California Wheat

Made with the Golden Touch!

Weekly Wheat Bulletin

Date: January 24, 2008 Issue# 1

The Weekly Wheat Bulletin is designed to share quick, informal and reliable information about the state's wheat crop and disease conditions. Comments forwarded by Thursday morning of each week will be posted in the Bulletin for distribution Thursday evening. Archived copies of the 2008 Wheat Bulletin may be accessed on the California Wheat Commission website: www.californiawheat.org

For those of you that are new to our mailing list, the length of this bulletin will change from week to week. The amount of material is dependent on the contributions from our readers.

Comments:

1.10.08 – West Side San Joaquin Valley, "Wheat is all over the spectrum in maturity. Some fields just emerging from rain moisture and others that where irrigated early are in the boot. Some growers are talking about herbicide application and all growers are talking about the high cost of fertilizer. However due to the price of wheat no one seems to be talking about cutting inputs. In our area wheat has to compete with other crops that also have good prices and thus I do not see wheat acres going very high*." Mark McKean, Grower, Riverdale, CA*

1.24.08 – San Joaquin Delta. "Too much rain, standing water in planted fields, yellowing in some spots*." Mike Scriven, Grower, Stockton, CA*

1.24.08 – Central Coast. "Due to the high costs of fuel, seed, and fertilizer coupled with the lack of rain, there was very little wheat planted before the third week of December. During the third week of December, this area received 2.5-3 inches of rain.

At the end of December and the beginning of January there was a shortage of Blanca Grande wheat seed. After many attempts, we were able to locate a small amount of seed. There does not seem to be any seed available at this time.

Most grain that was planned has now been planted, but on Tuesday, January 22 we were hit with a rain storm that dropped between 4-6 inches on the area. The rain has caused flooding, school and road closures, and snow in many areas. The rain and snow continued through Thursday morning with a break predicted in the precipitation until Thursday evening. Thursday evening we were scheduled for another storm that is predicted to bring another 5-10 inches. That storm arrived 12 hours early. The break lasted only from about 4:00am on Thursday morning until about 10:00am." *Charles Darway, Grower, San Luis Obispo, CA*

1.24.08 – San Joaquin Delta. "Wheat in the Delta is going great." *Tim Grunsky, Handler, Phil O'Connell Grain, Stockton, CA*

Comments continued….

1.24.08 – Imperial Valley. "1.)Planting weather has been good with no significant rain events to delay seeding of the crop. 2.) All acreage will be planted to durum wheat. 3.) We are expecting approximately 100,000 acres planted this season (compare to 45,000 in 2007). 4.) Seeding is about 80% completed now with the balance expected by March 1st." *Bill Plourd, Handler, El Toro Export, Imperial, CA*

1.24.08 – Imperial Valley. "Still planting and watering wheat behind produce....with the very high price for durum I would expect this to be happening here for at least the next four weeks...earlier planting are progressing very well..." Roy Motter, Grower, Brawley, CA

Nitrogen Fertilizer Management:

"Now that we are in the middle of winter, growers whose wheat crops are successfully established and have entered the tillering stage of growth following timely planting in the late fall should be monitoring their crops for need for additional nitrogen fertilization. An excellent guide to nitrogen management of wheat is provided in UC ANR Publication 8167, "Fertilization of Small Grains", Part 4 of the on-line Small Grains Production Manual. Publication 8167 is attached to this bulletin. The entire Manual can be accessed at the UC Small Grains website (http://agric.ucdavis.edu/crops/cereals/cereal.htm).

Pages 1-3 of Publication 8167 discuss the role of nitrogen in the plant, nitrogen deficiency symptoms, nitrogen requirements and rates, and topdressing for yield, as well as variables that affect uptake efficiency and crop yield response to applied nitrogen. Many growers have planned for split nitrogen applications, with a portion of the nitrogen applied pre-plant and/or at planting and most of the remainder due at the mid-to-late tillering stage – the growth stage that the crop is now approaching in much of the Central Valley. Nitrogen applications made during this period, when followed by rain or an irrigation, are most effective for attaining maximum grain yield. So, now is the time for supplemental nitrogen applications if warranted by crop nitrogen status. As Publication 8167 states, stem nitrate-nitrogen tissue tests are an effective way to monitor crop nitrogen status. Stem nitrate-nitrogen concentrations of less than 6,000 parts per million at the tillering stage indicates crop deficiency (and a likely yield response to additional nitrogen fertilization).

Later in the growing season, when the crop reaches the boot stage, growers will need to decide whether or not to make a final nitrogen application in order to increase grain protein content. Many years of research trials have shown a 1 to 2% grain protein increase from 15 to 40 lbs of nitrogen per acre applied between boot stage and flowering." *– Lee Jackson, UC Cooperative Extension Specialist, Small Grains, and Doug Munier, UC Cooperative Extension Farm Advisor, Agronomic Crops, Glenn County*

Note to new and returning subscribers. If you have a question about wheat diseases or crop management that you would like addressed in the bulletin, please forward to info@californiawheat.org or fax to the California Wheat Commission (530) 661-1332. The Commission will post the answer in the following bulletin.