

Michigan Farmer Column for September 2020 edition

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Is it an increased yield for the Great Lakes State?

Michigan farmers are waiting to see if USDA's earlier prediction of an increased yield of 81 bushels per acre is going to come true! The past wheat crop has been decreasing due to some tough fall weather and growers inability to get the wheat they wanted into the ground in ideal conditions. In fact the average yield last year was only 71 bushels per acre and is projected to be 81 bushels per acre this year.

In June, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Great Lakes Region office released a harvest forecast indicating Michigan wheat growers would harvest 460,000 acres this summer, down from 490,000 acres in 2019. 520,000 acres were planted this year versus 540,000 planted last year. NASS forecast total Michigan production to be 37.26 million bushels – including an increased yield of 81 bushels/acre in June.

When the final numbers are, if that yield forecast pans out the 2020 wheat yield will be up 10 bushels/acre above 2019 and the crop will be – *up nearly 3.2 million bushels from last year.*

In the rest of the US, the forecast has not been so rosy, but is about remaining flat: Total production of 1.2 billion bushels would be a 38 million bushel increase from a year ago. Meanwhile, average national yield was predicted to be 52.1 bushels/acre, down from 53.6 bushels/acre from a year ago.

The Michigan Wheat Program will let Michigan Farmer subscribers know the actual final yield when the final USDA-NASS numbers come in!

2020 Summer Wheat Field Day

The Michigan Wheat Program's annual Summer Wheat Field Day was held virtually this year given the new COVID rules. Even though we had a different format, the meeting continues to be an outstanding event with registrations at nearly 170. A highlight of the day in the past has been the opportunity for growers to view the research plots and talk with researchers about their projects. We tried to keep the event as interactive as possible, by including videos and photos from the field.

By the time this issue of *Michigan Farmer* hits your mailbox, the videos and handout materials from the 2020 Summer Wheat Field Day will be available at miwheat.org under the Education and Previous Events tabs.

Ramping up Research for 2020-21

The key purpose for establishing the Michigan Wheat Program was to fund research on yield and quality issues to help Michigan wheat farmers. With the 2020 harvest upon us, we are working to fund research for the next fiscal year.

The key areas of research in which the board has focused in the past are: breeding/genetics; disease management, nutrient management; processing/quality; cover crops; high management; health; diagnostics; double cropping with soybeans; marketing; rotation; variety trials and weed management.

When research projects are complete, we launch those final reports on our website at www.miwheat.org/research. The different topic areas are listed, so you can focus your search via topic.

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