



Nebraska Wheat Board Year in Review

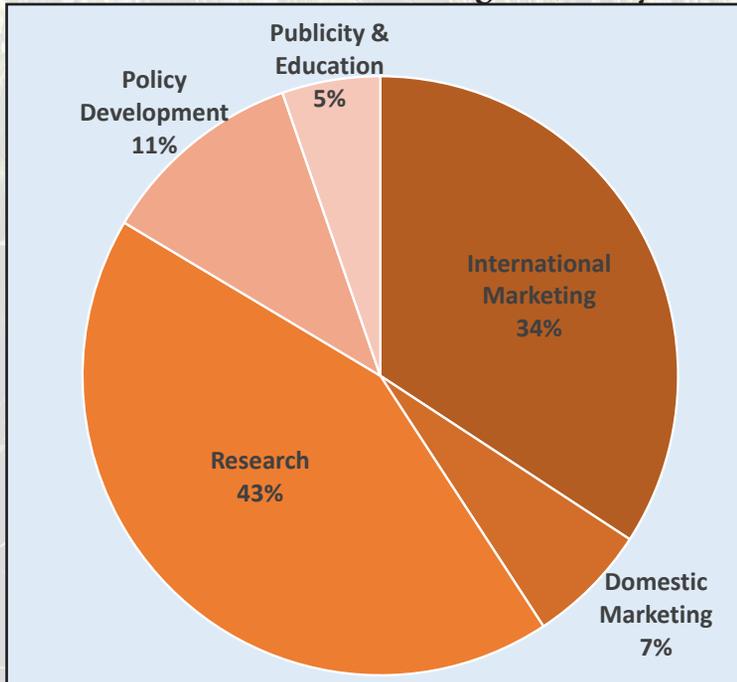
Nebraska Wheat producers faced a dry and windy crop season throughout 2019-2020. The states average planted acres dropped 16% from the planted acres in 2018-2019. Conditions throughout the year were less than favorable starting with the entire state receiving a late hard freeze at the end of April that set back growth by a couple of weeks. Throughout the spring and summer growing seasons, producers were faced with extremely dry and windy conditions. Nebraska's main wheat producing regions, the Southwest and the Panhandle, suffered significantly from the lack of rain and began to experience extreme drought.

Due to the weather conditions, wheat maturity was reached early and many producers were in the field prior to July 4th. Harvest progressed quickly with reports of below average to average yields and average to slightly above average protein. Wheat Stem Sawfly continued to spread into larger portions of the Southern Panhandle.

Test weights and protein content were among two desirable factors producers saw from harvest. When put through quality tests, Nebraska wheat ranked high in flour, dough and baking characteristics as well. International exports grew by 9% in the 2019-2020 year to 10.2 MMT (375 million bushels). Mexico remained the largest buyer of Hard Red Winter Wheat by purchasing a total of 2.61 MMT (95.9 million bushels). Domestic consumption also saw an increase as consumers began more home-baking projects during quarantine, in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Since 1955, the Nebraska Wheat Board (NWB) has been dedicated to helping the state's wheat producers advance the wheat industry through investment in the five key areas designated in its statute: Research, International and Domestic Marketing, Federal Policy Development, Publicity and Education.

2019-2020 NWB Funding Summary



International Marketing.....	\$222,600.00 (34%)
Domestic Marketing.....	\$42,816.00 (7%)
Research.....	\$278,415.00 (43%)
Policy Development.....	\$72,500.00 (11%)
Publicity & Education.....	\$34,678.00 (5%)

International Marketing

Agriculture was at the forefront of one of the most historic trade deals, when the United States and China agreed upon and signed the Phase One Agreement on January 15, 2020. This agreement included a waiver to retaliatory tariffs against U.S. agriculture products, provided specific targets for agriculture commodities and included structural changes to China's importing system. China is the largest wheat consumer in the world and has so far purchased more than 2.8 MMT of wheat from the U.S. If this import volume continues, China will likely be the fourth largest export market for U.S. producers in the current marketing year.

The NWB hosted a trade team in July of 2019 from the Philippines. Over the course of their visit the attendees toured Gaviion, Ardent Mills, Union Pacific and BASF. They also had the opportunity to meet with Governor Pete Ricketts, U.S. Congressman Don Bacon, NE Department of Agriculture Director Steve Wellman, UNL Small Grains Breeder Dr. Stephen Baenziger, and local producers.

Domestic Marketing

Bread. A Slice of Life. Wheat Foods Council (WFC) is the domestic marketing arm for wheat in the United States. In the 2019-2020 year, the WFC unveiled their new promotional advertisement: Bread. A Slice of Life. These ads showed it's not "just a slice of bread," but a fine detail in the big moments of life. The first three advertisements pictured relationships being built between parents and their children as well friendships being forged.

This message was especially well-received during at-home quarantines. When the United States saw a greater increase in at-home baking, the NWB along with the Home Baking Association and the Wheat Foods Council all began emphasizing togetherness in the kitchen. Many cherished memories come from small moments baking with friends and family. This message hit home with the "Bread. A Slice of Life" campaign.

Publicity & Education

Michelle Tuttle is a world class athlete that competes in triathlons across the world for Team USA. She is also a Registered Dietician and serves as an Ambassador for the domestic wheat marketing company, Wheat Foods Council. In April of 2020, the NWB hosted Michelle as the keynote speaker at the Nebraska Academy for Nutrition and Dietetics (NAND) Conference. While it was originally an in-person event, the conference was changed to an online platform.

Michelle had over 120 participants live-stream her Keynote Address. All of the feedback presented was positive, with many comments such as "A great way to start off the virtual conference," and "The presentation was informative and entertaining." Michelle shares the belief that a well-balanced diet is more beneficial to overall health than gluten free or Paleo diets. By reaching out to Registered Dieticians and personal trainers through these platforms, we can help inform these influencers about eating habits they will in-turn relay to their customers.

Federal Policy

The Nebraska Wheat Board invests money each year to support the Nebraska Wheat Growers Association (NWGA) and the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG). These organizations take action to support wheat producers and their interests on Capitol Hill. Funds help send members of NWGA to visit Washington D.C. each winter to meet with Nebraska Senators and Congressmen to discuss issues affecting the state's agriculture industry. Pressing topics for Fiscal Year 18-19 included trade agreements, rural broadband, and USDA's Market Facilitation Program.

NAWG's headquarters, located in Washington D.C., work year around to insure that wheat growers are represented at the federal level. The NAWG staff also monitors trade, the Farm Bill, and the federal budget among many other issues.

Research

In the fall of 2019, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Research & Extension launched the Testing Ag Performance Solution (TAPS) Program for wheat. The inaugural class of contestants consisted of 16 outside competitors and 4 UNL teams. This program had participants competing in the production and marketing of wheat. Each participant competed for one of the three following awards: Most Profitable Farm, Efficiency/Nitrogen Use, and Productivity (highest yield). Every management decision the producer made, from crop insurance to seed choice or fertilizer timing, was critical to their success or failure in the end. The participants were assigned 5 random plots that were 6 feet wide by 30 feet long. Yields and costs from these plots were amplified to represent actual farm production.

The first year of the program presented many challenges including delayed planting, Covid-19, extreme freezes and drought conditions. The UNL Research & Extension team looks forward to continuing the program in the 20-21 year.

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