
For Immediate Release**Contact: Wilma Trujillo**
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By Wilma Trujillo

Collaborative On-Farm Testing (COFT) began in 1995 when 28 eastern Colorado wheat producers agreed to plant the newly released variety 'Halt'. Since then, a number of newly released wheat varieties (Akron, Yumar, Ankor, Prowers 99, Above, Bond CL, Avalanche, Hatcher, Ripper, and Bill Brown) have been tested in collaboration with farmers around the Southeast Area. During the 2010 growing season, six on-farm wheat variety testing sites and four small variety test plots were planted and harvested in Baca, Prowers, Kiowa, and Cheyenne counties.

COFT offers an opportunity to wheat producers to evaluate new varieties in their own fields and demonstrate the adaptability of the varieties to growing conditions in different regions throughout Colorado. Wilma Trujillo, CSU Extension SEA Agronomist, has been actively involved in the COFT program since her arrival in March 2010. Some of her activities included recruiting new volunteer growers, delivering seed, assisting with planting, maintaining field and crop information, planning test layout and operations, coordinating visits, and communicating with growers and CSU coordinators. During harvest, she helped farmers weigh grain produced from each plot, computing yield, moisture and test weight and determining grain protein content.

Colorado winter wheat production broke a record in 2010, with an average yield of 45 bushels per acre. This is the largest winter wheat crop harvested since 1985. The record is the result of timely rains, improved wheat varieties and the accumulative effect of best management practices. In the Southeast Area's COFT sites, the tested wheat varieties average yields ranged between 45 and 53 bushels per acre and with protein contents above 12 %.

On-farm research can be tedious and require a great deal of time, but the information obtained from research plots has an important economic impact in the area. In Southeast Colorado (Baca, Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Prowers counties), there are potentially 631000 acres for winter wheat production. A yield increase of one bushel per acre will represent an income increase of \$ 4.6 million at today's wheat market value of \$ 7.25 per bushel. COFT results are powerful tools to help farmer to drive Southeast Colorado economies to higher levels.

Colorado State University Extension is working with area producers to plant the 2011 COFT. In Southeast Colorado, we are increasing the number of sites to 8 as well as the number of varieties to 6. Planting was delayed due to the lack of adequate soil moisture. With rain in the forecast for the fall, and good weather conditions during the spring, there is no doubt farmers will have another record wheat harvest in 2011.

Wheat Producers interesting in hosting a COFT program, please can contact your local extension office.

For more information visit www.ext.colostate.edu/SEA