

APHIS Provides Update on Detection of GE Wheat

On June 7, 2019, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced that it was investigating a detection of genetically engineered (GE) wheat in an unplanted agricultural field in Washington State. The GE wheat plants in question were resistant to the herbicide glyphosate. After a thorough fact finding effort, APHIS has determined through testing that the GE wheat plants in question were developed by Monsanto (now owned by Bayer CropScience (BCS)) and referred to as MON 71300 and MON 71800.

There is no evidence that any GE wheat has entered commerce or is in the food supply.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) completed a voluntary food and feed safety evaluation on MON 71800 several years ago, concluding it was as safe as non-GE wheat currently on the market. MON 71300 contains the same gene for glyphosate resistance as MON 71800, previously evaluated by FDA. With respect to MON 71300, FDA states it "would have no safety concerns in the unlikely event that low levels of MON 71300 wheat or MON 71800 wheat were present in the food supply." Additionally, APHIS is announcing that a test kit will be available for our trading partners to detect MON 71300. Previous test kits detected MON 71800 found in Oregon (2013) and MON 71700 found in Washington (2016).

There is no GE wheat for sale or in commercial production in the United States at this time.

APHIS is collaborating with our state, industry and trading partners. Announcing the availability of this test is part of our commitment to provide the public and all of our partners with timely and transparent information about our findings.

After previous detections of GE wheat, APHIS strengthened its oversight of regulated GE wheat field trials. APHIS now requires developers to apply for a permit for field trials involving GE wheat beginning with GE wheat planted on or after January 1, 2016. Bringing GE wheat under permit enables APHIS to create and enforce permit conditions that ensure confinement and minimize the risk that the regulated GE wheat will persist in the environment.

Wheat Could Soon Be Gluten Free (Through Gene Editing)

*By: NAWG Summer 2019 Intern Merrick Irvin,
National Wheat Foundation Series Blog #3*

According to WebMD, about 1 in 100 people worldwide has celiac disease. "The only treatment is a gluten-free diet. When someone with celiac disease eats even tiny amounts of gluten, their immune system attacks the the lining of the small intestine. This can lead to malnutrition." Therefore, many of these individuals seek out alternatives to gluten products as well as stay vigorous on preventing cross contamination from food containing gluten. In this third blog of our five-part series, which looks at the progression of gene editing and technology on wheat, we will explore the current research being conducted to make a low-gluten variety of wheat.

What is Celiac-Disease?

Gluten is a general name for the proteins found in wheat (wheatberries, durum, emmer, semolina, spelt, farina, farro, graham, KAMUT® khorasan wheat and einkorn), rye, barley and

triticale – a cross between wheat and rye. Gluten helps foods maintain their shape, acting as a glue that holds food together.

If a person has Celiac disease, eating foods that contain gluten may cause damage to the lining of the small intestine and possibly hinder absorption of nutrients. Possible symptoms of gluten intolerance include abdominal pain, bowel movement issues, bloating, and fatigue.

New Wheat Varieties May be the Solution

Dr. Chris Miller at Kansas State University is currently researching what wheat varieties that naturally have low levels of reactivity with individuals with a gluten intolerance. By finding a wheat variety that already has low reactivity with gluten intolerant individuals, an ideal starting material can be utilized to reduce gluten content through breeding and gene editing technology.

Each person reacts to gluten differently and is categorized under a spectrum disorder. Some only experience mild abdominal pain or an upset stomach, while others require a trip to the hospital after ingestion of gluten. Everyone's immune system antibodies react to different proteins in different ways, making categorizing reactions difficult.

Luckily, new wheat varieties have been found that vastly reduce the amount of gliadin, a component of gluten and main cause of intolerance, where about 97% of the gliadin content is removed. While not all gluten components have been removed, decreasing reactions to gluten is a major step in the right direction. Decreasing the reactivity where a stomachache is experienced rather than a trip to the hospital when a gluten intolerant individual consumes foods containing gluten.

The Future of a Wheat Variety Without Gluten

Dr. Miller's work may lead us down the pathway of obtaining a celiac-safe wheat variety. The research being conducted shows bright futures for those who must constantly avoid products that contain gluten. Wheat has been gathered and cultivated by humans for thousands of years, and through gene editing even those with Celiac can soon enjoy this crop which is vital for a healthy diet.

Northeast Ag Expo Wheat Variety Data Now Available

The data from the 2018-19 Northeast Ag Expo Wheat Trials is now available. You can find this data by using this link: <http://www.ncneagexpo.com/small-grains>

The Northeast Ag Expo Team is a North Carolina Cooperative Extension group that serves Camden, Currituck, Chowan, Gates, Pasquotank, and Perquimans Counties.

NCSGGA Announces Assessment Referendum Voting Date

The North Carolina Small Grain Growers Association (NCSGGA) has announced that an Assessment Referendum will take place on **August 7, 2019**. Polling places will be located throughout the state in each county extension office. This assessment is for a six year period on all small grain (wheat, rye, oats, barley, rape seed/canola and grain sorghum). The North Carolina Board of Agriculture approved the request for this referendum at their meeting in Raleigh, NC on February 26th, 2019. The assessment will be ½ of 1 % on wheat, rye, oats, barley, rape seed/canola and grain sorghum for a six year period. This assessment period will begin on January 1, 2020 and will continue until December 31st, 2025.

NCSGGA President Timmy Thomas of Timberlake NC, said, “This assessment is important to the small grain growers of North Carolina to continue the work of the association in Grower Education, Research, Marketing, Promotion, Administration and enhancing ways to grow small grain more profitable for farmers in North Carolina”.

All North Carolina Farmers who grow small grain over the age of 18, as of August 7, 2019 are eligible to vote during regular business hours of their local county office of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. Voting will also be available at the Blacklands Farm Mangers Field Day this year which will be held at the Coastal Carolina Cotton Gin in Fairfield on August 7th. For more details, contact Dan Weathington, NCSGGA Executive Director: 910-736-8258, Nikki Johnson, NCSGGA Communications & Outreach Education: 919-809-8657, North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, or your local county office of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service.

National Association of Wheat Growers: Weekly Update

FFT Hosts USMCA Roundtable with Congressman Dan Newhouse (WA-04)

On Monday, July 22, 2019, Farmers for Free Trade (FFT) is holding a roundtable with Congressman Dan Newhouse (WA-04) in Pasco, Washington. The event is being hosted by Tri-Cities Grain and co-hosted by the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) and Washington Association of Wheat Growers (WAWG). This farm roundtable is part of FFT's Motorcade for Trade tour which is going around the country and holding similar events in order to rally support for the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

Soil Health Partnership First Wheat Field Day - July 30

On July 30, 2019, the Soil Health Partnership (SHP) will host its first wheat focused field day in Red Lake Falls, MN from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Trinity Creek Ranch Wheat Field. NAWG's Environmental Policy Advisor and SHP Steering Committee Member Keira Franz will be attending the field day. For more details and to register, visit here: <https://www.soilhealthpartnership.org/field-days-events/>.

Agri-Pulse: WOTUS Repeal Advances

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has sent the White House the final version of a measure to repeal the 2015 rule that expanded the range of wetlands, ditches and other features regulated by the Clean Water Act. Once the White House review is complete, EPA can formally kill the old rule and move forward with finalizing its replacement by the end of the year....Because of conflicting court rulings, the Obama-era WOTUS rule is the law of the land in 22 states, while pre-2015 regs and guidance are in place in the other 28...Litigation over both the repeal and replacement rules is a virtual certainty, which means the regulated community likely will be dealing with a confused regulatory landscape well into 2020.

New Farmers.gov Feature Helps Producers Find Farm Loans that Fit Their Operation

On July 17, 2019, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced a new online tool that can help farmers and ranchers find information on farm loans that may best fit their operations. USDA has launched

the new Farm Loan Discovery Tool as the newest feature on <https://www.farmers.gov/> , the Department's self-service website for farmers. Farmers who are looking for financing options to operate a farm or buy land can answer a few simple questions about what they are looking to fund and how much money they need to borrow. After submitting their answers, farmers will be provided information on farm loans that best fit their specific needs. The loan application and additional resources also will be provided.

Senate Ag Committee to Hold Hearing on Ag Research

On Thursday, July 18, 2019, the Senate Committee on Agriculture will hold a hearing on USDA's agricultural research programs focusing on recent concerns around the relocation of two research agencies and the department's handling of climate change research. Scott Hutchins, USDA's deputy undersecretary for research, education and economics, will be the lone witness.

NWF Accepting Entries for 2019 National Wheat Yield Contest

The National Wheat Foundation (NWF) is currently accepting grower enrollment for the 2019 National Wheat Yield Contest! The Contest is divided into two primary competition categories: winter wheat and spring wheat, and two subcategories: dryland and irrigated. The Foundation is accepting entries for Spring Wheat at this website: <https://yieldcontest.wheatfoundation.org/> . The Spring wheat entry deadline is August 1st with an early registration deadline of June 15th.

NCSGGA Upcoming Events

July 21st - 23rd, 2019
NC Seedsmen's Convention
Marriott Grande Dunes
Myrtle Beach, SC

July 25th, 2019
Northeast Ag Expo
Summer Field Day
Roberts Brothers Inc.
169 N Gregory Rd.
Shawboro, NC 27973

August 1st/ 9:00am
Research & Education Mtg.
NCSGGA Office
3822 Bland Road
Raleigh, NC 27609

August 7th, 2019
NCSGGA Assessment Referendum Voting Day
All NC County Cooperative Extension Services Offices

August 7th, 2019
Blacklands Farm Managers Tour
Coastal Carolina Cotton Gin
1100 N Lake Rd.

Fairfield, NC 27826

August 15th – 16th, 2019
NCSGGA Board Meeting
Sheraton Imperial Hotel
Durham, NC

September 7th, 2019
CALs Tailgate
PNC Arena
Raleigh, NC

October 15th – 17th, 2019
Hoke Co. Ag Awareness Week
Hoke-Robeson Cotton Gin
Maxton, NC

October 22nd - 24th, 2019
Stanly County Ag Awareness Week
Stanly County Agri-Civic Center
Albemarle, NC

November 2nd - 6th, 2019
NAWG Fall Mtg.
Santa Fe, New Mexico

November 6th, 2019
Northeast Regional Ag Expo
Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center
Williamston, NC

November 8th, 2019
Person Co. Ag Field Day
Huck Sansbury Park
Roxboro, NC

December 5th – 6th, 2019
NCSGGA Board Meeting
Sheraton Imperial Hotel
Durham, NC

The North Carolina Small Grain Growers Association, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation formed to encourage, promote and develop more efficient and effective small grain marketing and production practices and to participate in all matters relative to the interests of small grain producers. For more information please contact Dan Weathington, Executive Director of NCSGGA at danweathington@gmail.com / 910-736-8258 or Nikki Johnson for Outreach Events and Communications at nfjohnson0902@gmail.com / 919-809-8657.