

Kansas wheat farmer testifies on importance of Grain Inspection System

A Kansas wheat farmer testified in front of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry on "Perspectives on Reauthorization of the U.S. Grain Standards Act" on Wednesday, July 31, 2019.

Brian Linin, a farmer from Goodland and member of the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers, provided testimony about the importance of the Federal Grain Inspection Service on behalf of wheat farmers.

"The farmer works to provide the highest quality product that feeds the world. FGIS helps ensure that our customers are receiving the exact specifications that they need," said Linin. "We've provided a lot of information on milling quality, the inspection services and our production processes to our buyers giving them more confidence in our high quality product that other countries can't always ensure."

The U.S.'s grain inspection system, authorized through the Grain Standards Act, provides certainty to our foreign customers that all U.S. grains and oilseeds have been inspected and certified by an independent agency. This service is a great, unique value to U.S. commodities and is an important enhancement for our products on the competitive world market.

"As a grower of winter wheat, among other crops, I wanted to be with you here to serve as a voice for fellow wheat farmers across the country about the importance of maintaining a smooth export system," said Linin. "It's been a very difficult few years for farmers. Having a functioning and respected grain inspection system has enabled the U.S. to be a reliable exporter and facilitate continued demand for our commodities. When we've seen disruptions to our grain inspection system in the past it has resulted in billions of dollars of lost value throughout the production chain."

The Grain Standards Act serves a critical role in exporting grains and oilseeds, including U.S. wheat, of which about 50% is exported each year. U.S. wheat exports increased despite bearish factors such as a strong U.S. dollar, uncertainty about U.S. trade policies, and difficult inland transportation logistics. A properly functioning grain inspection system is critical.

"The grain inspection system is one that is valued by our overseas customers and adds value to our commodities," Linin reported. "Foreign customers can be assured that an independent agency has certified shipments to meet the grade requirements specified in a contract. This certainty and reliability has helped wheat and other U.S. commodities to grow our export markets and serves as a significant advantage of purchasing U.S. wheat versus wheat from other origins."

Other testimonies for the committee were provided by Tom Dahl, president of the American Association of Grain Inspection and Weighing Agencies, Bruce Sutherland, member of the board of directors for the National Grain and Feed Association and

Nick Friant, chairman of the Grades & Inspections Committee North American Export Grain Association. For the Brian Linin's full written testimony, please visit kansaswheat.org.