



2025 AG Horizons — One Day Conference

Tuesday, December 2 — Ramkota RiverCentre, Pierre, SD

12 Sessions From Industry Leading Speakers

Visit with Exhibitors from a Variety of Industries



The annual Ag Horizons Conference will bring together producers, agribusinesses, researchers, and policymakers for a full day of learning and networking on Tuesday, December 2, 2025 at the Ramkota Hotel and Conference Center in Pierre. Hosted by seven South Dakota agricultural organizations – the South Dakota Wheat Growers Association, Crop Improvement Association, Oilseeds Council, Pulse Growers, Seed Trade Association, Soil Health Coalition, and No-Till Association – the event continues to be one of the state’s premier opportunities for farmers to hear from leading experts and connect with others in the ag community.

The 2025 conference will feature sessions on topics including soil and water quality, weed management, precision agriculture, and farm transition planning. Attendees will hear from speakers representing South Dakota State University, the South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, U.S. Wheat Associates, and others.

Twelve Certified Crop Advisor Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are available. “Ag Horizons is a unique collaboration among our state’s crop and conservation organizations,” said Jennifer Scharpe, executive director of the South Dakota Wheat Growers Association, on behalf of the conference partners. “It’s a day to learn something new, reconnect with friends, and head into the new growing season with fresh ideas.”

Registration is \$100 per person by November 15 and \$125 after. Participants can register online at SDWGA.org/ag-horizon or by mail. A block of rooms is available by calling the Ramkota Hotel at 605-224-6877 by November 15.

The conference also features a trade show and support from sponsors including BNSF Railway, Farm Credit Services of America, the South Dakota Wheat Commission, and Syngenta Crop Protection.

For more information, visit www.sdwga.org/ag-horizon or contact Jennifer Scharpe at sdwga@midco.net or 605-222-1919.



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September Trade Teams Begin Their Visits In South Dakota



In the first half of September, two representatives of East Africa's massive Bakhresa Group—a key player in East African food processing—visited the U.S. with South Dakota serving as the launchpad for their tour. The group, which also visited Kansas and Texas, sought to gain a better understanding of the US wheat supply chain, from farm to export and is actively seeking alternatives to its traditional Russian wheat supply.

The South Dakota portion of the tour included visits to the SDSU breeding programs, Sioux Nation Seed, and the Agtegra shuttle-loading facility in Kennebec, SD. "It was great to meet the Bakhresa Group team members and show them the South Dakota wheat industry," said Jon Kleinjan, Executive Director of the South Dakota Wheat Commission. "The visit provided them with a better understanding of how our wheat is produced and shipped and why we can consistently provide a quality product."

The visit was a success, culminating in the Bakhresa Group purchasing 5,000 metric tons of U.S. HRW wheat for use at their South African mill. This purchase symbolizes the start of

(Continued on page 3)

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Membership of the South Dakota Wheat Growers Association are invited to attend the Annual Membership Meeting on Tuesday, December 2 at 5:00 p.m. at the Ramkota RiverCentre (Gallery D), Pierre, South Dakota

This important meeting will include:

- Election of Board of Directors
- Priority Planning for SDWGA initiatives in 2026 and beyond
- Discussion on the proposed UP-NS Railway merger and MORE!

Your participation ensures that SDWGA continues to represent the interests and priorities of South Dakota wheat producers. We encourage all members to attend, engage in discussion, and help shape the future direction of your association.



September Trade Teams *(Continued from page 2)*



a new trade relationship, unlocking opportunities for US wheat in East African markets.

Mid-month, representatives from the Taiwan Flour Millers Association stopped in South Dakota as part of a Goodwill Mission touring the U.S. Taiwan has pledged to purchase \$10 billion in U.S. commodities—including soybeans, corn, wheat, and beef—over the next four years, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins.

As part of that pledge, the Taiwan Flour Mills Association (TFMA) signed a Letter of Intent (LOI) with the South Dakota Wheat Commission on September 19. The LOI outlines TFMA's plans to purchase approximately \$1.3 billion in U.S. wheat between 2026 and 2029.

"Agriculture is the backbone of South Dakota's economy, with \$5.4 billion in exports annually sup-

porting thousands of jobs across our state," said Jesse L. S. Fonkert, President & CEO of South Dakota Trade. "Wheat continues to play a vital role, and Taiwan's commitment to purchase American agricultural goods strengthens opportunities for South Dakota producers. We're proud to partner with the South Dakota Wheat Commission to host this mission."

"South Dakota's farmers work hard to produce some of the highest-quality wheat in the world, and it is encouraging to see that effort recognized through Taiwan's intent to purchase our wheat," added Bryan Jorgensen, Chairman of the South Dakota Wheat Commission, "This Letter of Intent provides opportunity for our producers while strengthening international relationships that are vital to agriculture. We are proud to see South Dakota wheat play such an important role in Taiwan's food supply."

The goodwill delegation spent several days in South Dakota, meeting with Governor Larry Rhoden, touring CHS and Sioux Nation, visiting a family farm, and experiencing the Black Hills.



**Scan the
QR code to
register
online**



Tuesday, December 2 — Pierre Ramkota RiverCentre

2025 Ag Horizons Schedule (Subject to Change)

7:30 – 8:00			Breakfast — Lobby
8:00 – 8:05	Opening Remarks		Welcome from Secretary Hunter Roberts, SD DANR — Amphitheater I
8:05 – 9:00	General Session	PM	Is weed management in South Dakota all doom and gloom or is there hope? — Dr. Eric Jones, SDSU Professor/Extension Weed Specialist Amphitheater I
9:00 – 9:50	Breakout Session	SW	Managing Soil and Water Quality for Productive and Resilient Cropping Systems — Kent Vlieger, NRCS State Soil Health Specialist — Amphitheater I
9:00 – 9:50	Breakout Session	CM	Laser Scarecrow and Smarter Nitrogen Use with Crops as Biosensors and Satellite Imagery — Dr. Ali Nafchi, SDSU Precision Agriculture Professor/Extension Specialist — Amphitheater II
10:00 – 10:50	Breakout Session	CM	2025-2026 Climate Review and Outlook — Laura Edwards, SDSU State Climatologist — Amphitheater I
10:00 – 10:50	Breakout Session	CM	Soil 101 to 2.0 with South Dakota Soil Coalition — Producer Panel of SD Soil Coalition Board of Directors — Amphitheater II
11:00 – 11:50	General Session	PD	Financial Performance of Production Agriculture Past, Present & Future — Nate Franzén, First Dakota Ag Banking President — Amphitheater I
12:00 Noon	Lunch & Keynote	PD	Charting the Course of Wheat Exports Amid Uncertainty — Julia Debes, U.S. Wheat Associate — Sponsored by the South Dakota Wheat Commission — Gallery B&C
1:30 – 2:20	General Session	PD	Celebrity Producers take the Post-Harvest Challenge — Ed Usset, U of MN Grain Marketing Economist — Amphitheater I
2:30 – 3:20	Breakout Session	IP	Speaker Panel: Clean Water, Endangered Species & Pesticide Policy: Regulatory Updates and Implications for South Dakota Agriculture, — Aaron Ward, DANR Water Quality Program Administrator and Rebecca Perin, EPA Region 8 Agriculture Advisor — Amphitheater I
2:30 – 3:20	Breakout Session	CM	Peas and Chickpeas in South Dakota: 2025 Crop Performance Insights — Dr. Chris Graham, SDSU Professor/Extension Agronomist — Amphitheater II
3:30 – 3:45	Break		Visit with Exhibitors and Enjoy Cookies — Sponsored by Farm Credit Services of America — Lobby
3:45 – 4:45	Breakout Session	PA	Emerging SDSU Technologies: Virtual Yield Mapping, Precision Cover Cropping, and Mapping Soybean N-Credit Variability — Dr. Ali Nafchi, SDSU Precision Agriculture Professor/Extension Specialist — Amphitheater I
3:45 – 4:45	Breakout Session	PD	Keeping the Farm in the Family: Estate and Succession Planning in a Changing Tax Landscape — Luke Edwards, Pierre CPA — Amphitheater II
5:00 – 6:00	Annual Meeting		South Dakota Wheat Growers Association — Gallery D
5:00 – 5:30	Annual Meeting		South Dakota Crop Improvement Association — Lake Sharpe
5:30 – 6:00	Annual Meeting		South Dakota Seed Trade Association — Lake Sharpe
6:00			Night on the Town — Dinner on your own

*Certified Crop Advisor Program Continuing Education Units (CEUs) – 12 credits available
Additional sponsors include BNSF Railway and Syngenta Crop Protection
Also, plan to visit with many exhibitors from a variety of industries!*

AG Conference Keynote and General Speakers Biographies

General Session Speaker

**Ed Usset — U of MN Grain Marketing
Economist**

Ed makes grain marketing practical through programs like “Winning the Game” workshops and the Commodity Challenge online simulation. He teaches courses on commodity markets and futures & options, writes for agricultural media, and authored Grain Marketing is Simple (It’s Just not Easy). Ed frequently speaks to farm groups across the Corn Belt about applying disciplined marketing strategies in real-world markets.

General Session: Celebrity Producers take the Post-Harvest Challenge

Breakout Session Speaker

**Chris Graham — SDSU Professor/
Extension Agronomist**

Dr. Chris Graham specializes in pulse crops and sustainable cropping systems. With extensive experience in field research and grower outreach, he works closely with producers to translate agronomic research into practical, on-farm strategies. His work focuses on improving productivity, profitability, and soil health through better crop management and variety selection.

Breakout Session: Peas and Chickpeas in South Dakota: 2025 Crop Performance Insights

Keynote Speaker

Julia Debes — US Wheat Associates

As part of the U.S. Wheat Associates team, Julia leads communications efforts and builds connections with state wheat commissions and global partners. A Kansas native with over 15 years of agricultural communications, she has held roles with the U.S. Grains Council, National Sorghum Producers, and USDA. Julia holds degrees from Kansas State University and Florida State University and writes regularly on trade and wheat industry topics from her family farm in Hoisington, Kansas.

Keynote Speaker: Charting the Course of Wheat Exports Amid Uncertainty

General Session Speaker

Nate Franzén — First Dakota National Bank

With more than 30 years of experience, Mr. Franzén has led First Dakota’s agricultural strategy and lending efforts while advocating for farmers and rural communities. He has testified before Congress and served as chair of the American Bankers Association’s Agriculture and Rural Bankers Committee. Nate also serves as chair-elect of the South Dakota Bankers Association and chairman of the South Dakota Agricultural Foundation.

General Session: Financial Performance of Production Agriculture Past, Present & Future



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Selling a Large Carry

Pricing spring wheat is not easy when cash prices are below \$5/bu. and the lowest since October of 2020. This is a real bear of a market but it brings with it one positive aspect: the return of large carrying charges in the market. And large carrying charges create an opportunity to sell a large carry.

Carrying charges are the price differences between nearby and deferred futures contracts. In spring wheat, positive carrying charges are not unusual at harvest. We enjoyed large carries during the harvest of 2024 and they returned in 2025. Harvest may be over but the large carries remain. In spring wheat, the Dec'25/May'26 carry has been trading near 34 cents per bushel (i.e., the May contract at a 34 cent premium to the December contract). This is a good carry, and nearly twice as large as your interest costs on stored grain.

On-farm storage combined with a weak basis and large carry offers a great opportunity to sell the carry in wheat. How do you "sell the carry?" Here is the storage hedge in four steps...

Step 1: Place wheat into on-farm storage (paying a commercial storage rate will take the fun out of this trade).

Step 2: Price grain with the sale of deferred futures (or use a basis-not-established contract with your local elevator). In late September, the May'26 wheat contract was trading near \$6.00/bu. and 34 cents higher than the Dec'25 contract.

Step 3: Watch the basis narrow, and there is a great opportunity for a narrower basis by next March or April. In late September, the Red River Valley spring wheat basis was posted at 85 cents under the Dec'25 contract, or nearly 120 cents under the May'26 contract. Over the past 10 years, the worst March/April

basis was posted at 60 cents under the May in the spring of 2016. With a little luck, I like to think that we might see a basis as good as 30 cents under the May'26 contract next spring.

Step 4: In March or April, unwind the hedge by selling wheat in storage and buying back May futures contracts.

Assuming the worst-case scenario—a spring basis of 60 cents under the May'26 contract—this strategy will result in a cash price next spring close to \$5.40/bu. (\$6.00 May futures sale less a \$0.60 under spring basis). That's 60 cents better than the late September bids near \$4.80/bu. If basis recovers to 30 cents under the May contract, your cash price will be \$5.70/bu., or 90 cents better than the late September price.

Let's review the pros and cons of selling the carry.

The pros . . .

- you are hedged against lower prices
- you can defer sales and revenues into a new tax year
- you capture the board carry, currently 34 cents from Dec'25 to the May'26 contract
- you buy time for basis improvement, and there is much room for improvement

The cons . . .

- no upside price potential if futures prices reverse trend

Selling the carry is a dull and conservative strategy because gains are limited to carry and basis improvement. If the big bull market of 2026 comes, you will leave money on the table. Should you be worried about a lack of upside potential? If higher prices come, create a new plan to make some early and profitable sales of the 2026 crop.

Save The Date

NAWG
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF WHEAT GROWERS



**U.S. WHEAT
ASSOCIATES**

NAWG/USW Winter Conference January 26-29, 2026 Washington, DC

NAWG committees meet to discuss ongoing policy and hear from a broad range of speakers engaged in policymaking at the federal level and from key industry stakeholders. Trade, transportation, budgeting, and planning for the future – these topics and more are tackled during the NAWG/USW Joint Winter Board Meeting.

To learn more, visit WheatWorld.org

South Dakota Wheat Growers Association Welcomes New Executive Director

The South Dakota Wheat Growers Association (SDWGA) is pleased to announce that Jennifer Scharpe has been named executive director, effective October 1, 2025. Scharpe brings more than 15 years of experience leading agricultural education and producer organizations and has a lifelong connection to production agriculture.



Jennifer Scharpe

Scharpe previously served as executive director of Colorado Agriculture in the Classroom where she expanded program reach to more than 350,000 students, teachers, and families annually and secured over \$1.4 million in public and private funding to grow agricultural literacy programs. Her career also includes leadership roles with the American Gelbvieh Association, the North American Limousin Foundation, and her own communications freelance business, JSignature Branding & Media, where she works with producers to enhance marketing and brand visibility. A graduate of Iowa State University with a master's in journalism and mass communication and a bachelor's degree in animal and range science from North Dakota State University, Scharpe is passionate about connecting people to agriculture and supporting the long-term success of farmers and rural communities.

"I am honored to join the South Dakota Wheat Growers Association and serve the farmers who are the backbone of the state's agricultural economy," said Scharpe. "I look forward to building on the strong foundation of education, communication, and advocacy that Caren Assman, and others before her, have so well established for this organization."

The SDWGA Board and membership extend their deepest appreciation and congratulations to Caren Assman, who has retired after many years of dedicated service to South Dakota's wheat producers. During her tenure, Caren made many valuable contributions to the association including expanding the Wheat Advantage newsletter to an eight-page publication reaching 5,000 readers, launching the South Dakota Wheat Yield Contest, and leading countless educational initiatives for growers – from the early Wheat Walks field tours to the more recent Rotate Into Profit seminars. She will continue working into December to help organize the annual Ag Horizons Conference on December 2, 2025, and to assist with the leadership transition.

"Caren's contributions to SDWGA and South Dakota agriculture have been extraordinary," said Doug Simmons, SDWGA president. ***"Her passion for grower education and advocacy has made a lasting impact, and we wish her all the best in her well-earned retirement."***

About the South Dakota Wheat Growers Association The South Dakota Wheat Growers Association (SDWGA) is a producer-led organization dedicated to advancing the interests of wheat growers across the state. Through advocacy, education, communication, and grower programs, SDWGA works to ensure a strong and sustainable future for the wheat industry in South Dakota. For more information or to become a member, visit SDWGA.org or call 605-224-4418.



Your Membership Dollars Provide Representation, Communication & Education

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.

SDWGA'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 marketin



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

Call 1-605-224-4418 or join online at www.sdwga.org

Are you a SDWGA Member?

Check the front of the Prairie Grains Magazine address label to see if you are a member. (SDWGA member) will be printed behind the your name if you are.

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