

Day 17, Kansas Wheat Harvest Report

This is day 17 and the final day of the 2018 Kansas Wheat Harvest Reports, brought to you by the Kansas Wheat Commission, Kansas Association of Wheat Growers and the Kansas Grain and Feed Association.

According to the July 16, 2018 USDA/NASS Kansas Crop Progress and Condition Report, winter wheat harvested was 99 percent, near 97 last year, and 95 for the five-year average.

Based on July 1 conditions, Kansas' winter wheat production is forecast at 277 million bushels, down 17 percent from last year, but up 7 million bushels from the May and June forecasts, according to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Average yield is forecast at 38 bushels per acre, down 10 bushels from 2017. Area to be harvested for grain is estimated at 7.30 million acres, up 5 percent from a year ago, but unchanged from the May and June reports. This would be 95 percent of the planted acres, above last year's 91 percent harvested.

Chris Tanner, a farmer in Norton County, began his harvest during the first week of July and recently finished this past Wednesday, July 11. Tanner reported having a pretty average year, with yields from 32 to 74 bushels per acre, where continuous crop averaged around 50 to 60 bushels per acre. His test weights averaged around 59 to 62 pounds per bushel.

"It was a pretty average year for us," Tanner said. "A couple of months ago I would have said that this year's harvest would be a complete failure, but with the timely rain - the crop really needed it, which was good for harvest."

Rain was not a huge delay for Tanner's harvest, only keeping them out of the field a couple of days. Other than decreased wheat acreage and a later start time, Tanner said this harvest was not much different than previous years.

"What's different this year is less acres in the county, which means less time in the lines at the elevators," Tanner said. "It just makes for a quicker harvest."

Brian Linin, a farmer in Sherman County, took his first load in on June 28 and finished his harvest on July 8. Linin said this year's yields were better than expected, as long as you were spared from the hail. The areas hit pretty badly by hail had yields in the single digits, but areas that weren't hit could make upwards of 90 bushels per acre.

"We didn't have any test weights below 60 pounds per bushel," Linin said. "When we first cut, we had test weights up to 62 to 63 pounds per bushel. Our proteins were high, ranging from 11.8 to 14 percent, but on average, it was 12 to 13 percent."

Linin said they finished earlier than normal this year, where he usually finishes cutting

on July 15. He thinks it might be because he had an extra machine this year.

"In comparison to past harvests, this year bushels were down some, quality was higher because of the rain and I would also say due to the genetics," Linin said. "The hail surprised us this year. My dad told me this is the most hail he had ever seen in one area in his life. We had more hail than expected but the wheat was good given its conditions it went through."

Jeanne Falk Jones, Multi-County Specialist in Agronomy at Kansas State University Research and Extension in the Sunflower District said harvest began on June 26 and 27. She said they are pretty much done with harvest in the area, expect for some areas that were left due to hail damage.

Jones said their numbers were all over the board for yields and test weights. She said test weights ranged from 52-64 pounds per bushel.

"I cover Wallace, Sherman and Cheyenne counties and from what I've seen the variable of wheat has been driven by hail," Jones said. "Wheat that wasn't harvested was because it got hit with a lot of hail."

Jones reported the areas had a dry drilling season and didn't have any fall tillers which made them rely on the spring tillers. She also said they were dry for part of the spring growing season, which hurt the crop.

Jones also reported she has noticed because of the rain, volunteer weeds have started to become a problem. She said people need to pay attention to controlling those weeds while looking forward to next season.

"Truly it was hail that was the name of the game," Jones said. "What could have been really high potential wheat was lost during the hail storms. We are thankful for the wheat that we got during the growing season. We had a few really good past harvests and this year was kind of a letdown. We were getting 60 to 80 bushels. The dry conditions just really took it out on the wheat."

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