

Expect tight wheat seed

By J.T. SMITH

GOING into summer, the global wheat stocks-to-use ratio had plummeted to 10%, a record-low supply.

If strong wheat prices persist, expect wheat seed to be in tight supply for sowing a new crop this fall.

"If there's a variety you really want, then you'd better go ahead and book it now," advises Texas AgriLife Extension agronomist Billy Warrick of San Angelo.

Like other inputs nowadays, wheat seed costs are expected to be high.

"Seed is still less expensive than not getting a stand," adds Gaylon Morgan, Extension small-grains specialist, College Station. "So don't go overboard in cutting seed rates."

But don't sow a lot more seed than you need either, Morgan adds.

That depends largely on your goals.

Texas A&M research has shown side-by-side plots of the same wheat variety sown at 60 pounds seed per acre and a 90-pound rate without any significant difference.

Morgan concludes that a

Key Points

- Expect wheat seed to be in tight supply this fall.
- Producers should book certified varieties early.
- Disease resistance is a big consideration for some.

60-pound seeding rate can still give good grain yields.

On the other hand, if you aim to get forage production for livestock, he would stick with a seeding rate of 100 to 120 pounds.

Those aiming for forage typically want to plant earlier to get the grazing. But if going for grain, Morgan would target wheat sowing in a mid-October through mid-November window. In fact, some wheat sown up to December has done well on the Rolling Plains.

Warrick suggests a planting depth of no more than 1¼-inch deep.

David Worrall, wheat breeder, AgriPro wheat, Vernon, says Oklahoma State University already has indicated wheat seed will be significantly higher for sowing this fall.

"If you want certified seed, then book early," Worrall says.

Morgan says Texas A&M studies have shown that high-quality seed pays for itself.

Look at your situation

What's right for one grower, or region, may not be for another. Some varieties deal better with specific diseases. Consider the following:

■ Dumas wheat performs well under irrigation, especially in the Texas Panhandle, and does have some stripe rust resistance.

■ Cutter is susceptible to leaf rust, but has good stripe rust resistance.

■ TAM 111 has stripe rust resistance but is susceptible to leaf rust.

■ Jagalene, a Jagger and Abilene cross, is susceptible to leaf rust, but is stripe rust resistant.

■ Sturdy 2K is a good dual-purpose wheat for grazing and grain yield. It is awned.

■ Abilene Ag shows both leaf and stripe rust resistance and is a beardless wheat.

■ WinMaster also is awnless. It has shown good yields.

■ The 2158 variety from Oklahoma State University has shown some Hessian fly resistance. OSU also bred 2174 wheat, which has yielded well for many producers.

■ TAM 103 was developed more for the High Plains and Texas Panhandle.

■ Duster, developed by OSU, has leaf and stripe rust resistance, and can be dry-sown in the fall if a producer is forced into that situation under droughty conditions — hence, the variety's name.

■ Bullet, also from OSU, has good disease resistance, and OSU has touted it as its no-till wheat.



BOOK EARLY: David Worrall, wheat breeder for AgriPro, Vernon, Texas, expects popular varieties of certified wheat seed to be in tight supply as fall draws closer, and says growers should book their seed early.



STALKING WHEAT: Billy Warrick, Texas AgriLife Extension agronomist, San Angelo, inspects some wheat this spring in Taylor County.

■ Fuller from Kansas State University has both stripe rust and leaf rust resistance. Morgan says growers interested in it could contact KSU.

Other varieties include the new TAM 401, an early variety from Jackie Rudd, a Texas A&M wheat breeder at Amarillo. Also, Worrall says the new tall wheat from AgriPro called Jackpot, excelled in field trials based on one year of data performed in 2007.

Jackpot will only be available to seedsmen this year. At this time, 100% of the Jackpot seed is being grown in Colorado because of the seed production that's realized from yields there.

IPM interest

Chris Sansone, Texas AgriLife Extension entomologist, San Angelo, says if wheat prices remain strong, he expects more interest by growers in Integrated Pest Management. He suggests producers rotate and plant at least four of five different varieties of wheat per disease and pests.

This can help maintain resistance longer.

"The Hessian fly will have a tougher time of getting established," Sansone notes. "So take this opportunity to introduce new varieties into your rotation."

Remember seed treatments just last 35 or 40 days, and knock down the first generation of Hessian flies or greenbugs.

"So seed treatments help,



DON'T OVERDO IT: Gaylon Morgan, Extension state small-grains specialist, College Station, says good grain yields are achievable without sowing an excessive amount of wheat seed, especially with good certified varieties.

but producers still may have to deal with those pests later," Sansone says.

The trend for more grain sorghum acreage may mean more greenbugs from sorghum into wheat, and vice versa. So producers should stay alert.

There's some concern of the Russian wheat aphid, more so in northern Texas, he adds. And wheat streak mosaic virus has moved southward.

If a grower has the virus, Sansone would advise rotating out of wheat in the field for one year.



WHEAT SWITCHEROO: Chris Sansone, Texas AgriLife Extension entomologist, San Angelo, says rotating with several varieties of wheat, can help in maintaining resistance to the Hessian fly.