

0203-BO-019 Development of scab resistant wheat cultivars for Kansas.

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PROJECT ABSTRACT

(1 Page Limit)

Serious scab (*Fusarium* head blight) epidemics occurred in Kansas in 1982, 1990, 1993, and 1995. Most of the losses have been concentrated in the eastern quarter of the state where rainfall is higher and corn residue is more prevalent. Since 1980, wheat acreage in the eastern one quarter of Kansas has declined by two thirds. A major cause of the decline has been farmer aversion to the risk of scab epidemics. Additionally, scab has the potential to become much more prevalent in central Kansas where wheat is the traditional dominant crop. First, there is a trend for increasing cultivation of corn, the main reservoir of inoculum of the scab pathogen. Second, there is a strong trend for decreasing tillage, which allows spore production and release from the corn residue. Third, the prevalent varieties in central Kansas are very susceptible to scab. Genetic resistance offers the best hope for economic management of this intractable disease. The long-term goal of this research is to develop hard red or white winter wheat cultivars adapted for Kansas with improved resistance to scab. Short term objectives are to: 1) screen existing local cultivars for resistance, 2) screen advanced breeding lines for resistance, 3) screen exotic germplasm lines for resistance, 4) screen the Uniform Regional Winter Wheat Scab Nursery for resistance, and 5) incorporate new sources of scab resistance into the Kansas wheat breeding program. Screening will be done in a misted field nursery using soil-applied infested corn grain inoculum and in the greenhouse using single floret inoculation. Standard disease evaluation methods will be used.