COLORADO WHEAT ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

2024-2025 Annual Report

CWAC
COLORADO WHEAT ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

Photo by Matt Greenwood

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Photo by Hunter Johnson

This is the time of year where reflection and anticipation coincide in the wheat world. In looking back on the past crops, Colorado's statewide production for 2025 is estimated to be 71 million bushels, up 10% from the 2024 crop. To put this in perspective, Colorado has an average wheat production of 72 million bushels. The moisture that came at planting time has the emergence and stands looking good, making the outlook for the 2025-2026 wheat crop promising.

Wheat Research is a priority for CWAC and it continues to fund many projects at Colorado State University, including entomology, pathology, weed science, crops testing and wheat breeding. The Wheat Breeding Program continues to be successful in developing varieties that meet the needs and challenges of growers in Colorado and surrounding states. It released four new varieties under the PlainsGold brand in 2025. In fact, the royalties from the varieties released by the program account for 55% of the total intellectual property income for CSU.

The biggest challenge that our farm faced this year, other than hail, was losses due to Wheat Stem Sawfly. I am looking forward to the new PlainsGold variety, Hoyt SF. This has a Semi-solid stem, good tolerance to WSMV and Triticum Mosaic Virus, and yields better then other solid stem varieties.

I recently attended a U.S. Wheat meeting in Austin, Texas. One of the speakers was Miguel Galdos, Regional Director for U.S. Wheat in South America. He is responsible for leading market development programs conducted in the USW South American Region to develop, serve and expand markets for U.S. wheat exports. The team has been focused, and successful in expanding the use of U.S wheat into Columbia by delivering wheat into ports both from the Pacific and Atlantic. South America is also using more U.S. wheat to feed a growing fish industry such as Chilean Sea Bass & Shrimp. U.S. Wheat has 13 overseas offices that address marketing, communication, planning, finance and trade policy. Exports for the first half of the 2025-26 marketing year are running 22% higher than the previous year.

U.S. Wheat's mission is to "Develop, maintain, and expand international markets to enhance wheat's profitability for U.S. wheat producers and its value for their customers." It will be having many conversations about HB4 trait and the benefits of biotechnology with members of our industry and trading partners as it continues its mission. By fully supporting U.S. Wheat, Colorado wheat farmers stand to see increased benefits.

After the retirement of Vince Peterson, U.S. Wheat named Mike Spier as its new President and CEO on July 1st. He previously served as U.S. Wheat Vice President of Overseas Operations. I'm looking forward to see where Mike can take the organization.

Best of luck with Fall Harvest & Happy Holidays!

Jerry Cooksey, President
Colorado Wheat Administrative Committee

2024-2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

Board members participated in joint meetings for U.S. Wheat Associates and the National Association of Wheat Growers. The fall meeting was held in Phoenix, the winter meeting was held in Washington D.C., and the summer meeting in Boise. Both U.S. Wheat and NAWG saw leadership changes this year. U.S. Wheat announced long-time employee Mike Spier as the new President and CEO of the organization. NAWG named Sam Kieffer, who previously worked for the American Farm Bureau Federation, as its new CEO. "The One Big Beautiful Bill Act" was passed back in July and included several key provisions that are normally addressed in farm bills. However, there are still several important provisions that have not been changed since the 2018 Farm Bill and are set to expire at the end of the year. These will have to be passed in what is being called Farm Bill 2.0. With the government shut down taking up Congress's focus this fall, it's unlikely we will see a new Farm Bill before the end of the year. It will most likely have to be passed as another extension.

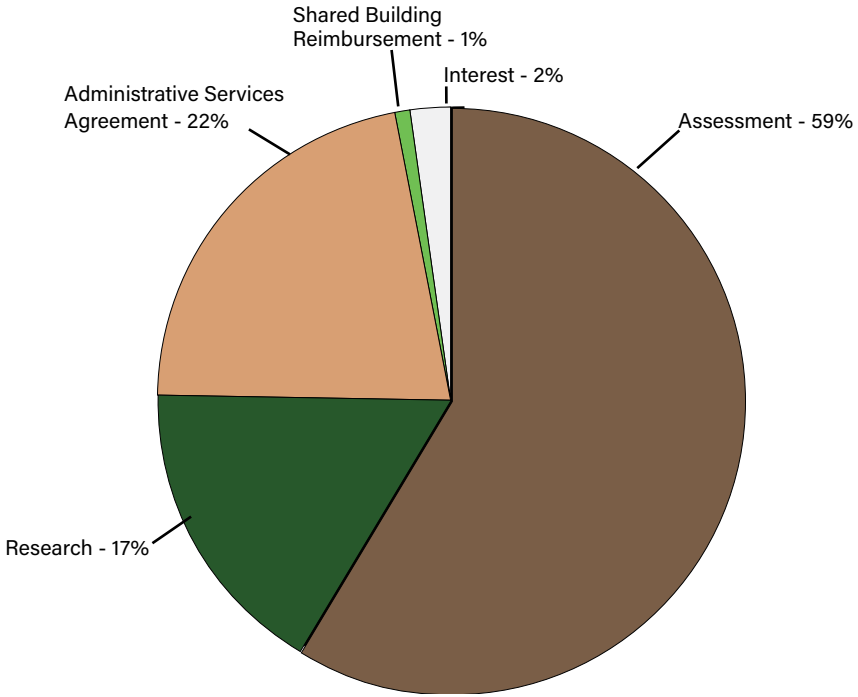
Trade and tariffs were also a focus this year. While wheat has not been included in any reciprocal tariffs, it has been part of trade agreements between the United States and several countries. On July 7th, the Indonesian Flour Millers signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to double its annual purchases of U.S. Wheat to 1 million metric tons (36.7 million bushels) each year for the next five years. On July 21st, the Government of Bangladesh signed an MOU that committed it to purchasing 700,000 metric tons (25.7 million bushels) of U.S. Wheat annually for the next five years. Finally, on September 17th, the Taiwan Flour Millers Association signed a letter of intent to purchase 3.6 million metric tons (132.3 million bushels) of U.S. wheat between 2026 and 2029. We would like to thank U.S. Wheat for all of its hard work in getting these agreements negotiated.

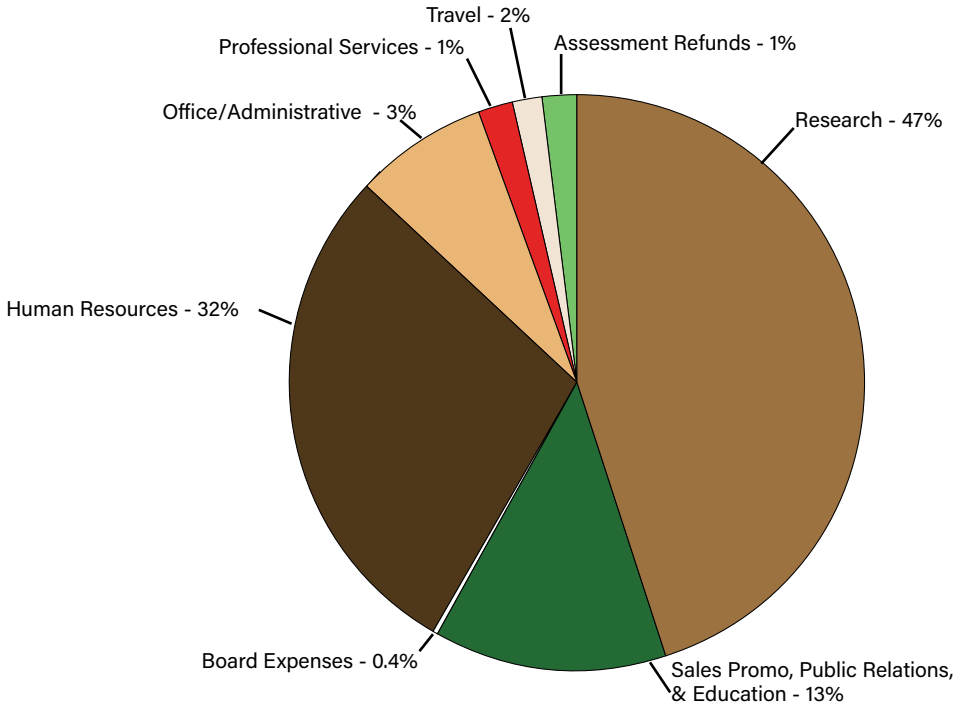
On September 22, 2025 the Colorado Wheat Research Foundation announced a strategic collaboration with Bioceres Crop Solutions to jointly develop and commercialize HB4® wheat in the United States. As part of the collaboration, Bioceres will grant CWRF exclusive, sublicensable rights to the HB4® trait in the U.S. territory. CWRF will serve as Trait Manager, facilitating broad access to HB4® wheat for third-party breeding programs and commercial channels, and leading engagement with U.S. stakeholders. Bioceres will continue to lead all regulatory activities for the HB4® trait, ensuring full alignment with the U.S. Wheat Industry Principles for Biotechnology Commercialization. This includes securing approvals in key export destinations, establishing tolerance thresholds for low-level presence, and ensuring trait stewardship through detection tools and certified seed systems.

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

COLORADO WHEAT ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE (CWAC) BUDGET*

*Unaudited





INCOME

Assessment	$1,084,931
Research	$305,000
Administrative Services Agreements (Reimbursement for Shared Staff: CWRF & CAWG)	$400,387
Shared Building Reimbursement	$11,956
Interest	$40,222
TOTAL INCOME	**$1,842,497**

EXPENSE

Research	$788,395
Sales Promotion, Public Relations, & Education	$219,759
Operating - Board	$6,436
Operating - Human Resources	$530,099
Operating - Office / Administration	$55,682
Operating - Professional Services	$18,140
Operating - Travel	$30,944
Assessment Refunds	$18,479
TOTAL EXPENSE	**$1,667,934**

WHEAT ASSESSMENT: ADVANCING YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH MARKETING AND PROMOTION

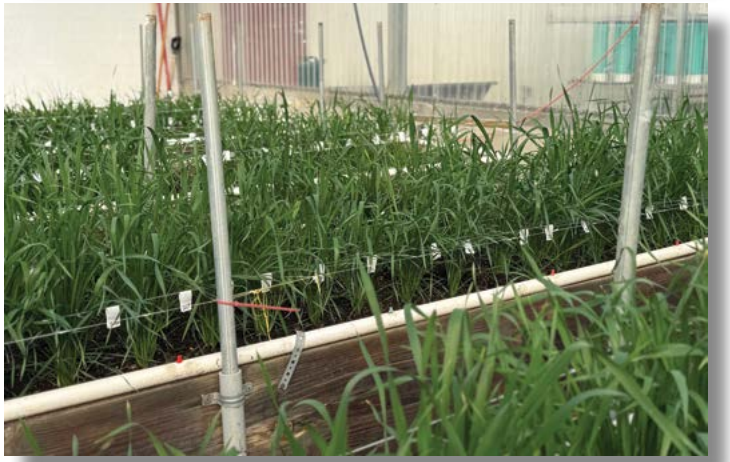
CWAC is a full member of U.S. Wheat Associates, which promotes the reliability, quality, and value of U.S. wheat to buyers, millers, bakers, food processors, and government officials in more than 100 countries around the world. CWAC Board members Steve Beedy and Jerry Cooksey sit on USW committees and participate in USW Board meetings. Colorado farmers export about 50% of their crop annually, and USW provides "boots on the ground" representation for our product with overseas offices and annual Crop Quality Tours.

CWAC is a non-voting member of Wheat Foods Council (WFC), which promotes domestic wheat consumption to key audiences like Registered Dietitians, personal trainers, chefs, health-conscious consumers and the media. WFC reaches out to each of these audiences as part of its mission to help increase awareness of dietary grains as an essential component of a healthy diet.

CWAC is a full member of the Wheat Marketing Center (WMC), located in Portland, Oregon. WMC is a technical crossroads of the wheat world linking wheat producers, consumers, millers and end product manufacturers. WMC focuses on promoting U.S. wheat by demonstrating its quality and functionality in end products, including pan breads, Asian noodles, crackers and biscuits, tortillas and flatbread, and many other baked goods. Pilot scale production lines, state-of-the-art quality testing equipment, and internationally recognized technical expertise provide great value to state wheat commission partners. CWAC Secretary/Treasurer Steve Beedy of Genoa continues to serve on the WMC Board of Directors.

CWAC is a full member of Plains Grains, Inc., (PGI), a private non-profit wheat marketing organization specifically focused on Hard Red Winter wheat. PGI serves HRW wheat producers through gathering of samples across grainsheds at harvest, quality testing of those samples, timely reporting, enhanced marketing, and development of buyer relationships. PGI data is used extensively on USW Crop Quality Tours in other countries to demonstrate the quality of wheat available for purchase.

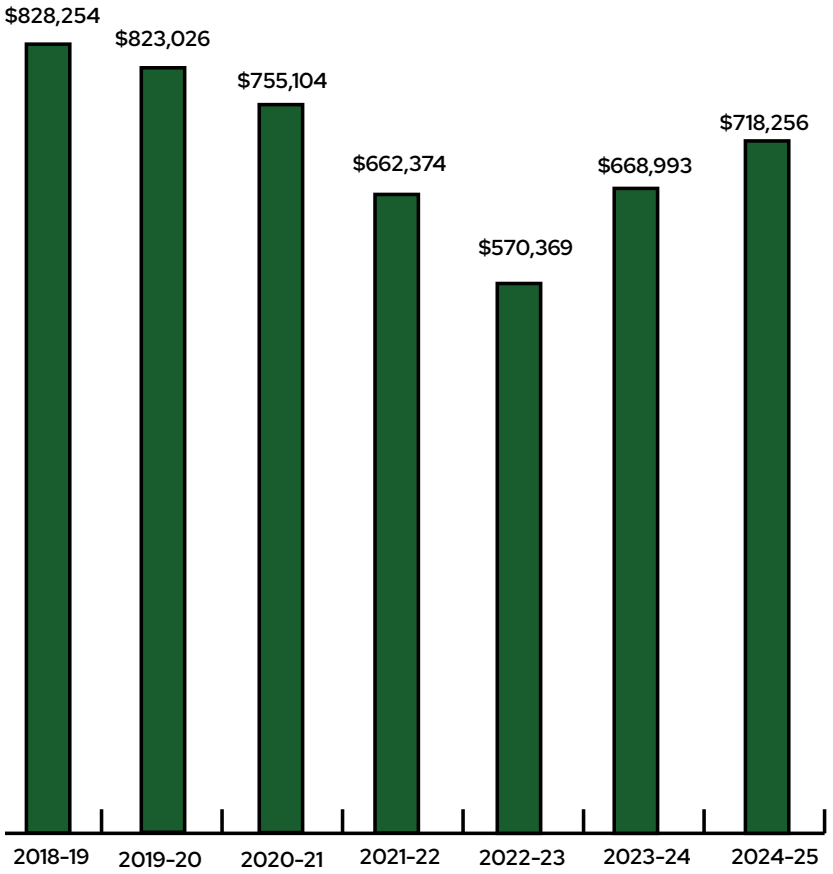
CWAC provides support to the Wheat Quality Council (WQC), which advocates for the development of new wheat varieties that improve the value of wheat to producers, millers, and processors of wheat. WQC conducts annual quality testing of new wheat varieties that may be released to producers, with CSU Wheat Breeding being a consistent participant in these evaluations. WQC also conducts an annual Hard Winter Wheat tour that brings in people from all over the US and the world. Brad Erker, CWAC Executive Director, is serving a three-year term on the WQC Board of Directors.



WHEAT RESEARCH

Colorado producers invested $718,256 in wheat breeding and wheat-related research at CSU in fiscal year 2024-25, which was 43% of the total CWAC budget. Variety development continues to be a major focus, breeding for Colorado's unique conditions, which now include severe pressure from the wheat stem sawfly in many northeastern counties. The elite wheat breeding program at Colorado State University uses the latest technologies available to develop hard red, hard white, CoAXium®, Clearfield®, and wheat stem sawfly-resistant varieties. The assessment has also supported numerous other wheat-related research scientists and programs aimed at increasing profitability.

CWAC'S WHEAT RESEARCH INVESTMENT AT CSU



GRANT-IN-AID FUNDING DIRECTED TO CSU IN FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025

HARD RED AND HARD WHITE WINTER WHEAT BREEDING $437,590

This was the 56th year of an ongoing program aimed at developing better wheat varieities for Colorado producers, led by Dr. Esten Mason. Breeding trials are planted at fifteen locations in Eastern Colorado. The project breeds for both yield and end-use quality, including varieties that promote identity-preserved marketing of hard white wheat, as well as insect and disease tolerance and herbicide tolerance. The project utilizes the most advanced breeding technologies, like marker-assisted selection, doubled haploids, and genomic selection. The project is increasingly emphasizing development of semi-solid varieties that show reduced cutting from the wheat stem sawfly. This project also receives formula support from CWRF royalties and trait fees.

WHEAT ENTOMOLOGY $116,666

This was the 35th year of entomology support at CSU, under the direction of Dr. Punya Nachappa in the Department of Agricultural Biology. This program supported research on wheat stem sawfly, and other wheat pests of potential significance. This program involed surveys to evaluate the WSS flight timing monitoring at Orchard/New Raymer, WSS stubble infestation survey across Colorado, solidness scoring and dissections of wheat stems of the wheat breeding program's Elite trials and WSS trials, and assessment of insecticide treatments against WSS. Additional research priorities included assessing WSS non-preference for certain hollow-stemmed varieties, impact of solidness on natural enemies, and developing high-throughput phenotyping to screen for WSS infestation. The funding will provide support for an entomology research associate and operating funds.

PLANT PATHOLOGY
$52,000

This is the 43rd year of a continuing program at CSU in the Department of Agricultural Biology, under the direction of Dr. Robyn Roberts. The funds supported the wheat plant pathology research and extension program. The funds supported research and extension programming on critical wheat diseases including stripe rust and viruses vectored by the wheat curl mite, including Wheat Streak Mosaic Virus and Triticum Mosaic Virus. Funding also supported research to improve virus diagnostics, deep sequencing to analyze virus populations collected in Colorado grower field samples, diagnostic services to growers, sequencing complete genomes of 1-2 stripe rust isolates, and disease assays to determine Colorado stripe rust environmental limitations. The aim of these programs is to develop improved disease predictive models, management strategies, and screening of CSU germplasm for sources of resistance.

NOVEL HERBICIDE TOLERANT WHEAT PROJECT
$30,000

This was the 9th year of funding under the leadership of Dr. Franck Dayan in the Department of Agricultural Biology. Weed pressure continues to be one of the most profit-limiting aspects of wheat production, especially as weeds evolve to be tolerant to existing chemistries. These funds supported discovery and development of novel wheat traits that impart tolerance to herbicides and methods of use of new herbicide modes of action. This project enhanced the existing wheat weed science research program and helped support the basic science to 1) characterize the tolerance mechanisms and the specific mutation(s) conferring tolerance; 2) investigate factors contributing to overall level of resistance (i.e. metabolism); 3) develop greenhouse screens to validate the level of resistance of new wheat varieties with tolerance traits. This project also provided basic collaborative research support to the CSU Wheat Breeding Program as needed.

WEED SCIENCE - EXISTING AND EMERMGING WEED PROBLEMS
$30,000

This was the 11th year of weed science support at CSU, under the direction of Dr. Todd Gaines in the Department of Agricultural Biology. These funds supported weed science test plot research on jointed goatgrass, downy brome, feral rye and herbicide resistance weed management in winter wheat. It also enhanced the existing wheat weed science research program for basic and applied research on existing and emerging annual and perennial weed problems and help support the basic science and gene-based documentation of herbicide tolerance traits to support commercialization.

WEED SCIENCE - CROP-WEED DYNAMICS
$30,000

This is the 33rd year of a continuing program under the leadership of Dr. Lovreet Shergill in the Department of Agricultural Biology. The funds supported the developement of a weed science program exploring crop-weed dynamics with a focus on weed management strategies tailored to wheat and wheat-based cropping systems. The program evaluated weed control technologies, studied weed-crop interactions, and investigated sustainable weed management practices.

CSU CROPS TESTING
$10,000

This was the 40th year of a continuing program under the leadership of Sally Jones-Diamond in the Department of Soil and Crop Sciences. This project supported the existing wheat improvement program and provided farmers with unbiased and reliable variety recommendations for making better decisions. It provides partial support for a Research Associate to assist in the operation of wheat test plots and partial operating expenses for 13 dryland and 3 irrigated variety trials annually. This project also received formula support from CWRF royalties and trait fees.

FOUNDATION SEED
$12,000

This was the 18th year of support for Agronomy Foundation Seed (AFS), under the leadership of Laura Pottorff. AFS operates within CSU Seed Programs and is the link between CSU breeding programs and Certified seed growers. A healthy foundation seed program is critical for getting new varieties out to farmers for fast adoption. AFS is responsible for increasing breeder seed of new wheat varieties while maintaining varietal purity. Foundation seed is then used as the seed source for Registered and Certified seed production throughout Colorado and the region.

WHEAT GENETICS RESOURCE CENTER
$25,000 (CWRF Also Provides an Additional $25,000)

In addition to research funding provided directly to CSU, CWAC is a full member of the Wheat Genetics Resource Center (WGRC), located at Kansas State University. The WGRC collects and conserves wild wheat relatives that are potential sources of genes for wheat improvement. Genes for resistance to viral, bacterial, fungal, and insect pests and abiotic stresses are identified, transferred to agronomically useful breeding lines, and deployed. Membership gains CSU early access to traits discovered by WGRC, which uses member funding to leverage federal grant dollars. Dr. Punya Nachappa, Assistant Professor of Entomology in the Department of Agricultural Biology at CSU, successfully applied for grant funding from WGRC in 2022. Her project looks for resistance genes to wheat stem sawfly in Aegilops tauschii, a relative of jointed goatgrass, and Triticum dicoccoides, a relative of emmer. The 2024-25 growing season was the fifth year of this research.