



FIELDS *of*

SOUTH DAKOTA WHEAT COMMISSION

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

OPPORTUNITY

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he South Dakota Wheat Resource Act, enacted by the 1961 Legislature states, “to protect and foster the health, prosperity and general welfare of its

people by protecting and stabilizing the wheat industry and the economy of the areas producing wheat” requires the establishment of a state wheat commission for the purpose of discovery, promotion, and the development of markets and industries for the utilization of wheat (SDCL 38-10-1. Legislative intent). Over 60 years later, the South Dakota Wheat Commission continues working to stabilize and improve South Dakota’s wheat industry through research, market development, and education.

From our new home in Brookings, the Commission has been able to strengthen an already close relationship with South Dakota State University (SDSU). In 2024, 54% of the budget was used to fund research, the majority going to SDSU researchers and special projects. The breeders for both spring and winter wheat continue to develop new varieties, pathologists work to stay ahead of constantly evolving plant diseases, plant physiologists examine ways to increase drought and heat tolerance, and many other researchers study a myriad of issues related to the wheat industry. All of this is made possible by funds from the SD wheat producers. In a world where wheat

is grown seemingly everywhere, market development also remains a key focus for the Commission. Funding for US Wheat Associates helps to promote the export of American wheat throughout the world. While US wheat is an excellent product and highly sought after in some markets, this export business cannot simply be taken for granted, as there is stiff competition from Canada, Australia, and the Black Sea Region. Relationships with grain buyers need to be constantly maintained and new ones need to be developed. On the home front, support for organizations such as the Wheat Foods Council, Eatwheat.org, and



In 2024, South Dakota's winter wheat production was projected to reach 44.5 million bushels



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the Home Baking Association helps to promote the healthy qualities of wheat foods and encourage more domestic wheat consumption.

South Dakota wheat production in 2024 was overall very good, but producers nonetheless faced challenges. The winter wheat crop turned out to be a record with a state average yield of 63 bu/acre, shattering the previous record of 58 bu/acre set in 2020. The spring wheat crop was decent, averaging

49 bu/acre, but far below the record of 56 bu/acre set in 2014. Despite good yields, producers struggled with low prices, low grain protein content, and high deoxynivalenol (DON) levels in some areas.

As a reminder, the Commission is made of five SD wheat producers, appointed by the Governor. Each commissioner can serve up to four three-year terms. Presently, it is a requirement that the commission consists of two commissioners from west river, two from east river, and one at-large.

Terry Hand of Hayes completed his fourth term as Commissioner in October of 2024. He has served on the Commission since 2012 and his wisdom and insight will be missed.

The SDWC is pleased to announce the appointment, by Governor Kristi Noem, of Levi Neuharth to a three-year term on the Commission. Neuharth lives in west central Stanley County where he is a second-generation farmer. He grows a diverse rotation of crops and integrates livestock as much as he can across his acres keeping his operation sustainable for the future. The Neuharth's are the recipients of the 2021 South Dakota Leopold Conservation Award. Neuharth values the importance of family - learning from his father when he was younger and now instilling his knowledge to his children to carry on to the next generation. He farms with his wife, Crystal, and their three children: Johnathon, Justin and Kaydee.

Increased agricultural production in countries like Brazil has intensified competition in global grain markets, affecting US exports. Additionally, logistical challenges, such as drought-induced reductions in Panama Canal capacity and geopolitical conflicts affecting shipping routes, have further complicated export dynamics.



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Dr. Jonathan Kleinjan began working for the Commission in January of 2024 and transitioned to the Executive Director upon the retirement of Reid Christopherson in June of 2024. Christopherson served as Executive Director of the Commission for ten years and his service is much appreciated. In fact, upon his retirement, Governor Noem announced June 20, 2024 to be 'Reid Christopherson Day'! Reid is staying busy in retirement with several volunteer roles.

In closing, it is no secret that wheat acres in South Dakota continue to decline. We have less than half the acres planted to spring and winter wheat than we did twenty years ago. There are a multitude of intertwining reasons

for the decline in acreage. For example, wheat has not benefited from the increased yields and stability that GMO technology has provided for other crops, wheat has not benefited from a friendly biofuels policy, and wheat crop insurance coverage has not been as robust as for other crops.

On the other hand, wheat remains an important part of a crop rotation that provides diversification and enhances soil health. In addition, a new emphasis on food security highlights the importance of domestic wheat production in times of uncertainty. Whatever the future may bring, the South Dakota Wheat Commission will continue to adapt and invest



Dr Jon Kleinjan
Executive Director

resources to continue working to stabilize and improve South Dakota's wheat industry through research, market development, and education.



A small group of Commission personnel attended the Milling and Baking short course in Manhattan, KS, seeing firsthand how different wheat flours affect the quality of baked goods.



The Commission supports milling research at the Northern Crops Institute in Fargo, ND. Featured here are different types, or "breaks", of wheat flours.



The Commission helped sponsor travel to the first Hard Red Spring Wheat Worker's Meeting in Fargo and Casselton, ND.



The Commission visited Portland, OR, and was able to tour the United Grain terminal. This PNW region is our country's number one port for wheat exports.



The Commission congratulates Dr. David Wright, South Dakota State University's former Agronomy, Horticulture, and Plant Sciences Department Head, on his retirement. Dr. Wright has been a valued partner to the Commission.



The Commission is proud to support scholarships at institutions across South Dakota. This past year's recipients from Lake Area Technical College in Watertown, SD were Isaac Van Scharrel from Hitchcock, SD, and Kaeden Bitterman from Canton, SD.

SOUTH DAKOTA

WHEAT PRODUCTION 2024

ACRES PLANTED

WHEAT TYPE	ACRES	% CHANGE FROM 2023
Winter Wheat	860,000	-7
Spring Wheat	660,000	-11
Total Wheat	1,520,000	-9

ACRES HARVESTED

WHEAT TYPE	ACRES	% CHANGE FROM 2023
Winter Wheat	760,000	13
Spring Wheat	635,000	-2
Total Wheat	1,395,000	0

BUSHEL HARVESTED

WHEAT TYPE	BUSHEL HARVESTED	% CHANGE FROM 2023
Winter Wheat	47.9 million	52
Spring Wheat	31.1 million	11
Total Wheat	79 million	30

YIELDS

WHEAT TYPE	BUSHEL/ACRE	% CHANGE FROM 2023
Winter Wheat	63	34
Spring Wheat	49	14

All wheat stored in all positions on December 1, 2024 totaled 53.4 million bushels, up from 43.8 million from 2023, a 22% increase.

Winter wheat plantings in the fall of 2024 are estimated to be 790,000 acres, down 8% from fall 2023.

Previous winter wheat record yield for SD was 58 bu/acre in both 2016 and 2020.

The spring wheat record yield for SD is 56 bu/acre in 2014.

SOUTH DAKOTA

WHEAT COMMISSION INVESTMENTS

	FY23		FY24 [†]	
	\$	%	\$	%
RESEARCH	714,619	51	814,468	54
MARKET DEVELOPMENT	168,675	12	222,350	15
EDUCATION/PROMOTION	99,135	7	136,736	9
POLICY	100,681	7	94,954	6
OPERATIONS*	39,985	3	109,202	7
TRAVEL	63,599	5	58,129	4
PERSONNEL	161,374	12	164,868	11
BENEFITS	39,775	3	33,912	2
TOTAL	1,388,023	100	1,511,412	100

*The increase in operations expense is due to paying rent for two offices for half of 2024, moving costs, and outsourcing the accounting.

[†]FY24 runs from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.



SDWHEAT.ORG

