

# Newsheat

Volume 7 • Issue 2 • Summer 2017



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**Photo: a wheat field harvested near Chappell**  
*Courtesy of Jan Flohr*



Randon Peters  
President  
McCook

With our grain bins full, I'm pleased to say we were blessed with a great harvest this year! Good yields, test weight and great protein were our rewards for having sound management practices. There were many challenges this year, but fortunately wheat is a very resilient crop. Although the price still isn't what I'd like it to be, it sure was satisfying to be sitting in the combine seat and listen to the markets as they rallied during harvest.

I often wonder what it would take to receive a higher price for the crops we grow. And of course the answer is simple, build demand! As wheat is a globally traded commodity, fair and equitable trade agreements are vital to our farms. I hope we can renegotiate current agreements and enter into new ones that would help broaden our markets.

I hope all your harvests have been fruitful and favorable weather follows. I can always be reached for further discussion by e-mail at [randonpeters@gmail.com](mailto:randonpeters@gmail.com).



Mark Spurgin  
Executive Board  
Paxton

It must be summer. The temperature is 100 degrees and no rain. We just completed our wheat harvest. In our area we were lucky to harvest one of the best crops ever. We are not the best farmers in the world, particularly as compared to the McCook area farmers as far as yields go, but we averaged around 68-70 bushels this year. We didn't have any stripe rust or wheat streak mosaic virus. Our protein went from 9.8 to 13.1 depending on the variety. Our Grainfield had the top yield and best protein. We used a split application of fertilizer and two applications of a fungicide. This helped in our protein content and also kept the plant healthy. This program wouldn't work at \$3.50 wheat but looks good after the wheat took a \$1.00 plus bounce up.

We have not had a rain since May 25th. Our dryland corn is needing a drink along with the pastures. The good thing is the weeds are not growing either. The cattle markets are good, everyone is making a little money. I hope our people in DC remember us when negotiations on trade take place. The National Association of Wheat Growers are doing their best in representing us-keep up the good work. Be safe and have a good rest of the summer; fall will be here before we know it.

[spurg@nebnet.net](mailto:spurg@nebnet.net)



Scott Osler  
Executive Board  
Elsie

The dry late spring and summer we are experiencing in southwestern Nebraska is reminding us that when wheat is part of a rain fed rotation, there are several benefits besides the crop raised during the current season.

The wheat made a pretty good crop if you were able to avoid the Wheat Streak Mosaic. And we have seen a run up in prices even though we are not really at profitable levels yet. The spring crops planted into wheat stubble are showing noticeably less stress levels than that planted into corn stalks.

When considering your crop mix for next year, remember that wheat offers several benefits beyond the actual crop raised.

I can always be reached at [scott3y@gmail.com](mailto:scott3y@gmail.com)



Jeff Ruggles  
Executive Board  
McCook

Harvest has finished in southwest Nebraska and yields were variable, with most producers in the McCook area having pretty good wheat on fallow ground. The month of June was dry. McCook received a trace of rain for the month, so the continuous and marginal ground suffered some.

The market has come up, giving producers an opportunity to price wheat at a level not expected a couple months ago. Some big premiums have been noted for high protein wheat.

As we move into late summer, NWGA and the National Association of Wheat Growers will be turning attention to trade issues around the world and the development of new farm policies (Farm Bill). I'd be happy to hear any input or ideas from growers across the state.

I can be reached at [ruggles\\_jeff@yahoo.com](mailto:ruggles_jeff@yahoo.com)

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

The following is a list of upcoming events and meetings for both NWGA and NWB. Events in *italics* will have the NWGA Mobile Baking Lab present. Those wanting additional information on an event, who are interested in participating at an event, or are interested in volunteering at an event can contact the NWGA office for additional details.

August 15-16: Certified Seed Days - Gurley, Chappell, Hemingford

August 16: NWB board meeting - Ogallala

*August 17-19: Chase County Fair - Imperial*

August 18: NWGA Annual Golf Tournament - Imperial

*August 24: Water & Crops Field Day - North Platte*

September 1: Farm Bill Listening Session - Grand Island

September 12-14: Husker Harvest Days - Grand Island

September 25-27: Farm Bill Policy Fly-in - Washington, DC

*October 14: Commodity & Russ's Market Education Tailgate - Lincoln*



# ***Managing for Wheat Streak Mosaic Virus***

Article by: Cody Creech, Gary Hein, Stephen Wegulo, Jeff Bradshaw, Justin McMechan

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Wheat streak mosaic virus (WSMV) problems have been extensive throughout the western Great Plains this year significantly reducing the yield potential of many fields. In Nebraska, most of the serious virus problems have occurred in areas where pre-harvest hail occurred last summer. However, a critical factor contributing to the serious issues this year was the very warm, extended fall.

The wheat curl mite is a vector of a complex of three viruses in wheat, the most common being WSMV. Wheat infected with WSMV is characterized as being stunted with a yellowing mosaic pattern on the leaves. Head size and number of tillers is often reduced which lowers wheat yields. These viruses can only become a problem if mites survive the summer on a living bridge host and become numerous in the fall to carry the virus into the new crop wheat.

The extended fall in 2016 allowed mite populations more time to build up to greater densities and increased movement into the new crop, thus increasing risk. In addition, the warm fall enabled greater virus replication and buildup within the infected wheat plants, and therefore, increased virus impact.

Approximately 90 different grass species have been listed as potential hosts for the wheat curl mite through field observations. Of these hosts, wheat is considered to be the primary host with mites having high rate of reproduction. With the exception of wheat, corn is one of the most well documented and tested hosts for the wheat-mite-virus complex. Mite activity and virus spread from corn to wheat has been shown to be most severe when corn maturity is delayed past wheat emergence. Early maturation of corn in most areas last year minimized this risk and limited the importance of corn as a bridge host.

Pre-harvest volunteer wheat has by far the greatest risk for mite and virus development; therefore, managing this green bridge host is critical to reduce the risks from this virus complex. It is important to identify the presence of this volunteer at harvest and focus efforts on eliminating this serious threat and avoid harvest losses. Without these sources of mites serious virus problems will not result, even if environmental conditions are quite favorable.

Pre-harvest volunteer wheat and other mite hosts must be controlled throughout the summer to reduce suitable mite hosts and should be completely controlled at a minimum two weeks prior to planting wheat. Mites can only survive about a day off a green host so they must find a new host to enable their survival.

Tillage and/or herbicides can both be effective at controlling hosts. Both operations would need to be completed about a month before planting wheat to allow sufficient time for the hosts to completely dry up and cease being a suitable host.

If not adequately controlled, mite populations will continue to build throughout the fall. Mites will move from these green bridge source fields in all directions as the wind changes directions through the fall. However, studies have shown that a greater potential for movement to the south and east of source fields, and this is likely due to the prevalence of winds from the northwest during the fall movement period (see Mite Movement Animation <http://passel.unl.edu/custom/wheat-mite-visualization/>). Fields adjacent to the source fields are at greatest risk, and in many situations a gradient of movement and virus spread can be seen from these source fields. However, under serious mite/virus presence in volunteer, mites and virus can spread well beyond the neighboring field.

Controlling volunteer wheat and other grass hosts is the key to managing WSMV. Some wheat varieties have some resistance to WSMV and could be used when in a high-risk scenario. Wheat infected after planting in the fall will likely suffer some level of yield loss. Once infected, no options remain to prevent yield loss.

A Nebraska Extension video that describes more about the wheat curl mite, WSMV, and how to manage it can be accessed at <https://mediahub.unl.edu/media/7596>.



## *U.S. Wheat Production to Fall to Lowest Level since 2002/03*

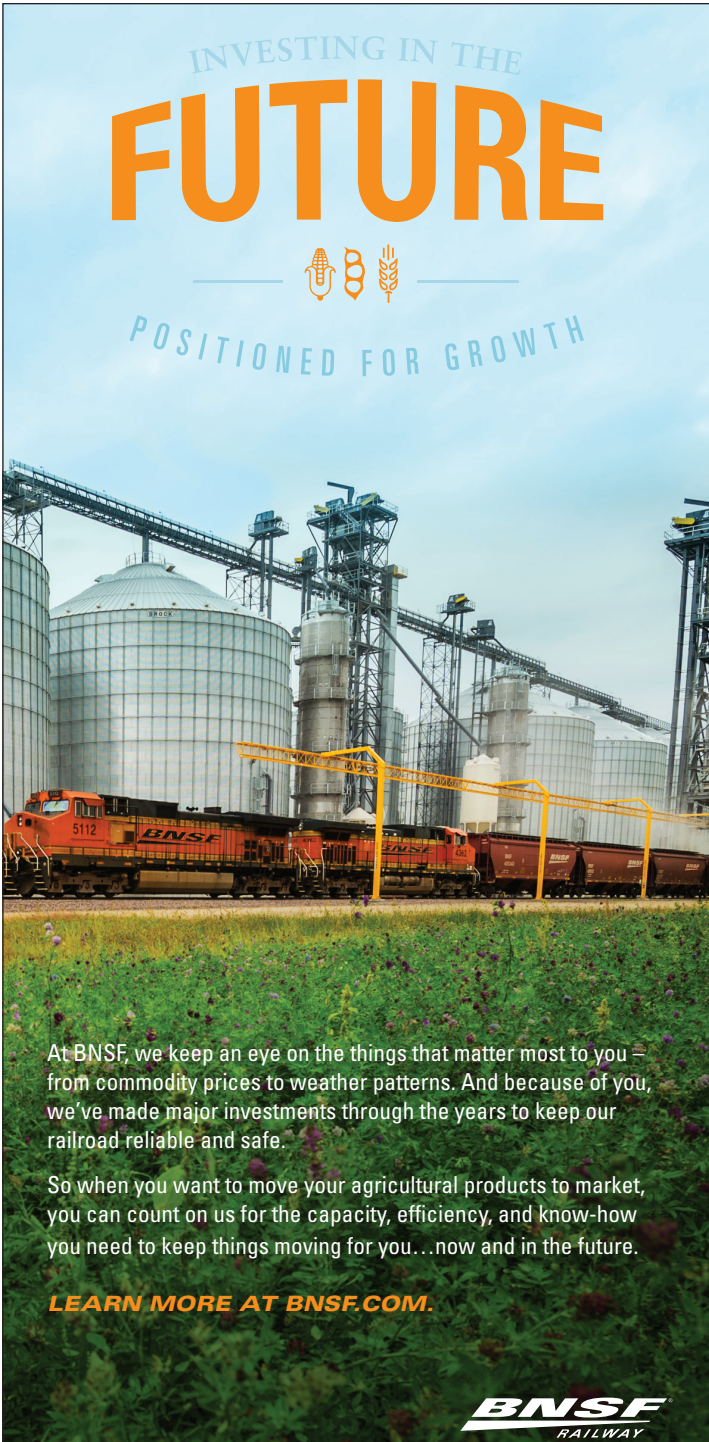
*US Wheat Associates Update* — USDA forecast U.S. 2017/18 wheat production at 47.9 million metric tons (MMT), down 24 percent year over year and 18 percent below the 5-year average. The reason: an anticipated 12 percent decline in average yield and the lowest planted acres since USDA records began in 1919. The largest beginning stocks since 1988/89 will partially offset lower production. Total 2017/18 U.S. wheat supply is forecast at 80.1 MMT, down 10 percent from 2016/17 but still 1 percent above the 5-year average of 79.3 MMT.

On June 30, USDA estimated total planted wheat area would fall 9 percent year over year to 45.7 million acres (18.5 million hectares). If realized, that would be 17 percent lower than the 5-year average. USDA expects 2017/18 harvested area to drop 13 percent from last year and 18 percent below the 5-year average to 38.1 million acres (15.4 million hectares).


USDA forecast 2017/18 hard red winter (HRW) production to total 20.6 MMT, down 30 percent from 2016/17 and 14 percent below the 5-year average. A smaller planted area and sharply lower harvested area led to the decline. USDA forecast 2017/18 HRW beginning stocks at 16.1 MMT, up 33 percent year over year and 81 percent above the 5-year average. Total 2017/18 HRW supply is expected to total 36.8 MMT, down 12 percent from 2016/17.

Soft red winter (SRW) production is also expected to decline 11 percent to 8.33 MMT in 2017/18 due to fewer planted acres. USDA estimated total 2017/18 SRW area at 5.61 million acres (2.27 million hectares), 15 percent lower than 2016/17 and 30 percent below the 5-year average. USDA estimates that SRW 2017/18 beginning stocks totaled 5.85 MMT, up 37 percent from 2016/17 and 47 percent above the 5-year average. The total 2017/18 SRW supply is expected to increase by 500,000 MT year over year to 14.2 MMT.

USDA reported white wheat production will decrease 11 percent from 2016/17 to 6.91 MMT, but still 1 percent above the 5-year average, if realized. The decline is due to 3 percent fewer planted acres and slightly lower



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forecast yields. Larger beginning stocks are expected to offset the lower production, leaving the 2017/18 SW supply unchanged year over year at 9.77 MMT.

Hard red spring (HRS) production is expected to plummet in 2017/18 to 10.5 MMT, down 22 percent from the prior year and the lowest since 2002/03, if realized. The sharp reduction in HRS production is due to significantly lower expected yields and smaller planted area. The average spring wheat yield is forecast

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## *US Wheat Organizations Comment on NAFTA Renegotiation Objectives*

*NAWG Update* — The Trump Administration released its objectives for renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) today and U.S. wheat farmers, who are facing low prices and increasingly aggressive wheat exporting competitors, are encouraged to see that the interests of agriculture are an important part of the Administration's priorities.

"Because NAFTA helped make Mexico one of the most important export markets for U.S. wheat, our main priority right now is to do no harm to wheat trade," said David Schemm, president of the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG) and a wheat farmer from Sharon Springs, Kan. "We are happy to see that the objectives call for maintaining existing reciprocal duty-free market access for agricultural goods. Mexican buyers import more of the wheat my neighbors and I grow than any other country and we can't afford to risk interrupting that positive relationship with our customers."

Wheat farmers agree with the Administration that renegotiation can set the stage for a stronger NAFTA and set standards for trade agreements going forward. A good place to start is with the updated rules on sanitary and phytosanitary health and safety standards that the three countries already agreed to as part of the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiation.

"The United States, Canada, and Mexico are all strong advocates of free trade and science-based regulations," said Mike Miller, chairman of U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) and a wheat farmer from Ritzville, Wash. "We should go big in this negotiation and agree to align around those gold standard rules. That will ensure that all three countries can't throw out regulations that are just flimsy excuses to restrict trade."

NAWG and USW also want to see a change in Canada's restrictions on cross-border trade.

"We believe wheat should be allowed to cross the border and be treated equally," Miller said. "Today Canadian wheat can move into our handling system freely, but U.S. wheat farmers don't have the same opportunity in Canada. NAFTA renegotiation is a good context with which to address this issue."

## *FY 2018 Funding Gets House and Senate Attention*

*NAWG Update* — The House Budget Committee considered its version of the FY 2018 budget resolution and the Senate Appropriations Committee held a markup of its FY 2018 Agriculture Appropriations bill. While the mark-ups were separate, we had similar concerns going into those markups.

The House Budget Committee completed its markup on Wednesday, July 19 with no amendments offered that came after crop insurance or other Farm Bill programs. However, the direction to the Agriculture Committee to cut \$10 billion (over ten years) that was in the original base text of the Budget resolution was maintained. The Budget resolution will now go to the House floor.

Additionally, the Senate Appropriations Committee completed its markup of the FY 2018 Agriculture Appropriations bill on Thursday, July 20. The Committee reported out the bill unanimously, and it will now be set for possible floor consideration. Here again, there were no amendments offered coming after crop insurance. However, the bill does include important report language supportive of several key wheat research programs, including the U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative, the Small Grains Genomic Initiative, and Falling Numbers. The Committee has not yet publicly released the text of the bill or bill report, but highlights of the bill can be found at <https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/news/majority/fy2018-agriculture-appropriations-bill-gains-committee-approval>.





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# ***Nebraska Wheat hosts Nigerian & South African trade team***

NWGA and NWB recently worked together to host a trade team of representatives from milling and food processing companies in Nigeria and South Africa. The team included a representative from the world's second largest milling company.

While in Nebraska, the team visited with researchers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, learned about quality characteristics of wheat breeding during a stop at the Wheat Quality Lab, toured National Manufacturing (a company in Lincoln that specialized in manufacturing testing equipment for dough and cereal grains), visited with grain merchandisers at Gavilon, made a trip to a certified seed farm near Fairbury, learned about grain grading and Federal Grain Inspection Service standards at Lincoln Inspection Service and visited with ag leaders, area farmers, and government representatives during a farewell dinner.

“The importance of hosting these teams cannot be overstated,” said Royce Schaneman, NWB executive director. “Building relationships with these customers gives us a better chance to maintain market share in these countries. Relationships and being able to show these buyers exactly where their wheat comes from helps, particularly when other countries are trying to make trade agreements or price their wheat cheaper than U.S. wheat.”

“This trip helps give us the confidence that U.S. growers, breeders, grading agencies and private exporters are committed in ensuring that quality standards of all wheat classes are met when exporting to other countries,” said Tanya Erwee, a grain procurement executive with Premiere Milling in South Africa. “The United States is still the exporter we can trust to supply good, consistent quality wheat.”



**Members of the Nigerian and South African trade team pose for a photo in a wheat field near Fairbury with staff of NWGA, NWB and Rick Larson and Mark Knobel from the NWB board of directors.**



**Todd Blacksher of National Manufacturing explains how a seed sorter works and how it could be used for wheat.**



**The team watches as Danae Podraza with Lincoln Inspection Service demonstrates how a protein test is run on a sample of wheat.**



## THE NEBRASKA WHEAT GROWERS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 95063  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Telephone (402) 471-2358  
FAX (402) 471-3446

Every year you invest in seed, fuel, fertilizer, machinery and other inputs required to produce wheat. How much do you invest in equitable farm programs, international marketing and environmental issues that dictate how you run your farm?

Membership in the Nebraska Wheat Growers Association should be a part of your general operation cost, just like seed, fertilizer and fuel. Membership is really a type of insurance to help protect and improve the price you are paid for the quality wheat you produce. Membership dues are a tax deductible *investment* in your industry.

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\$75.00 annually

\$375.00 – 5 years

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### **Name of Main Contact:**

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Additional Name(s) on Membership:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Mailing Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Phone:**

### **Cell Phone:**

### **Email:**

### **County:**

### **Referred by:**

Thank you for your commitment to the Nebraska Wheat Growers Association! NWGA frequently needs help from its members to influence issues. Sometimes that help is a simple letter or phone call to a legislator; sometime it involves representing NWGA at a meeting, simply sharing your opinion on an issue, help with an NWGA committee or meeting consumers when helping in the Mobile Baking Lab.

Please check below the issue area (s) you would be interested in assisting NWGA in its mission of enhancing profitability for grain producers. Thank you!

\_\_\_ State Affairs      \_\_\_ International Policy      \_\_\_ Membership      \_\_\_ Educational Events

\_\_\_ Research/Value Added      \_\_\_ Environmental Policy      \_\_\_ Baking Lab Events

\_\_\_ Domestic Policy (Transportation/Basis/Federal Farm Policy/Risk Management/Taxes)

## *US Farm Groups Urge Trump Administration to Not Restrict Steel, Aluminum Imports*

*NAWG Update* — On Tuesday, July 11, 2017, NAWG, along with a broad coalition of farm groups, sent a letter to the Trump Administration urging it to not restrict imports of steel and aluminum under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. The groups argued that restricting these imports could have the potential for “igniting a trade war” which would prompt other countries to slap duties on U.S. food and agriculture exports. “U.S. agriculture is highly dependent on exports, which means it is particularly vulnerable to retaliation,” the farm groups said in the letter Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross....”Many countries that export steel to the United States are also large importers of U.S. agriculture products. The potential for retaliation from these trading partners is very real.”

Additionally, on July 12, 2017, a group of 15 bipartisan economists who were former chairs of the White House Council of Economic Advisers sent a letter to President Trump on the harms of imposing a steel import tariff by using the Section 232.

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### ***Continued from Page 5 - U.S. Wheat Production***

down 15 percent from 2016/17. USDA estimates farmers planted 10 percent fewer acres compared to 2016/17. USDA anticipates a 14 percent drop in beginning stocks. Estimated 2017/18 HRS supply will total 16.9 MMT, down 19 percent year over year, which would lower the HRS stocks-to-use ratio to 22 percent in 2017/18, compared to 41 percent one year prior.

Smaller planted area and 30 percent lower yields are expected to reduce durum production to 1.55 MMT in 2017/18, down an estimated 45 percent from 2016/17 and 26 percent below the 5-year average. USDA expects average durum yields to sink to 30.9 bu/acre (2.08 MT/ha), compared to 44.0 bu/acre (2.96 bu/acre) in 2016/17. Durum planted area decreased this year as farmers responded to lower prices and large carry-out stocks. USDA expects the U.S. durum supply will fall to 2.53 MMT, 29 percent below 2016/17 levels and 9 percent below the 5-year average. The U.S. durum stocks-to-use ratio will fall to 24 percent, on par with the 5-year average.

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to the mill,  
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## ***Upcoming Census of Agriculture***

As the time for the 2017 Census of Agriculture approaches, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is preparing with updates and new features. NASS Census and Survey Division Director Barbara Rater said, “Responding to the census will be easier than ever before in December. It is our hope that producers will become familiar with the online census questionnaire demo this summer, like it, and return to report online when responding to the Census of Agriculture later this year.” You can visit the online census questionnaire demonstration site or check out the Census of Agriculture website where you can watch videos, explore examples, and access data. The 2017 Agriculture Census will go live late fall, with an updated online questionnaire accessible on any electronic device.



# Annual NWGA Golf Tournament

**August 18, 2017**

**Imperial Country Club**

**810 W. 7th St., Imperial, NE**

**Registration: 7:00 am, MDT**

**Shotgun Start: 8:00 am, MDT**

**18-hole, 2 person Scramble**

(9 hole course played twice)

**\$100 registration per team**

**Team fee includes: 1 mulligan/person, golf cart, lunch**



**For questions & registration, contact Caroline Brauer at  
402-471-2358 or [newheatgrowers@gmail.com](mailto:newheatgrowers@gmail.com)**

**Cash Prize for top 2 teams, pin prizes, door prizes**

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## Nebraska Wheat Revisits Capitol Hill

Recently, several members of the Nebraska Wheat Board and staff of both NWB and NWGA took time to visit with Nebraska's congressional leaders on issues currently affecting wheat. The visit followed a meeting of U.S. Wheat Associates in Annapolis, MD where trade and international marketing topics were discussed.

"This visit gave us a timely opportunity to hit on a few issues like trade and transportation that are affecting wheat farmers across the state," said Rick Larson, a member of NWGA and the District 2 representative for NWB.

The group met with both Senators Fischer and Sasse, as well as Congressman Adrian Smith and staff members for Congressmen Bacon and Fortenberry. They also attended the Nebraska Breakfast held at the Capitol the morning of their Hill visits.

Topics discussed included ensuring wheat and agriculture were not harmed during NAFTA renegotiations, maintaining support for the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) programs that have supported international marketing of wheat, supporting development of a strong Farm Bill that includes a strong crop insurance program, and looking into rail transportation price discrepancies between corn and wheat rates.

"This visit was important for us to make as some issues like funding MAP and FMD are being discussed in the new fiscal year budget," said NWGA executive director Caroline Brauer. "Other issues like transportation matter because farmers are still facing low prices, and high transportation costs are pricing us out of international markets. On the whole I feel our visits were a success, but we'll keep raising these issues on behalf of Nebraska wheat farmers as long as we need to."



Bob Delsing, Rick Larson and Diane Larson pause for a photo in between visits with Nebraska's congressional leaders.