



Rediscover W H E A T™

The official publication of the Kansas Wheat Commission and the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Vanier Family donates \$1 million to future of wheat research; campaign passes halfway mark

The Jack and Donna Vanier family continued their legacy of giving by donating \$1 million to the future of wheat research.

“As we enter the golden age of wheat research, this gift to the Kansas Wheat Commission Research Foundation (KWCRF) will ensure a bright future for our state’s most iconic crop,” said Ron Suppes, a Kansas wheat farmer who serves as the chair of the KWCRF Steering Committee.

“Wheat is something that touches lives across the world every day, from the Kansas farmer to the suburban mom to children in developing countries,” said the Vanier family. “For our family, wheat is ingrained in our heritage and is a proud cornerstone of our business, so we are honored to give back to the industry that has blessed us with so much.”

John J. Vanier had a bold passion for the milling industry, and through saving and hard work, was able to afford a then-struggling Western Star Mill Company in 1925. As his business began to expand, so did his family, which includes Jack and Donna Vanier, as well as their children Marty, Mary and John, the generous individuals who now have given a gift that will shape the Kansas wheat industry for years to come. The KS Western Star variety, which was developed at Kansas State University, will be available to farmers in fall 2020.

The KWCRF was established in 2011 as the official fundraising organization for the Kansas Wheat Commission. The Foundation works to raise private dollars to combine with public funds for the advancement of wheat research including the accelerated release of wheat varieties. Much of this research is conducted at Kansas State University.

Over the past half century, Kansas wheat farmers have contributed millions of their own hard-earned dollars toward wheat research through the wheat checkoff. However, the cost of research continues to increase while government funding decreases. The Kansas Wheat Commission Research Foundation was created to increase research funding above and beyond the resources of the wheat checkoff. And while the checkoff is paid only by farmers, the Foundation allows private individuals and all segments of the wheat industry to support wheat research through tax-deductible gifts.

KWCRF announced on July 17 that its Fields Forward research fundraising campaign has surpassed the \$2 million mark toward its goal of \$4 million by the end of 2021.



“The continued success of the Fields Forward campaign is a credit to the generosity and commitment to wheat research by all segments of the wheat industry,” said Suppes. “We sincerely thank our donors who have invested in the future of wheat research through the next several decades.”

Other lead donors include The Mull Family Foundation, with a gift of \$300,000; MKC, with a gift of \$150,000; Great Plains Analytical Laboratory, Cereal Ingredients, Inc. and Robert Hatch with a gift of \$100,000; and \$50,000 gifts from CoMark Equity Exchange, Skyland Grain, GrainCraft and ProValue Insurance.

Funds raised through the campaign will be used for three different purposes:

- 1. Fields of Research** — Funding ongoing wheat research programs that improve the profitability of farmers while improving the quality of wheat for end use.
- 2. Fields of Study** — Keeping a full pipeline of future research talent by supporting students and technicians in research fields essential to wheat.
- 3. Fields of the Future** — Building funds for the long-term support of wheat research, while maintaining the level of technology and facilities necessary to sustain that work.

The campaign accepts many types of gifts to support wheat research including cash, stock transfers, donations of grain and deferred gifts such as will bequests.



To learn more about the Fields Forward Campaign, visit our website: fieldsforward.org

KANSAS WHEAT

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\$100 per year

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Grain fill weather helps offset challenges to 2020 wheat crop

On July 10, USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service released their July Crop Production report. The Kansas winter wheat production forecast was at 307.2 million bushels, which was down 9% from last year. Yield was forecast at 48 bushels per acre, down 4 bushels from 2019. Harvested acres were down 2% this year at 6.40 million acres.

Harvest began in south central Kansas in early June, but really got rolling about June 15. Early reports were that quality was good, test weights exceptional, average to above average yields, and protein levels slightly below average.

As harvest progressed north and west, test weights were slightly lower and protein was a little higher. Areas in southwest and

north central Kansas faced an extreme drought throughout the growing season. Areas in central Kansas faced a late season freeze, which caused yield loss; however, excellent grain fill conditions in late spring and early summer helped offset the freeze damage.

By July 12, Kansas winter wheat harvested was 95%, well ahead of 75% last year, and ahead of 90% for the five-year average.



Kansas Wheat hosts virtual wheat tour

Crop scouts stopped in wheat fields across the state over three days in mid-May and calculated potential yields using a history-based formula provided by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. This formula has traditionally been used by the Wheat Quality Council's Hard Red Winter Wheat Tour, which is held each year during the first week of May.

This year's tour was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so a virtual tour was held the week of May 18 by Kansas Wheat and Kansas State University Research & Extension, with support from the Kansas Department of Agriculture. While the virtual tour was based loosely on the WQC's tour, it did not follow the same routes, nor did scouts visit as many fields. This virtual tour gave a broad look at the crop in the lieu of the regular tour.

Overall crop yield potential for the state was estimated at 44.5 bushels per acre, 3.5 bushels lower than the July USDA estimate of 48. This estimate was a snapshot in time of the potential of the crop.

Drought, freeze damage and stripe rust distress 2020 wheat crop

Total precipitation received across Kansas during the 2020 wheat growing season was anywhere from five inches below normal to close to normal in central and western Kansas. The numbers indicate that severe, long-term drought stress has been established in parts of the state.

Several wheat fields in north central Kansas and the western third of the state were showing symptoms of short-term drought stress, including leaf rolling and loss of older (lower) leaves and a blue canopy coloration. These symptoms were sometimes coupled with damage from the freeze events which causes abortion of older leaves and yellowing of lower canopy to be more pronounced.



Thanks to our farmers, there's plenty of safe food available

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, we all saw the temporarily empty shelves at the grocery stores. People were rushing to buy staples — bread, milk, eggs, meats, flour and, of course, toilet paper — in bulk.

But, experts in the agriculture industry said we don't need to worry about food shortages, because for many Kansas farmers, it's business as usual.

"The farmers, ranchers and agribusinesses of Kansas are an integral part of the economic backbone of the state," said Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Mike Beam. "During this time of uncertainty, Kansas farmers and ranchers are continuing to care for their crops and livestock as they do every day. While we've seen some empty shelves in grocery stores, I want to assure everyone that there is, and will continue to be, safe and adequate food available across Kansas and the United States."

Kansas State University hosts drive-thru flour distribution

Kansas State University Department of Grain Science and Industry partnered with Kansas wheat farmers to provide flour for those in need in the local community.

Three months after Kansas State University implemented limited operations and moved to remote instruction, the department of Grain Science and Industry brought the Hal Ross Flour Mill back online to manufacture the flour.

As safer at home orders began, faculty noticed the absence of flour at local supermarkets and wondered if the university's milling facilities could be used to aid the local community. This idea received unanimous support from college and university leadership and moved into the planning stages.

"We know people are struggling with basic food supplies, including flour. It's something K-State and the department could do," said Gordon Smith, department head for grain science and industry. "We have a mill, we have highly-skilled faculty to run the mill and continued support from the Kansas Wheat Commission and Kansas wheat farmers. It is a locally sourced, farm to table, philanthropic endeavor by K-State."

The university hosted a drive-thru flour distribution on June 18. There was no charge for the flour, and occupants of each vehicle received a 10-pound bag.

Kansas State University is the only higher education institution that offers all three degrees in milling, baking and feed sciences, which are available through the Department of Grain Science and Industry within the College of Agriculture.

Shawn Thiele, IGP Institute Associate Director and Flour Milling and Grain Processing Curriculum Manager at K-State, loads a 10-pound bag of flour into a vehicle during the drive-thru flour distribution. The wheat was provided by Kansas wheat farmers through the Kansas Wheat Commission.



Wheat Food Council works with influencers

Wheat producers in Kansas and across the country came together in 1972 to create the Wheat Foods Council (WFC) as a national non-profit organization to promote the category of wheat-based foods. WFC is a one-stop source for everything about wheat and wheat foods nutrition. The WFC includes grain producers, millers and bakers, baking suppliers and life science companies.

Due to COVID-19 and the unforeseen circumstances we all faced, WFC activities looked a little different this year. Along with meetings being held online, they are also transitioning their content to be online as well. By doing this, they have seen a great change in activity and success. By creating short, 1-minute videos with experts and infographic style communications, they were able to get their point across in a very productive and fun way. Once they had created these videos, they then put them out on social media and were able to have tremendous pickup in return. As they grow their 800,000 viewers, their main target is personal trainers.

WFC works with personal trainers and chefs that set the menus for restaurant chains and major international companies. A major reason WFC chose to work with these influencers is because of their reach and followers, allowing them to impact many different people. They partnered with a culinary institute to educate the chefs and inspire new items on their menus. Personal trainers have a reach that works as a direct impact on the clients. The clients then share what they have been doing with their personal trainer to their network, whether it be friends or family. When they started this collaboration in 2015, most personal trainers did not realize the nutritional value of carbohydrates, but over the years WFC has noticed a huge turn around on that.

"We picked personal trainers as our influencer target because they were giving bad information that was reaching a lot of people, and we thought it was the right step to turn it around," said Tim O'Connor, President of Wheat Foods Council.

USDA Cochran Tunisia professionals visit the IGP Institute

The lack of quality in wheat being imported to Tunisia has led to an incredibly high amount of bread waste. In an effort to help change the course of the wheat policy in Tunisia, participants engaged in the USDA Cochran Tunisia Market Reform within the wheat value chain. This course was held August 11-24, 2019, at Kansas State University's IGP Institute and hosted nine fellows. The participants engaged in discussions regarding U.S. wheat standards, storage and quality among other things. They also participated in field trips to U.S. Wheat Associates in Washington D.C., farms, grain elevators, flour mills, bakeries and export facilities in New Orleans.

"The quality of wheat being purchased by the Tunisian government is very bad, which leads to waste in the processing stage and by the end user," says Nabil Maouia, agricultural specialist at USDA foreign agriculture service and course participant.

In addition to flour milling and grain processing, the IGP Institute also offers courses in the areas of feed manufacturing and quality management, and grain marketing and risk management. To learn more about these other training opportunities, visit the IGP Institute website at www.ksu.edu/igp.

USW hosts seminars to help customers make purchase decisions

As a key part of its commitment to transparency and trade service, U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) produces an annual Crop Quality Report that includes grade, flour and baking data for all six U.S. wheat classes. The report compiles comprehensive data from analysis of hundreds of samples conducted during and after harvest by partner organizations and laboratories. It provides essential, objective information to help buyers get the wheat they need at the best value possible.

Kansas Wheat CEO Justin Gilpin presented quality data about the 2019 hard red winter wheat crop at seminars in South America.

"South America is a priority market for Kansas wheat," said Gilpin. "Hard red winter wheat is an excellent fit for many of this market's needs, and there is an increased interest in HRW with current market conditions. These seminars allowed for direct discussions on expanding those opportunities and growing markets for U.S. wheat in this region."

U.S.-Japan Tariff Agreement is a good deal for wheat farmers and their customers

U.S. wheat represents about 50 percent of all the wheat Japan imports each year, valued at more than \$600 million. That volume represents more than 10 percent of total annual U.S. wheat exports, generally benefiting all U.S. wheat farmers. The text of the U.S.-Japan tariff agreement signed in Washington, D.C., confirms that the agreement will provide imported U.S. wheat the same preferential advantage that is now given to Canadian and Australian wheat under the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). When the tariff agreement is implemented, Japan's effective tariff on imported U.S. wheat will drop to the same level Japanese flour millers now pay for Canadian and Australian wheat. Since the CPTPP agreement entered into force, market factors have kept U.S. wheat competitive. Without this new agreement, however, U.S. wheat imports would have become less and less cost competitive to the point that Japan's flour millers would have no other choice than to buy more of the lower cost wheat from the CPTPP member countries.



To learn more about international marketing, visit our website: kswheat.com/international

Kansas Wheat Farmers Featured in U.S. Wheat Associates 40th Anniversary Campaign

On January 12, 1980, wheat farmer leaders with Great Plains Wheat and Western Wheat Associates officially merged to become one organization, U.S. Wheat Associates (USW), to focus on building overseas demand for U.S. wheat. To mark its 40-year anniversary in 2020, USW launched an outreach effort to recognize and celebrate the people who produce the wheat and their enduring partnerships with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, wheat buyers and wheat food processors around the world.

The primary component of the USW campaign is a landing page on www.uswheat.org titled "Our Story." The page includes historical background and profiles of U.S. wheat farm families and overseas customers. The campaign also features a video that defines the value created by farmers, the U.S. wheat export supply system and the service the USW organization offers to flour millers and wheat food processors around the world.

Three generations of Kansas wheat farmers were featured in the U.S. Wheat Associates 40th Anniversary Campaign. They include (l-r) Jeremy Millershaski, Gary Millershaski, Earl Kleeman and Kyler Millershaski of Lakin.



Kansas Wheat hosts virtual trade team with customers from Brazil

Kansas Wheat Commission held its first ever virtual trade team on June 10 with customers from Brazil. These customers had the opportunity to learn more about the current wheat crop, growing conditions and updates about how harvest is progressing. The event was moderated by Aaron Harries, VP of Research and Operations for Kansas Wheat and held in cooperation with U.S. Wheat Associates, the industry's export market development organization, and the Oklahoma Wheat Commission.

Kansas wheat farmer Martin Kerschen, from Garden Plain, gave a live report from a Kansas wheat field. He said his wheat was nearly ready to harvest, stating that they would begin test cutting on June 12 and that harvest should be in full swing by the weekend. He said it would take him about 7-10 days to complete his harvest, with the hot, dry, windy weather that is predicted for the area.

"We wish you guys could come up here and see how good this crop is going to look, and the berries in it," Kerschen said. "We want to trade with you, knock down the trade barriers, and let's just all get along and have a good time doing it."



Long-sought opening of Brazilian wheat TRQ

Brazil's government announced it intends to implement a tariff rate quota (TRQ) allowing up to 750,000 metric tons (MT) of wheat to be imported duty-free from countries outside the Mercosur trade agreement. Brazil first agreed to this TRQ some 24 years ago when it joined the World Trade Organization (WTO). The Brazilian government is now moving forward with developing a final process and date for implementing the TRQ.

Through U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) and the U.S. government, wheat farmers have worked and negotiated for several years with Brazil's government to open the TRQ and create a more open market there for U.S. hard red winter (HRW) and soft red winter (SRW) wheat.

Brazil is the fourth largest wheat importer in the world but Argentina and other countries in the Mercosur agreement have had a competitive advantage with mostly unlimited duty-free access to the market. Wheat imports from countries outside the Mercosur agreement including the United States are subject to a 10 percent tariff. However, USW has always conducted activities in Brazil to keep its millers and bakers informed about the quality and value of U.S. wheat. As a result, when Brazil opened provisional TRQs in 2008, 2013 and 2014 because its Mercosur partners had wheat supply challenges, U.S. HRW and SRW made up more than 80 percent of imports.

Kansas wheat farmer testifies on importance of Grain Inspection System for U.S. export markets

A Kansas wheat farmer testified in front of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry on "Perspectives on Reauthorization of the U.S. Grain Standards Act" on July 31, 2019.

Brian Linin, a farmer from Goodland and member of the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers, provided testimony about the importance of the Federal Grain Inspection Service on behalf of wheat farmers.

"The farmer works to provide the highest quality product that feeds the world. FGIS helps ensure that our customers are receiving the exact specifications that they need," said Linin. "We've provided a lot of information on milling quality, the inspection services and our production processes to our buyers giving them more confidence in our high quality product that other countries can't always ensure."

The U.S. grain inspection system, authorized through the Grain Standards Act, provides certainty to our foreign customers that all U.S. grains and oilseeds have been inspected and certified by an independent agency. This service is a great, unique value to U.S. commodities and is an important enhancement for our products on the competitive world market.

The Grain Standards Act serves a critical role in exporting grains and oilseeds, including U.S. wheat, of which about 50% is exported each year. U.S. wheat exports increased despite bearish factors such as a strong U.S. dollar, uncertainty about U.S. trade policies, and difficult inland transportation logistics. A properly functioning grain inspection system is critical.



Brian Linin, a farmer from Goodland and member of the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers, pictured with Senator Pat Roberts, testified on the importance of the Grain Inspection Service for U.S. exports.

K-State chosen as hub for improving U.S. winter wheat

The USDA's National Institute for Food and Agriculture selected Kansas State University to serve as a center for efforts to improve U.S. winter wheat varieties.

The university received \$1 million to establish the International Wheat Yield Partnership's (IWYP) Winter Wheat Breeding Innovation Hub. K-State will lead the effort to evaluate research findings from several IWYP projects that contribute to "significantly improved" wheat yields, according to officials.

Hub partners will seek ways to stack – or combine – desirable traits from those projects into elite winter wheat varieties for U.S. growers. Desirable traits may include genetic improvements that make winter wheat more resistant to pests, disease or drought, thus improving its yield potential.



To learn more about farmer-funded research, visit our website: kswheat.com/research

K-State releases three new wheat varieties

Kansas State University recently released three new wheat varieties.

The new releases include two hard red winter wheat varieties – KS Western Star and KS Dallas – and one hard white wheat, KS Silverado. They were all developed at the K-State Agricultural Research Center in Hays, Kan. The wheat breeding program at Kansas State University, with locations in Manhattan and Hays, receives funding from the Kansas Wheat Commission through the two-cent wheat checkoff.

Thanks to wheat breeding programs like the one at K-State, producers have ever-improving options of wheat varieties to plant. Whether it's improved resistance or increased yields, wheat breeders are creating varieties that meet producers' changing needs.

These three new varieties will be available to Kansas wheat farmers in fall 2020 through Kansas Wheat Alliance associates.



Survey shows Best Management Practices for improved wheat yields

Researchers at Kansas State University are looking to the experts – commercial wheat growers – on real-world best management practices for improving wheat yields in the state. This study is supported by Kansas wheat farmers through the Kansas Wheat Commission's two penny wheat assessment, and not only gives a snapshot of how wheat is managed, but more importantly how management practices are associated with yield.

Dr. Romulo Lollato, K-State's Extension Wheat Specialist, and Brent Jaenisch, a K-State Ph.D. student in agronomy, have been gathering field-specific wheat management practices from farmers across the state. The main objective of this project is to collect information on a field level about wheat management strategies (i.e. planting date, variety selection, yield, etc.) for hundreds of wheat fields throughout Kansas.

"A sustainable farm should yield and make money. You also need to leave your farm in good shape for the next generation."

- Dr. Lollato

The study covered a total of about 700 fields from three regions: west, north central and south central Kansas. These regions were chosen because of their importance in terms of wheat acreage in Kansas, and fields were grouped within region due to the similar weather conditions of temperature and rainfall. Planting date, seed rate, fungicide use and amount and timing of nitrogen applied were management strategies that had the greatest effects on yield.

Grain Craft increases commitment to quality with additional donation to wheat research foundation

Grain Craft, the largest independent flour miller in the nation, has increased its commitment to improving wheat quality with another gift to the Kansas Wheat Commission Research Foundation (KWCRF). The gift will build upon previous support of research to improve wheat quality and yield through proper fertility management.

“Preliminary results from the research indicate there is a strong correlation between proper fertility management of wheat by farmers and not only the quantity, but quality of the protein produced,” according to Romulo Lollato, Wheat Production Extension Specialist at Kansas State University in Manhattan.

Grain Craft’s contribution makes the company a lead sponsor of the Fields Forward Campaign. Fields Forward is the campaign to raise \$4 million for the KWCRF. The three focuses of the campaign are funding of ongoing wheat research, developing future research talent, and building funds for the long-term support of wheat research facilities and technology. More information is available at www.fieldsforward.org

“Grain Craft has led by example as a liaison between its customers and wheat scientists,” said Justin Gilpin, CEO for the Kansas Wheat Commission. They educate their customers about wheat quality while communicating those quality needs upstream to the research community. That dialogue is invaluable.”

“Grain Craft is committed to sourcing wheat with excellent milling and baking characteristics,” said Alan Koenig, Chief Supply Chain Officer for Grain Craft. “We are proud to further our support of the ongoing improvement of wheat quality and the advancement of quality for the entire supply chain.”

Great Plains Analytical Laboratory, Cereal Ingredients, Inc. and Robert Hatch donate to research

Great Plains Analytical Laboratory, Cereal Ingredients, Inc., and their CEO Robert Hatch, have committed a \$100,000 donation to the Kansas Wheat Commission Research Foundation in support of impactful wheat research. The gift will be directed toward ongoing research aimed at developing wheat varieties that result in high-quality baked goods. Hatch is Chairman and CEO of Cereal Ingredients, Inc., a specialty food ingredients

manufacturer he founded in 1990, and CEO of Great Plains Analytical Laboratory, an analytical laboratory founded as a response to a need in the grain, flour, baking and food industries for a high level of service, response time and expertise.

The Kansas Wheat Commission Research Foundation differs from the wheat checkoff. While the checkoff does fund wheat research, it also is used for marketing, promotion and

education. Donations to the Kansas Wheat Commission Research Foundation will be used only for wheat research.

Through its Fields Forward fundraising campaign, the Kansas Wheat Commission Research Foundation is raising funds further wheat research efforts led by K-State faculty that increase the profitability of farmers while improving the quality of wheat for millers, bakers and consumers.

Kansas Wheat Commission Results of Operations & Cash Roll Forward* July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 Unaudited

Cash at July 1, 2019		\$4,260,963
Wheat assessment collected	\$6,933,408	
Building related income	665,972	
Other income	89,220	
Sponsorship income	34,500	
Interest income	46,715	
Refunds of wheat assessments	(472,305)	
International marketing	(1,490,570)	
Research	(2,067,526)	
Administration	(398,048)	
Domestic marketing	(1,196,371)	
KWIC Facility Support	(125,981)	
Special Projects	(5,000)	
Public issues	(232,403)	
Net cash effect of operations		\$1,781,611
Cash at June 30, 2020		\$6,042,574

Income received each year by the Kansas Wheat Commission depends upon the size of the state’s wheat crop. In 2019, farmers produced 338 million bushels of wheat, up 22% from 277 million bushels in 2018.

The Commission collected about \$6.9 million from the voluntary Wheat Assessment, and refunded \$472,305. Each year, the budget is subject to approval by the farmer-elected board of the Kansas Wheat Commission.

In FY 2012, the KWC began construction of the Kansas Wheat Innovation Center, a major investment that has helped shape a bright future for wheat production in Kansas.

Connecting with consumers amid a global pandemic

Launched in November of 2017, Eatwheat.org is a website that features stories of American wheat farmers. Along with farmer stories there are also recipe pages, and a learn section focused on everything from different types of flour to gene editing and a get inspired section with creative and fun activities for all ages.

Since the launch of the website, traffic has steadily risen to 15,000 to 17,000 visitors per month. Website traffic mainly comes from Pinterest, where people search for recipes and find our site, and hopefully learn more about farmers and their livelihood. Due to quarantine in late-March and early-April, the number of visitors increased, peaking at the end of April with more than 45,000 monthly viewers. Since the end of the peak, traffic has dropped down to 30-34,000 per month, which is still double from before the COVID-19 quarantine.

Two years ago, we brought a group of food bloggers to Kansas during wheat harvest. They got to ride in a combine and tour a flour mill and bakery. But with current travel conditions, it wasn't possible to host an in-person event this year, so we started looking at other options. Subscription boxes have become extremely popular over the past few years, so we wanted to tap into their exciting, yet practical formula to create a more engaging relationship between wheat farmers and their audience.

The target audience consisted of women who not only consume content, but also create content. As we identified this new audience, we considered how to create a greater impact with an audience we couldn't interact with in person. We developed two limited supply boxes, one with baking activities, the other with crafting activities, to send to this audience for free as a way to spend a fun afternoon with their family, all the while creating a connection with Kansas wheat and wheat farmers.

In order to promote these boxes, we collaborated with Instagram micro influencers located in Kansas that had an audience that matched our target audience and could authentically promote these boxes within their typical content. We chose these influencers because while their audience is small, their followers are more relevant and are more engaged than those of a larger influencer. In addition, this was a cost-effective approach to promotion.

The boxes were all requested within hours of the promotion, and other interested consumers were able to download the activities and use their own supplies to bake wheat foods and create craft projects.

Within a few days of the promotion, it reached 18 states, had 83,634 impressions, 1,700 engagements and 373 link clicks.



To learn more about consumer promotions, visit our website: eatwheat.org


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