

Why we don't keep seed back from a blend

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I receive questions every year about wheat blends and keeping wheat seed back from blended fields to use as seed wheat. I don't have a problem utilizing blends. You are normally putting 2 or 3 varieties equally into a blend with the hopes that you are covering all bases. One variety will be strong against one disease, another variety, while weak on that disease, may bring some other strength into equation. Because of the wheat plants ability to compensate in tiller numbers and head size, the variety that is strong against this year's threat will fill in and compensate for that variety that is hurt. A blended wheat field may never be the top yielder in a given location, but it usually won't be on the bottom of the list either. It makes for a good balancing act and if you have competitive landlords, it may be a good way to deal with that issue! With that said, I do not recommend keeping seed back from a blend to replant in the fall. The original even split of the seed in what you planted last year will not be repeated in the seed that you harvest. It will be dominated by whatever variety excelled this year. Now, if next year is exactly like this year, then you'd be okay. But it probably won't be so you'll have a higher portion of the plants that may be hurt by next year's weather. Therefore, you need to start fresh each year with new certified seed going into that blend. Consider a blend to be a terminal situation. You do it once and then you start over with the same varieties, or maybe some newer ones. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Why were yields good and test weights so so.

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Invariably we all like to perform a post mortem analysis of a crop after the harvest. Which means that I receive a lot of calls from producers asking why this or why that. This year, in general and we are generalizing here, yields were good in some cases VERY good, but test weight was just so so. Leaf diseases were not a big issue this year. Simply not enough disease to the south to blow in any infection. Wheat streak mosaic and to a lesser extent barley yellow dwarf did impact yield somewhat. Naturally, weather was the big impact on the wheat crop. Cooler than normal weather through March, April and May were good for the developing wheat crop. Wheat likes cooler weather and it helps stretch out moisture resources when precipitation is below normal as it was this year. However, that cooler temperature did slow down development and pushed some crucial grain fill and plant maturation periods on into June when the temperatures started to heat up. One thing to remember about wheat is that if temperatures start to get up above 80 and especially above 85, the plant doesn't like it and it starts to die, slowly. There was some frost damage that took out primary tillers, but the coolness allowed secondary tillers to develop. But these tillers were then later maturing which put them into grain fill as those high June temperatures hit the area. Heat in late grain fill ends up hurting test weight. Oh, one other thing, we had at least 50% of last year's nitrogen applications that got used by this year's crop. So, long cool weather helped yield, late maturity hurt the test weight! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Wheat Variety Selection - 2013

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Wheat harvest wrapped up later than normal this year, or at least later than in the past 25 years, perhaps more like the wheat harvest of the 1950s. But planting time is less than 3 months away and you're going to want to get seed ordered soon. We talked about blends already this week, but what about varieties to consider. Results are still being tallied from K-State's Wheat variety test plots so consider this report "early returns". I'm also including some things from the just released 2013 Wheat Variety and Insect Ratings bulletin that is available online or at the Extension Office. As you do evaluate yields from this year's trials, remember that we had very light leaf disease pressure. Varieties that have poor disease resistance but good yield potential will probably show up very good this year. But in another year, you may have to treat with fungicides to repeat those high yields. As you look at results from western Kansas tests, you may think you are seeing good drought tolerance, but remember that many of those may also not have good soil borne resistance. We just need to figure that we have both soil borne and spindle streak mosaic virus in all our fields. So what's catching my eye in the early returns based on yield and disease resistance? Well, I still live Everest and I wouldn't write off Fuller, but you will need to spray it in heavy disease years. And that could hold on many of the varieties out there. Others to consider, in no order, Duster and Iba (both have good Hessian Fly resistance and would be good grazing wheats to plant early), SY-Wolf, Cedar, Grainfield and Redhawk. Stay tuned. This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420

KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.