

To say this year that growing wheat was a challenge is an understatement. Rains have plagued this crop since planting last fall, and continue to plague it to this day. Because of the rains, planting for some was delayed until late October or early November and the rain and cool weather have delayed harvest by more than 2 weeks from normal. Actually, as I am writing this, combines are still not in the field. This may make it difficult for producers to enter the Market Wheat Show at the Barton County Fair this year, but not impossible.

A farmer can submit 10 lbs. of a variety of wheat to Extension, either by bringing it into our office, or at the local co-ops and filling out a small information page. The wheat will then be tested and scored. We will display the results at the county fair, and the best ones will then be entered into to the State fair. There is no cost to the producer to enter. If you are interested, please call 620-793-1910 or come into the office at 1800 12th street. Entries are due by July 3rd.

If you have an entry that you want to enter, but the deadline for the County Fair has passed, you can still bring it in and I will get it tested for the State Fair entries. Due to increased costs at the State Level, there will be a charge of 1.00 to enter into the State Contest. Any that wish to enter the State Fair needs to have their entries into the extension office by July 31st.

After wheat harvest, it is also a good idea to monitor your garden for Thrips. Thrips are tiny insects that feed on developing flowers and leaves. If they feed on your tomato plants, they can cause the spread of a virus known as Tomato Spotted Wilt Virus. One symptom of this disease is white or yellow rings developing on the young fruit. If the virus is there, it cannot be treated. To help prevent this disease, control the weeds around the garden to make it more difficult for the Thrips to get to your plants. If you see symptoms of the virus, remove the infected plant immediately. Insecticides can be used, but with limited success. Your best defense is observation and early control if you happen to see these insects.

Alicia Boor is an Agriculture and Natural Resources agent in the Cottonwood District (which includes Barton and Ellis counties) for K-State Research and Extension. You can contact her by e-mail at aboor@ksu.edu or calling 620-793-1910