



UNITED WHEATGROWERS (NZ) LTD

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UWG Newsletter November 2021

The 2021 wheat harvest, for most, went well with good grain quality and yields achieved. Given the large increases to the cost of production we now have, as growers, we will be hoping for a kind season again this year to help achieve high yielding and quality grain to support us as we have to absorb these costs.

Demand for last season's grain has been good and as a result most silos are now empty, so now is a good time for cleaning and fumigation ready for the next crop. A reminder for those of us with some grain still to be delivered, do keep a good watch out for bugs and treat any present prior to delivery to avoid any problems.

It was another reasonably big year of claims for the Insurance Scheme, meaning some growers again suffered losses during the season. It is very pleasing that the scheme remains an economical way of supporting all growers at these times. This helps keep growers viable and confident to stay in the industry of producing wheat for the New Zealand consumer, whether that be to the Feed Industry or the Flour Mills.

Given the number of claims, United Wheat Growers Directors are pleased to have negotiated with FMG, our insurance providers, for the 2021/22 premiums to remain the same as last year at \$3.75/tonne covered to a value of \$225.00/tonne. Growers are reminded that this is disaster relief cover, so does not cover full market value. It aims to cover the cost of production and any grower who wishes can still purchase top up cover from their insurer.

Lodging an Insurance Claim

Insurance cover for the 2021/22 wheat crop started on the 1st November for all perils with the exception of frost. The frost cover starts from 15th November.

In the event of a loss, claims must be lodged with FMG. This is as simple as calling 0800 366 466 and an assessor will be appointed to work with you to confirm any losses.

If you are unfortunate enough to get a frost after 15th November, please **don't wait until harvest to decide there is damage**. Firstly, record the date and if possible, also the strength of the frost as these details help with the assessment. Then lodge the claim with FMG and the assessors then collect samples for our plant pathologist who confirms if there is frost damage and then what percentage of yield loss has occurred.

Wheat Competition

We held a very successful 2021 Wheat Competition. A huge thankyou to all the sponsors, particularly Bayer who came on board this year as our major sponsor. Bayer supports growers with massive investment in crop science research, delivering quality products to support us as growers in our arable production and this makes them a perfect fit for our competition that is looking to recognise top quality wheat growing. We will be running the Bayer Wheat Awards again after the 2022 harvest. Growers are reminded to collect samples and the entry forms will be out in March next year.

Congratulations to all the prize winners this year, particularly to Craig Muckle of Millisle Farm who won the Wheat Grower of the Year Award. Craig grew an exceptionally good line of Reliance wheat that the judges mentioned graded perfectly for the mills.

This year we also introduced a category for Agronomist of the Year. Congratulations to the winner Kerry Thomas of Luisetti Seeds. It is a pleasure to have the support of NZGSTA, helping organise this category and sponsoring it. Given the partnership farmers have with their Agronomist in helping to produce top crops, we see this as a great opportunity to recognise their efforts. This will be run again next season so give thought to who you may wish to nominate.

Use of Rodenticide in Grain Storage

Rodent droppings can be a problem in our grain so it remains important that we, as farmers, do what we can to control rats and mice around our farm buildings. Having said this, it is equally important that we are very vigilant with the use of rodenticides around grain storage.

The issue of rodenticide has been raised with us through the Flour Millers Association. They understand the importance of rodent control, however, they also have the Bakers Association seeking confirmation that there cannot be rodenticide present in any flour. There is survey work being conducted to confirm what is the practise of farmers currently. In the meantime, the question of where and when you lay poison, and confirmation of it being recorded is now being included in the QAgrainz Audit. If you are not doing this, please begin to record these actions.

As summer approaches, on behalf of the Directors at UWG, I wish everyone a very happy and safe season, a great Christmas and New Year that can hopefully be enjoyed with friends and family and then followed by a wonderful and successful harvest.

Brian Leadley
Chairman UWG NZ Ltd

