Extension

By Ruth Beck, Adam Varenhorst, Emmanuel Byamukama, Patrick Wagner, Paul O. Johnson and Dwayne Beck

Managing Wheat Residue to Prevent a ‘Green Bridge’

When wheat fields in South Dakota are cut for hay this year due to drought conditions or the need for hay, issues are presented.

In some fields where moisture was adequate or rainfall has occurred, wheat and weeds are growing back. Deciding what to do with this growth presents complex problems. The wheat and weeds are providing valuable ground cover and vertical architecture to partially replace that lost in the haying process.

At the same time, they are using valuable moisture and can cause insect, disease, and weed problems if they are not properly managed. Deciding on whether to remove this growth, or remove and replace it, or simply leave it alone for a while will depend on what is planned for the field next year and what conditions exist in the field along with probable weather trends.

Wheat Streak Mosaic Virus

Fields of winter wheat and spring wheat fields can be seriously affected by Wheat streak mosaic virus (WSMV). WSMV is spread by wheat curl mites.

According to researchers from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, wheat curl mites live on many species of grasses but particularly favor barnyard grass, green foxtail, and wheat.

Prevent the Green Bridge

Volunteer Wheat & Grassy Weed Control. The grassy weeds and volunteer wheat provides the wheat curl mites with a place to live (called the “green bridge”) until the new winter wheat fields begin to grow in the fall. “Green bridge” can happen with fungal root and foliar diseases but it is most commonly thought of in terms of insects and insect transmitted diseases.

Volunteer wheat and other grasses ideally would be dead two weeks prior to planting the fall crop. This provides time for the wheat curl mite population to die along with the WSMV that they spread. It also allows time for the cereal aphids that transmit Barley yellow dwarf virus to die off as well. Delaying seeding in the fall until after the weather cools (date varies with location and climate) can help to minimize the chance of these diseases spreading into the field from uncontrolled infestations in neighboring areas. Insecticide seed treatments do not reduce wheat curl mite populations.

There may be some benefit in their use for the reduction of aphid populations during the fall in winter wheat, which may also reduce transmission of Barley yellow dwarf virus. Control of volunteer wheat and grassy weeds, and delayed planting is the

best way to prevent a green bridge.

Adjacent Field Sanitation

The second most challenging scenario would be a field that is not going to wheat but is bordering a field going to winter wheat this fall or spring wheat next spring.

Good sanitation steps are required here also. Wheat curl mites and the cereal aphids can transmit diseases in both the spring and fall from adjacent fields that have hosts and the virus present. Wind often aids this movement. This commonly makes it easy to confuse WSMV infestation with herbicide spray drift damage.

Preventing spread to adjacent fields requires taking many of the same steps as those taken for fields going to wheat. Plants that host the virus need to be controlled early, especially in areas on the upwind side of the planned wheat field. Appropriate planting date guidelines still pertain.

Cover Crop Cleanup

Lastly, if you have received adequate rain, producers in these areas may be considering a cover crop to produce some feed or cover this fall. These are also areas that could harbor volunteer wheat.

These areas should also be cleaned up two weeks before planting a cover crop. Volunteer wheat growing in a cover crop is another area that can harbor the wheat curl mite, and aphids until they can move to newly planted winter wheat fields this fall.

The Bottom Line

Surface residue is very important to winter wheat success but so is soil moisture and good sanitation that prevents diseases and insects from bridging to the subsequent crop. Controlling volunteer winter wheat and breaking the green bridge, along with conserving moisture through post-harvest sanitation and retaining residue, are all tactics that will help next years’ wheat crop.



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We fight every day to ensure that life on the family farm continues to prosper and grow. We need your involvement and thank you for your continued support.

SDWI's current top priorities are:

- Helping shape the Farm Bill
- Preserving the farm safety net by protecting crop insurance
- Protecting land owner rights
- National farm program spending
- Shortline rail and transportation
- Agricultural research
- Free trade and marketing

SDWI officers, board of directors, and staff have been actively representing wheat farming interest in many policy areas in Pierre and Washington, DC.



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