

News Column

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## WHEAT PLOT TOUR

I'll take the blame for that stretch of wet weather we had last week. I was supposed to have a wheat plot tour on May 27 and history suggests it will rain on our plot tour about 60% of the time.

Now that I know I only have to schedule a tour, and don't have to actually hold it, I'm going to schedule tours in July when we really need the rain.

We were shut down by COVID-19 restrictions and didn't have a wheat plot tour last week, but you are welcome to stop by for a self-guided tour at your convenience. The plot is just across the road to the east of the Fancy Creek Church, in northwest Riley County. Signs are up and the plot is headed and looking good.

If you need directions to the plot it gets a little tricky, but Bob Whearty tells me you can hop on Riley County Road 875 just east of Leonardville and it will take you right to the plot. Watch the road signs carefully though; there are lots of twists and turns along the way.

The Fancy Creek Church is at the corner of Ober Road and Bodaville Road. If you get lost, it's no big deal – it's pretty country and you'll enjoy the drive anyway.

Once you have located the plot, you will find the following wheat varieties:

Everest — Released in 2009, Everest was the most-planted variety in Kansas for a six year stint. It is still a good variety in eastern and central Kansas and is now the fifth most-planted variety.

Larry — Released in 2018, Larry may be a little better adapted to central and western Kansas, but appears to be a top yielding variety under increased management, such as a fungicide application. It is susceptible to leaf rust, but responds well to fungicides.

LCS Chrome — Chrome was released in 2016. It is a medium-late, medium-tall variety that holds up under heavy grazing and still produces good grain yields. You don't want to plant it late, but it can perform well for you when planted on time.

WB 4269 — WB 4269 was released in 2017 and is an early maturing, medium-short variety. It is best adapted to the eastern half of the state and is reported to be good after beans. This could be one to watch.

WB Grainfield — I liked this variety before it became popular and I still think it is one we should plant. Grainfield was released in 2012 and grew in popularity to become the second most planted variety in Kansas in 2019. Grainfield does a lot of things well, including being a variety that can be grazed. Yield potential is excellent.

Bob Dole — This is a taller variety, but it has good straw strength and should stand well unless you are expecting yields above 80 bushels per acre. Bob Dole was released in 2017. Yields have been good in our plots, but it is still just on my watch list. I'm still evaluating it.

WB 4699 — WB 4699 is a new release from Westbred. They say it has excellent yield potential and a very good disease package. We'll watch it and see how it does in Kansas trials.

WB 4303 — It seems like a lot of wheat varieties were released in 2017 and here is another one. WB 4303 has high-end yield potential and is adapted to intensive management and irrigation. I suspect it will shine in a wet year, and will be average on our dryland fields in normal years. It is expected to need a fungicide application to reach full yield potential.

SY Benefit — Yet another 2017 release, SY Benefit is probably a bit better adapted to

central Kansas than to Riley county. It is reported to be good after corn, having moderate scab resistance.

SY Monument — Monument rapidly gained popularity in recent years (it was released in 2014) to be come the most-planted variety in Kansas in 2019. It is a good choice to plant after soybeans, and has performed well in Riley county. I like Monument.

Zenda — Released in 2016, Zenda has been touted as an Everest replacement. It is among the best varieties for tolerance to scab, and is tolerant of acid soils. By 2019 it was already the fourth most planted variety in Kansas.

Paradise — Paradise is another 2017 release. The company promoting it says it has produced top yields in farmer fields. Unfortunately, we don't have enough plot data yet to confirm that claim. It will probably be good, but I'm not ready to promote it yet.

LCS Link — The final 2017 release in the plot, Link was bred in Nebraska but seems to be adapted to the northern corridor of Kansas. It has performed well in state variety trials, so we'll watch this one too and see if it holds up over time.

WB 4458 — The check strip is WB 4458, a 2013 release that has a good track record in dryer conditions. It reportedly can handle a drought well, and does best when planted on time. Its leaf disease package is not very strong, so a fungicide application may be needed.

There you have it. Now you're set for your own self-guided tour. Pack a lunch and have a picnic on the church grounds across the road while you're there.

Then, when you're done with your picnic, head east on Bodaville Road and see if you can find North Otter Branch. That's a pretty drive and a nice place to get lost. If you can't get lost there, cross the highway and get lost in the Swede Creek area. You won't be disappointed.

If you have questions, you can reach me at the Riley County Extension Office at 785/537-

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