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Report: Winter wheat forecast down amid drought, surplus

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) - A government report shows U.S. farmers are expected to harvest their smallest winter wheat crop in more than a decade amid an ongoing drought that has devastated fields across the nation's breadbasket and a global surplus of the grain that has depressed prices.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service on Thursday forecast the nation's 2018 wheat crop at 1.19 billion bushels. If realized, that would be down 6 percent from the previous year.

Marsha Boswell, spokeswoman for the industry group Kansas Wheat, says the last time the nation's farmers harvested such a small wheat crop was in 2002.

She says it's not a surprise that production is down because the market is not really telling people to plant wheat given the surplus of it in the world.