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Wheat Fungus Re-emerges in KS

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) - A fungus called wheat flag smut has re-emerged in Kansas after not being seen since the 1970s.

The Kansas Department of Agriculture says the fungus is not a danger to humans or animals and doesn't affect grain quality.

Jeff Vogel, of the KDA, says the main concern is that 15 countries have some restrictions on imports that might be infected with the fungus. He says the infestations found so far have been very low.

The Topeka Capital-Journal reports farmers are being encouraged to choose wheat varieties resistant to fungi, apply fungicides to their seeds before planting winter wheat, and delay planting.

The fungus has been found in Phillips, Smith, Rooks, Graham, Wallace, Logan, Trego, Ellis, Lincoln, Wichita, Scott, Ness, Rush, Barton, Pawnee, Edwards, Stafford, Kiowa, Pratt and Dickinson counties.

Associated Press