

FIELD OF DREAMS

All of us have sat through many meetings where, if we would put this product on our wheat field we would increase our yield by so many bushels. Two weeks later, we sit through another meeting and another product that would increase our yield again. Soon, we feel that if you sit through enough meetings and apply all the products, we should be raising 100 bushel wheat.

I write the above paragraph with tongue-in-cheek, but there is also some validity to it. We probably can and should put more inputs into our wheat crop and improve our yields. We probably can and should manage our wheat crop better. We probably can and should raise our yields by 20 bushels. The questions then become: Would it be economical? Would it increase our yield enough to pay for the increased cost of inputs, with enough left over to increase profits?

WE HAVE DECIDED TO TRY AND “GO THE DISTANCE”!

We are going to put a little more management and inputs into a ten acre field in southern Grant county to see what happens and have facetiously called this field the” **FIELD OF DREAMS**”.

The **Field of Dreams** was measured out of a full quarter, not taking out the best bottom land, not trying to miss mud holes or avoid any corners. “F.O.D.” is just ordinary acres out of a decent quarter of ground. It is and has been conventionally tilled and farmed well in the past, and is capable of averaging in the 40 to 50 bushel per acre range given “normal” weather. We hope this might be an ongoing endeavor and might expand the acreage next year to 15 or twenty acres. This is not a “scientific” experiment with replicated trials using a very small area. It is a fairly large acreage of normal farm ground, done like a producer would do it.

Specifications of Field of Dreams to date:

75 lbs. of nitrogen applied by anhydrous in August

The pH was 5.4 and lime was applied to the field in the amount needed to bring pH to 6 in mid- September. Ultimately we will probably try to bring pH to 7.

No other crop nutrient is needed at this time according to soil sample.

Field was planted on Oct. 19th with foundation Bullet treated with Gaucho XT seed treatment. 25lbs. of 11-52-0 went down in furrow for starter fertilizer. The rest of the field was planted to Bullet the same day with the starter but without the seed treatment.

Control for unwanted winter annual grasses (cheat, rescue grass, etc.) and winter annual broad leaf weed control was applied in the form of Power Flex at 3.5 ounces per acre with 2 qts. /100 gallon of water and 8 ounces of MCPA ester on 11/17/09.

Probable future treatments:

An addition of a nitrogen rich strip.

A top dress of nitrogen.

Foliar fungicide at flag leaf emergence.

Possible addition of sulfur fertilizer.

Possible foliar applied micronutrients.

Insecticides if warranted.

Any other treatment we feel may be warranted or feel would increase yield that we haven't thought of yet.

There have been, and will be many more in the future, contributors to this project. So far it has been: McCart Farms, Farmers Grain Co. Dow Chemical, and Bayer Crop Science. Metcalf Land and Lawn will apply many of the herbicides with their sprayer. So far every company we have informed about the Field of Dreams has been enthusiastic and supportive with chemicals, seed, fertility, application, etc. It has been with a clear understanding with the various chemical companies that have supplied different inputs that the Field of Dreams is an independent project and the decisions of what or how much will be made by the agronomy team at Farmers Grain.

The Goals:

Can we increase our wheat yield significantly by more intense management?

Will it increase our net profit by doing so?

AND: If you build it, will he come?

Kim Metcalf