

Wheat Planted In Dust – Bins Will Bust

JOE VESTAL

LEWISVILLE, ARK.

Wheat has been a very productive crop in the past two years in southwest Arkansas. Much of this has been due to dry fall and winter growing conditions favorable to wheat yields. Low disease incidence has also been a positive factor. The dry conditions prompted a local producer to remark, "Wheat planted in dust – bins will bust," to describe how dry winters impact wheat yields.

Wheat seems to be a good option on the non-irrigated fields in southwest Arkansas and is a consistent profit producer. In fact, the average yield of the University of Arkansas' wheat research verification program in Lafayette County for the past two years is 87 bushels per acre (153 acre field).

Successful producers follow several recommendations to produce top yields. These include good field drainage, ryegrass/weed control and regular disease and insect scouting with treatments when warranted.

Adequate drain furrows should be installed after planting to improve good drainage. Be sure drainage ditches are clear of debris and ob-

structions that could allow water to back up onto fields during heavy rainfall events.

Also, now is the time to scout fields for annual ryegrass. Annual ryegrass is the number one damaging weed in our area. Only one ryegrass plant per square yard can significantly reduce wheat yields. A fall herbicide application should be applied when ryegrass is found. A spring application may also be needed. But achieving full control is critical since the ryegrass that emerges with the wheat will impact wheat yields the most.

Several excellent herbicides are available for use on wheat. Growers should be aware of the possibility that ALS resistant ryegrass may be a presence in their fields. The ALS herbicides include Finesse, Osprey and Power Flex. If you suspect ALS resistant ryegrass, contact your local county Extension Agent. They can provide protocols for obtaining ryegrass seed samples to determine herbicide resistance levels.

More information on strategies for controlling ryegrass is available at your local county Extension office. Δ

JOE VESTAL: Lafayette County Extension Agent, University of Arkansas



Link Directly To: **AGROTAIN**



Link Directly To: **PIONEER**