U.S. WHEAT & BARLEY SCAB INITIATIVE
FHB DISEASE IMPACT
UPDATE

For 2025, Where Conditions Were Favorable for Fusarium Head Blight Development, the FHB Risk Tool Predictions Mitigated Losses

By Dr. Amber Hoffstetter

FHB symptoms on spring wheat, durum, and two-row spring barley in North Dakota. *(Andrew Friskop, photo)*

This season, Fusarium head blight (FHB or scab), caused predominately by the fungus *Fusarium graminearum,* was an issue for organically grown grains, susceptible planted varieties, and farmers in the Mid-Atlantic states whose crops received rainfall during anthesis. In the Mid-Atlantic states, DON levels were reported to be as high as 18 ppm. Most other states reported few instances with FHB, and the disease was not an issue for those who experienced drought conditions. Where FHB was prevalent, the USWBSI FHB Risk Tool predictions were accurate and, in most cases, farmers were proactive in making timely fungicide applications. However, some states reported farmers were still interested in learning more about the benefits of fungicides and proper application timing. In addition, farmers are opting to choose resistant varieties at planting to help aid in managing FHB, however, more communication is still needed on which varieties have resistance.

The U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative (USWBSI) reached out to state experts for an assessment of FHB during the 2025 growing season; an overview of each region is presented below.

Variable Weather in the Northeast Means FHB Causes Issues for Some

(Malting Barley, Spring Wheat, and Soft Winter Wheat)

Northeast farmers experienced a few issues with FHB during the 2025 growing season as a late wet spring caused conditions to be ideal for infection. DON levels remained mostly low with only a few cases of farmers not meeting industry cut off levels reported mostly in spring and winter barley and organically produced spring wheat. Overall, yield and quality were not largely impacted by FHB this season.

Cold and wet spring conditions followed by a hot dry summer characterized the growing conditions in **Vermont**. By harvest, the state was in moderate to severe drought in most areas. Spring type grains seemed to face the most challenges. For most of the farmers, issues with FHB and DON were low with only a few reports of high levels. "Most of New England experienced extremely dry conditions throughout flowering, grain fill, and harvest," reported Heather Darby, University of Vermont Extension agronomist. Below average yields reported in many locations especially for spring grains was likely a result of late planting. Harvest conditions were ideal and overall, excellent crop quality was reported.

In their annual testing, Darby's lab conducted DON analysis on samples from all Northeastern states and various small grains including: corn, einkorn, spring barley and wheat, winter wheat, spelt, triticale, and rye. The hard winter wheat and the soft winter wheat both averaged 0.7 ppm while spring wheat samples had an average of 0.9 ppm. All barley samples tested were below 1 ppm.

A record number of rainy days in **New York** during the months of May and June meant conditions were ideal for FHB and DON, as reflected by the FHB Risk Tool. Symptoms of FHB could readily be observed in fields during June. The incidence and severity of FHB were variable across the state as the growth stage did not always align with rainfall events. In July, the weather turned very dry in advance of harvest resulting in high falling number and limited issues with preharvest sprouting this season.

Contamination with DON was a problem for New York farmers in 2025. "Regional grain purchasers rejected approximately 5% of grain lots due to DON levels that exceeded 2 ppm for winter wheat," said Gary Bergstrom, professor emeritus of plant pathology at Cornell University. Contamination levels above 3 ppm were not common this season. Bergstrom attributes this to the state's farmers opting to apply fungicides at anthesis. However, some winter and spring malting barley failed to meet the malthouse purchasing specification of 1 ppm DON. Additionally, some spring grains produced organically in the Hudson Valley for artisanal bakeries, had issues with DON contamination.

"Regional grain purchasers rejected approximately 5% of grain lots due to DON levels that exceeded 2 ppm for winter wheat."

Gary Bergstrom

DON Levels High in Some Mid-Atlantic States

(Malting Barley and Soft Winter Wheat)

Rain either during flowering or at harvest time, increased DON levels in small grains grown in the Mid-Atlantic states this season. Reports were received of levels exceeding 10 ppm. Additional grower education is likely still needed on fungicide efficacy and variety resistance in this region. Other states reported the application of fungicides for FHB helped to mitigate the risk.

Conditions in winter and spring were dry this season for **Pennsylvania** small grains. Farmers were optimistic as yield estimates and quality assessments were strong throughout the crop condition tours across the state during the early growing stages of kernel development. However, these predictions failed to be fulfilled, as late rains during harvest across the central and southern regions were a hinderance. Reports were received by most all of the farmers and buyers in the regions regarding high levels of tombstone kernels and mycotoxins in the grain. Many grain lots were rejected at delivery points for DON levels above 10 ppm. "Yield and falling number varied across farms, but most of the wheat was affected by scab (FHB) with DON ranging from 2 to 18 ppm in unsprayed fields, and levels in treated fields in the 1 to 4 ppm range," said Alyssa Collins, associate research professor at Pennsylvania State University and the director of the Southeast Agricultural Research and Extension Center. The Appalachia and Northern Tier regions remained relatively unscathed with minimal DON and higher quality.

Grain samples from the 2025 Penn State Wheat Quality Contest reveal grain from northern countries fared better for FHB and overall quality than the rest of the state. *(Nicole Thompson, photo)*

While most of the small grains fields in the state were treated with a fungicide for FHB management, farmers still had questions regarding the best application time and a reasonable level of control to be expected from a fungicide. In addition, many farmers still do not have readily available information about the resistance of their variety. "Extension educators and crop advisors indicated that the FHB Risk Tool performed well to predict scab occurrence, but environmental conditions overwhelmed the tools available for combatting the disease," said Collins. Overall, wheat yields were acceptable, but the combination of disease pressure and unfavorable weather reduced the value and market acceptance of the crop for much of the state this season.

Conditions during fall were very dry in **Delaware** making the planting of small grains difficult and challenging for plant establishment. Planted acreage across the state was down. Some relief came with rainfall during the winter months but soon dried up as the crop approached flowering. In early May, the rain returned and this increased the risk for FHB.

“FHB levels remained moderate, more than 2022-23, but slightly improved over 2023-24” said Alyssa Koehler Betts, University of Delaware extension plant pathologist. Levels of FHB infection and DON varied across the state depending on the amount of rainfall received. A few fields experienced high levels of powdery mildew at flag leaf and stripe rust was found in the state around flowering but both were controlled using products applied for FHB protection.

Spring in **Maryland** started off as it typically does with the early part of wheat and barley flowering mild and dry. As the season progressed, frequent rainfalls increased the humidity and as a result FHB was observed across the state. “Most of the farmers used recommended fungicides to manage the disease,” said Nidhi Rawat, University of Maryland small grains pathologist. Due to fungicide applications, DON levels remained low this season. However, in untreated experimental plots at the University of Maryland, DON levels higher than 1 ppm were observed. Stripe rust was also an issue for Maryland farmers this season. The disease could be observed during wheat flowering in the southern part of the state. Those who applied a recommended fungicide to manage FHB at flowering also were able to mitigate stripe rust and manage both diseases.

Across most of **Virginia** environmental conditions were not conducive to FHB prior to flowering. Prolonged periods of moisture following anthesis increased DON accumulation in harvested grains. Localized reports were received from several farms and grain elevators of elevated DON levels. “In one instance, a grain elevator recorded exceptionally high DON concentrations (15-16 ppm), and the average DON level of that site exceeded those reported from nearby elevators,” said Doug Higgins, assistant professor and extension specialist at Virginia Tech Eastern Shore Agriculture Research and Extension Center. Farmers affected by high levels of DON generally observed moderate symptoms in their fields.

FHB symptoms on winter wheat in the Clemson University Piedmont Research & Education Center trials in Pendleton, South Carolina.
(Alex Coleman, photo)

Dry Conditions in Southern Atlantic Result in Few Cases of FHB

(Malting Barley and Soft Winter Wheat)

In the Southern Atlantic, wheat acres were down this season. Dry conditions during anthesis meant little to no FHB was observed by farmers. Experts found evidence of FHB at low levels in some state trials; however, levels were not high enough to be noticeable by most farmers.

Dry weather in **North Carolina** meant FHB was not an issue for wheat and barley farmers in the state. While rain didn’t fall abundantly during heading and flowering, it was an issue during harvest. “Wheat yields were about average (60-65 bushels per acre), and test weights were fine for many farmers, but falling numbers were terrible,” said Christina Cowger, USDA-ARS plant pathologist located at North Carolina State University.

Overall, disease pressure also remained low in **South Carolina** this year. Evidence of powdery mildew and leaf rust could be found but the number of calls received about fungicide application was lower than normal. “I’d say the growing season was an average one with the exception of harvest,” said Alex Coleman, Clemson University extension small grains specialist. Moisture returned during harvest time for small grains delaying harvest. Coleman did not receive any specific calls regarding FHB; however, it was observed in some trials across the state but was generally not a concern for growers.

Evidence suggests that wheat acreage planted and harvested in **Georgia** was lower than previous years. FHB incidences were low across the state during the 2024-2025 growing season. Farmers, county agents, and crop consultants were encouraged to monitor the FHB Risk Tool nearing anthesis to monitor the likelihood of FHB infection and optimize application timing. “Most wheat growers applied fungicides at flowering as a preventative measure against FHB,” said Alfredo Martinez-Espinoza, University of Georgia small grains extension plant pathologist. No wheat samples were received by the University of Georgia Plant Disease Clinic with FHB.

“Most wheat growers applied fungicides at flowering as a preventative measure against FHB.”

Alfredo Martinez-Espinoza

FHB Scarce in the Midwest, Few Reports Received

(Malting Barley & Soft Winter Wheat)

FHB in the Midwest remained low this season. Most state specialists indicated that FHB was encountered only in isolated incidences; however, a few reports of dockage because of DON levels were received. Most farmers in this region are choosing to plant resistant varieties and use fungicide applications, however, there is still interest in a few states to learn more about fungicides.

Wheat yields in **Michigan** this season averaged 91 bushels per acre. Risk for FHB was predicted to be low for most of the state at the time of anthesis. “During flowering the Fusarium Risk Tool indicated low risk across the state except for a small portion of elevated risk on the east side of the “Thumb” and a small corner of southwestern Michigan,” said Martin Chilvers, Michigan State University extension plant pathologist. There were no reports of DON this season. Some areas of the state experienced issues with powdery mildew and a second year of survey results indicated 70% of the fields had wheat streak mosaic virus.

Fusarium head blight was fairly easy to find across the state of **Ohio** in 2025. “Levels of severity were generally consistent with the low-to-moderate risk predictions made by the FHB Risk Tool for fields reaching anthesis during the third and fourth weeks of May,” said Pierce Paul, extension plant pathologist at The Ohio State University. However, there were a few pockets across the state with higher levels of severity, and correspondingly, DON contamination of the grain. Not surprisingly, the observed patterns of FHB development depended on planting date, susceptibility of the variety planted, and light but persistent and timely showers in some areas.

FHB was low for farmers in **Indiana** this season. Harvest conditions were good and the state reported an average yield of 87 bushels per acre. Approximately 235,000 acres were harvested, down 5,000 from last season. Only a few reports of dockage because of DON levels were received by local experts. “In our USWBSI supported research trials in both central and southern Indiana, we had very little Fusarium head blight this season,” said Darcy Telenko, extension plant pathologist at Purdue University.

Symptoms of FHB on infected heads in the Purdue University wheat research plots located in Vincennes, Indiana. *(Darcy Telenko, photo)*

Rainy weather occurred while many wheat fields in **Kentucky** were going through anthesis and grain development. “Cooler temperatures likely reduced conducive conditions for FHB and DON development, as very few problems with DON were encountered in the state,” said Carl Bradley, University of Kentucky extension plant pathologist. Approximately 355,000 acres of wheat were harvested this season with an estimated yield of 83 bushels per acre. In environments where FHB was able to establish, the use of integrated management practices including planting moderately-resistant varieties and applying effective fungicides on time prevented financial losses due to FHB and DON.

Acres planted to wheat in **Tennessee** for 2024-2025 were slightly reduced at 345,000 with 77% harvested. “Very little to no FHB was observed in 2025, similar to a typical wheat season,” said Heather Kelly, extension plant pathologist at the University of Tennessee. Farmers are choosing improved varieties. This coupled with a low disease pressure year contributed to the state wide yield average of 74 bushels per acre.

Foliar and head diseases were lower this year in **Wisconsin** compared to 2024. The highest levels of FHB were found in the southeastern part of the state. “In these locations FHB index levels rarely were above 10,” said Damon Smith, University of Wisconsin extension plant pathologist. While FHB wasn’t a huge problem for farmers, Cephalosporium stripe was found at damaging levels. The weather was optimal for the pathogen, with cool wet spring conditions, allowing the pathogen to infect susceptible varieties in both the variety trials and commercial fields. Stripe rust and occasional reports of tan spot were also reported but these diseases did not impact yields except occasionally on highly susceptible varieties.

FHB pressure in **Illinois** was relatively low this season and largely confined to the southern part of the state. No reports of dockage or rejections due to high levels of DON were received by local experts. “We did not receive reports of FHB problems in commercial fields this season, and incidence was very low in our central Illinois research trial,” said Boris Camiletti extension plant pathologist at the University of Illinois. “However, in a separate trial on a susceptible variety in southwest Illinois, evaluating drone-applied fungicides for FHB, disease

pressure was higher, and DON was detected in all samples." Approximately 700,000 acres of wheat was harvested this year with an average yield of 88 bushels per acre, tying the state record.

Farmers in **Missouri** planted approximately 640,000 acres of winter wheat and harvested 460,000 acres. The estimated average yield for this season was higher than the historical average of 70 bushels per acre, reaching 80 bushels per acre in 2025. A total of 36.8 million bushels is anticipated to have been produced by the state. The growing conditions were good this year for most farmers. "Favorable conditions for FHB resulted in isolated incidences and continued interest in fungicide applications, similar to 2024," said Mandy Bish, University of Missouri's extension specialist for field crop pathology. A few regional concerns were received regarding incidences of wheat streak mosaic virus, barley yellow dwarf virus, and cereal yellow dwarf virus.

"Favorable conditions for FHB resulted in isolated incidences and continued interest in fungicide applications, similar to 2024."

Mandy Bish

Southern States Report FHB Low This Season

(Soft Winter Wheat)

Karamjit Baryah, a graduate student, rates the Auburn University Official Variety Trials at the E.V. Smith Research Center Plant Breeding Unit.
(Amanda Strayer-Scherer, photo)

Reported cases of FHB were low for the southern states growing soft winter wheat this season. A couple states reported late rains which delayed harvest and reduced test weights. In cases where FHB could have been a problem, the low level of disease was attributed to farmers planting resistant varieties.

Farmers in southwest **Alabama** were at the highest risk for FHB in the state in 2025. But overall, the disease pressure was low for the season. The Plant Diagnostics Labs of Auburn University did not receive any samples of wheat or barley with suspected FHB. "Overall, yield impacts and DON levels caused by FHB infection were minimal across Alabama," said Amanda Strayer-Scherer, Auburn University associate professor and extension plant pathologist. Foliar diseases including, leaf rust, powdery mildew, spot blotch, and Barley yellow dwarf virus made an appearance in the state variety trials.

Pressure from FHB was extremely low in **Mississippi** for 2025. "Limited infection occurred in the wheat crop," said Tom Allen, extension plant pathologist at Mississippi State University. In alignment with the previous five years, wheat acres remained

relatively static with approximately 60,000 acres planted and 45,000 harvested. Overall, 2025 was a relatively light disease year, with leaf rust being the major disease in the wheat crop.

Rainfall in early November hindered planting in **Arkansas**. Acres were down, with an estimated 120,000 planted. Spring was wet and the state experienced record flooding during the first week of April. During flowering, the conditions dried up which limited FHB development. There were no reports of wheat loads rejected or docked due to high levels of DON. "The generally low levels of DON, despite a wet April, can be partially attributed to the growing of varieties with moderate to good resistance," said Jason Kelley, University of Arkansas extension agronomist. Once June came around, prolonged rainfall during harvest led to low test weights and many producers reported discounts at the point of sale. Overall, the state average for yield was 62 bushels per acre.

Planting of the soft red winter wheat crop in **Louisiana** started slowly. Dry weather was followed by rainfall which reduced planting progress in some areas of the state. Many producers proactively applied fungicides for FHB. "I did not observe significant levels of scab or foliar diseases during the growing season," said Boyd Padgett, plant pathologist at Louisiana State University Agricultural Center. Leaf rust and tan spot were observed in the LSU AgCenter variety trials in the south and southwest regions of the state. Overall, harvest conditions were good for most locations and for the varieties planted in the on-farm demonstrations. Yields ranged from 58 to 62 bushels per acres.

Soft winter wheat in **Texas** experienced a dry season resulting in little to no diseases, including FHB. "Overall, disease and insect pressure appeared below average which included incidents of Hessian fly and wheat streak mosaic virus," said Brandon Gerrish, small grains extension specialist at Texas A&M University. Late season rainfall and mild temperatures boosted yield potential but also delayed harvest and reduced test weights.

FHB Risk High in Northern Great Plains but Impact Minor

(Durum, Hard Winter Wheat, Hard Spring Wheat and Malting Barley)

Risk for FHB in the Northern Great Plains was high in some areas. Regions where FHB was a major problem coincided with susceptible varieties being planted or where fungicides were either not applied or the application timing was not appropriate. However, even with the higher risks, no major concerns were reported with DON levels.

Spring wheat planting in **Minnesota** was well behind last year's pace and slightly later than the 5-year average by the last week of April. Above normal temperatures and little precipitation during the beginning of May allowed for progress to be made and by May 12, planting had caught up to 2024 and was 20% ahead of the 5-year average. Aphids arrived due to the warmer and drier than normal weather and by the end of May could be found across the state in low numbers. Tan spot and crown rust were found during June but only in minor incidences. Bacterial leaf streak could be found readily in individual fields across much of the state. FHB risk remained low until June 7. "Starting along the Wisconsin border the risk steadily increased from east to west and from moderate to high," said Jochum Wiersma, University of Minnesota extension agronomist. Only counties in the northwest and southwest part of the state were predicted to be at low risk as precipitation remained elusive for these areas.

Nevertheless, the final incidence and severity of FHB in 2025 were much lower this year than in 2024.

Small grain seeding was spread out across **North Dakota** resulting in a wide range of heading and flowering dates in 2025. Early planted crops started to head and flower the third week of June while the latest crops were heading and flowering during the middle of July. Weather conditions were routinely favorable for FHB development in 2025. In late June, the risk of FHB on susceptible varieties was moderate to high for areas in the southcentral, southeast, and northeastern regions of the state. In July, the risk for FHB was highest in the Red River Valley. Risk for moderately resistant varieties remained relatively low for most of the growing season. “Conversations with agricultural professionals and extension agents indicated scab and DON were manageable in most areas when a well-timed fungicide was used on susceptible varieties,” said Andrew Friskop, extension plant pathologist at North Dakota State University (NDSU).

Winter wheat was planted on around 120,000 acres, but a dry fall and winterkill terminated some acres. The remaining crop flowered during a time when risk was low for FHB. Therefore, no concerning reports of FHB or DON were received.

Spring wheat and durum were sown on 5 million acres and 1.1 million acres, respectively. FHB was observed at variable levels across all production regions. The NDSU Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Survey indicated 24% of the fields reported FHB with an average of 13% incidence within those fields. Reports from grain elevators indicated that most spring and durum DON levels remained below 2.0 ppm. “The highest reported DON levels were at 7.0 ppm, when a fungicide was not used on a susceptible spring wheat variety in southeast and southcentral North Dakota,” said Friskop. Another report from the northwest part of the state reported 5.0 ppm DON. Overall, the majority of the crop received a good quality rating with above average yields.

Spring wheat breeding site in northwest North Dakota.
(Andrew Friskop, photo.)

The barley crop in North Dakota was similar to the spring wheat and durum. FHB was found at variable levels in spring barley. NDSU IMP scouts reported finding FHB in 27% of the fields at an incidence of 17%. Although FHB symptoms could routinely be found in spring barley fields, the yields and malting quality remained high throughout the state. Overall, there were no concerning DON reports in the spring barley crop this season.

“The FHB Risk Tool was heavily utilized this year and predictions for risk seemed to be accurate.”

Madalyn Shires

Wheat diseases in **South Dakota** were lower on average for 2025. FHB was observed in some areas of the state including central and north central, where many of the winter wheat fields and a few spring wheat fields showed symptoms. In these areas, FHB risk was predicted to be high and fungicides were either not applied or not applied at the proper time. “The FHB Risk Tool was heavily utilized this year and predictions for risk seemed to be accurate,” said Madalyn Shires, South Dakota State University assistant professor and extension plant pathology specialist. Moisture occurred around flowering in some spring wheat fields and therefore, FHB was observed. To date, no major losses were reported from FHB in either winter or spring wheat.

Drought Conditions for the Great Plains Meant Few Issues with FHB

(Hard Winter Wheat)

Conditions in the Great Plains were mostly hot and dry during the growing season, meaning conditions were not optimal for FHB development. While some states received rain from April to June, allowing the crops to recover, overall, disease pressure remained extremely low and only a few fields were observed with a low incidence of FHB.

Low levels of FHB were observed in a few fields in southeast, south central, and southwest **Nebraska** in 2025. In research plots, DON levels were mostly undetectable and the economic impact in the state from FHB was negligible. “Rainfall in the wheat growing regions of the state was insufficient or the timing was not optimal for FHB development,” said Stephen Wegulo, extension plant pathologist at the University of Nebraska. Stripe rust arrived late during the growing season but was widespread in the major wheat growing regions, however, only trace amounts were found within fields. Leaf rust was confirmed in two southeastern counties and one county in the west with incidence and severity ranging from low to severe in hot spots. Fungal leaf spot diseases, especially Septoria tritici blotch, developed at low levels in fields not treated with a fungicide. While not widespread, bacterial leaf streak was also present at low levels in some fields.

Overall, **Kansas** produced 346 million bushels of wheat, which is well above the 10-year average of 317 million bushels. Warm weather and well-timed moisture in the fall allowed for good establishment of the winter wheat crop through much of the state. Although the wheat crop experienced drought conditions through the early spring, rainy, cool weather starting in April improved yield potential statewide. Harvest was delayed in parts of the state due to rainfall events through June. Fusarium head blight was patchy, and levels were generally below average in 2025. “We watched the FHB forecasting tool carefully as conditions favorable for development coincided with flowering in the south-central part of the state,” said Kelsey Andersen Onofre, Kansas State University’s wheat and forage crops plant pathologist. The

conversation in Kansas was dominated by unprecedented levels of wheat streak mosaic complex.

Wheat production in **Oklahoma** was estimated at 107 million bushels. Fall planting was impacted by severe drought conditions. Rainfall during November arrived late for optimal planting in many regions of the state, resulting in reduced fall forage production. Stands were variable throughout winter and spring as the crop continued to suffer from prolonged moisture stress during critical growth stages. By the beginning of April, drought stress signs were widespread throughout the state; however, rain arrived a few weeks later coinciding with jointing for most of the crop. April turned into the wettest month on record and moisture continued into May aiding grain filling and overall crop recovery. These wet conditions were also conducive to disease development. "Low levels of FHB were detected during the second and third weeks of May in variety trials at Stillwater, Kildare, Kingfisher, and Lahoma," said Meriem Aoun, Oklahoma State University small grains pathologist. The FHB Risk Tool predicted a high risk across the state, excluding the Panhandle, during the first week of May. However, no significant outbreaks were reported in commercial fields.

"Low levels of FHB were detected during the second and third weeks of May in variety trials at Stillwater, Kildare, Kingfisher, and Lahoma."

Meriem Aoun

Total wheat production in **Texas** was estimated to be just over 85 million bushels with a statewide average yield of 37 bushels per acre which tied the statewide yield record. Southern Texas was very dry this season which reduced the spread of rust to the rest of the state. November rains allowed for some of the best dryland wheat stands in several years in the Texas Panhandle resulting in above average yields for both irrigated and dryland production. Improved growing season conditions resulted in more acres being harvested for forage. "With depressed wheat prices, but high cattle prices and a growing need from dairies, we continue to see more acres used as a forage crop rather than for grain," said Brandon Gerrish, small grains extension specialist at Texas A&M University. In addition to acres lost to forage production, spring and early summer hailstorms resulted in further reductions of harvested acres.

Wheat harvest in **Colorado** for 2025 was better than initially expected. Stand establishment in Fall of 2024 was variable, with some areas emerging well but others not emerging until late winter/early spring. The central part of the state received a large snow event in late fall, but otherwise winter moisture was scarce. April weather was fairly dry and led to declining crop conditions. However, about mid-May, rain and cooler-than-average temperatures kicked in and gave the crop much-needed relief. Several widespread showers across the state in June helped the crop finish and end slightly above the ten-year average. Wheat production is estimated at 74 million bushels, up from 64.4 million bushels in 2024. The state had a very low incidence and severity for FHB. "I only found three samples with FHB, and no widespread infection, only a few plants in an entire field," said Robyn Roberts, a field crops plant pathologist at Colorado State University. No samples were submitted to the seed certification lab with FHB. Wheat stem sawfly continued to be a significant problem in the Northeast portion of the state, with growers planting semi-solid stemmed varieties to combat the lodging issues associated with sawfly pressure. The biggest shift in disease pressure came

from an increase in Triticum mosaic virus, which has become the prevalent virus disease, displacing wheat streak mosaic virus.

FHB Limited in the Pacific Northwest, Conditions Hot and Dry

(Malting Barley and Hard Spring Wheat)

Symptoms of FHB in the Pacific Northwest were readily observed this season, but DON levels remained low. Some spring malting barley was rejected at the point of sale due to DON but no other reports of rejected grain were received.

The growing environment for **Idaho** wheat was hot and dry and no issues with FHB were reported. However, in the southeastern region of the state, the disease and DON were easily found, but not at significant levels. “Concern due to reports of contaminated grain with high DON was actually flagged for hard white wheat from 2024 that someone was trying to blend off in shipments delivered to a milling facility,” said Juliet Marshall, University of Idaho plant pathologist. FHB was reported and confirmed in spring barley in the Rupert area. Yield under irrigation ranged from 160 to 180 bushels per acre; however, one malting barley variety was rejected for DON levels ranging from 0.55 to 0.65 ppm. This area continues to be a major FHB region as corn production increases due to dairy farm expansions.

Overall, Some Farmers Experienced FHB in 2025 and Most Mitigated Losses

FHB in 2025 was not as problematic for U.S. farmers as it was in 2024. It seemed to be the most challenging for organic farmers, those planting susceptible varieties, and those in the Mid-Atlantic states where rainfall led to high humidity allowing the pathogen to thrive. The remainder of the U.S. reported few or no problems with FHB, either due to environmental conditions not being favorable during the time the fungus can infect the crop or where the use of integrated management strategies to control FHB were effectively deployed. In most cases, the FHB Risk Tool was accurate in providing predictions and those utilizing the tool were able to make appropriate management decisions. There were still a couple states where farmers had questions regarding fungicide application timing and efficacy and extension specialists are working to educate these growers. Overall, there were only a few reports of high levels of DON and therefore, grain rejection or dockages were limited.■

Amber Hoffstetter, PhD
USWBSI Research
Technical Specialist

Amber Hoffstetter, PhD, is the research technical specialist for the U.S. Wheat and Barley Scab Initiative and is based out of Kinsman, Ohio. She can be reached at 330.442.3583 or at amber.hoffstetter@scabusa.org.

The USWBSI is a national multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional research consortium whose goal is to develop effective control measures that minimize the threat of Fusarium head blight (scab), including the production of mycotoxins, for producers, processors and consumers of wheat and barley. The USWBSI's more than $7.6 million annual allocation comes from Federal funds appropriated through the USDA-ARS and is distributed to 125 research projects in more than 30 states.

U. S. Wheat & Barley Scab Initiative (USWBSI)
Networking & Facilitation Office (NFO)
495 Borlaug Hall | 1991 Upper Buford Circle | St. Paul, MN 55108

nfo@scabusa.org | 517.290.5023 | https://scabusa.org
Twitter @USWBSI | Linkedin #uswbsi