2010 Wheat Variety Test Results Now Available For Most States

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Results from the 2010 University of Kentucky Small Grain Variety Test are available at www.uky.edu/ag/WheatVarietyTest. Links to all state variety testing programs can be also be accessed at this site.

The 2010 wheat growing season ended with Kentucky farmers harvesting 270,000 of the 420,000 acres of soft red winter wheat planted. A statewide average yield of 63 bushels per acre was recorded for a total production of 17 million bushels. The 150,000 acres not harvested for grain were used for forage production and cover cropping. Flooding in May contributed to fewer acres being harvested for grain and lower yields in some areas of the state.

In 2010, eighty-three wheat entries from seed companies were evaluated across Kentucky at 7 test locations. In addition to evaluating wheat varieties for differences in grain yield potential, the UK wheat variety tests also evaluate characteristics, such as test weight, heading date, plant height, winter hardiness, lodging and disease reaction. Additional specialized tests were conducted to measure wheat varietal differences in post-grain harvest straw yields, differences in wheat forage biomass yields and barley variety performance at a single location.

A thorough evaluation of variety characteristics allows growers to select a group of top yielding varieties and then base varietal selection on secondary traits important to their production system, such as maturity date, disease resistance, plant height, forage or straw yield potential.

Because weather, soil, and other environmental factors may alter varietal performance from one location to another, tests are annually conducted at multiple locations throughout the state. It is best to have multi-year data at multiple locations from which to draw conclusions. Single year data from one test location should not be used for variety selection. The University of Kentucky offers a statewide summary of varietal performance across all tests, over a one, two or three year period. Varieties that perform well across locations and years are more likely to perform well under future growing conditions.

Variety selection is an important component of profitability, both to maximize productivity potential and to utilize secondary characteristics important to the production system and management practices used. Most states have variety testing programs to offer growers free, unbiased, reliable information for variety selection. Δ

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