

Day 13, Kansas Wheat Harvest Report

This is day 13 of the Kansas Wheat Harvest Reports, brought to you by the Kansas Wheat Commission, Kansas Association of Wheat Growers and the Kansas Grain and Feed Association.

Kansas rains were few and far between during the wheat growing season, but they have become a regular presence during the 2018 harvest. As the precipitation record has ticked higher and higher over the last few weeks, weeds have inched taller and taller in Kansas wheat fields and pose an issue to farmers... To spray or not to spray, that is the question. Farmers face dockage, or even refusal, at the elevator if their wheat exceeds a tolerance level. But when farmers spray herbicide to kill the weeds, they must wait an allotted number of days and chance the exposure of more rain to their crop while extending this marathon of a harvest even further.

Mike McClellan, a Rooks County farmer, reported that his fields received anywhere from 1.5 to 4.5 inches of rain on Saturday evening. Farmers who received the lighter end of the range may try to get harvest rolling again Monday, but McClellan expects that it may turn into a muddy mess. Between starting and stopping for rains, McClellan is still toward the beginning of his harvest and expects to be harvesting for at least another two weeks.

"It feels like we're still going to be cutting at Christmas," said McClellan. "In 1993, we cut wheat in June, July and August, and it may just be on track for that this year."

Yields for the two fields he has cut so far had exceeded expectations at 54 and 53 bushels per acre, but McClellan estimates that it'll be all 'downhill from there' with expectations of some of his other fields to yield in the teens and twenties. Test weights have ranged from 58-62 pounds per bushel, but more rains mean the possibility of test weights dropping. Proteins in the area are higher than average.

Harvest for Jenny Goering in Kearney County has also been dotted with rains. But the Goering family narrowly avoided the heavy rains and plans to resume cutting on Monday. Goering reported that their harvest is around halfway done and expects to be finished in about a week.

Yields on the Goering's organic wheat in the area have ranged from 20-30 bushels per acre, better than what she had expected going into the harvest season. Test weights have stayed above 60 pounds per bushel.

"Weeds will definitely put the pressure on us as we continue to cut," said Goering. "We're still in the middle of it, but we just have to keep going and keep our heads up."

The 2018 Harvest Report is brought to you by the Kansas Wheat Commission, Kansas Association of Wheat Growers and the Kansas Grain and Feed Association. To follow

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