



PRESS RELEASE

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Nebraskans Promote Wheat in the Big Apple

What could be more unexpected than a wheat field in the middle of New York City? The Wheat Foods Council and sponsors from all areas of the wheat industry will answer that question when the “Urban Wheat Field” opens for three days in the heart of the Big Apple, October 6 to 8. The quarter-acre wheat field, opens to the public from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST daily, will be located in at the intersection of Water Street and South Street in New York City. The exhibit will showcase the different stages of a growing wheat crop, from early season green plants to the amber waves of grain at harvest time.

Representing Nebraska Wheat will be Nebraska Wheat Board member Brent Robertson and his wife Amy of Elsie, Nebraska Wheat Board Executive Director Royce Schaneman, and Nebraska Wheat Public Information Officer Zoe Olson. The Nebraska team will serve as tour guides in the wheat field and assist with bread and cookie baking demonstrations.

To create the field, nearly one half million wheat kernels were planted in 300 4x4 foot pallets. Richard Taylor, Ph.D., from the University of Delaware’s plant and soil science department, has been overseeing the growing of the wheat used for the exhibit. Dr. Taylor’s location at the University of Delaware is in close proximity to the New Jersey greenhouse where the wheat has been growing since the end of July under controlled conditions until ready for the exhibit. The interlocking pallets will create the wheat field with a pedestrian path running through it.

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Participant interaction in the wheat field is encouraged at four main stations. There will be a complete combine with grain head provided by Case/I-H before participants enter the wheat field, a milling station complete with miniature grain mills courtesy of ADM and ConAgra, a baking station featuring the Oklahoma Wheat Commission/Plains Grains, Inc. mobile baking lab with Ultra Grain flour from ConAgra, and the Wheat Foods Council/U.S. Wheat Associates nutrition lab. Kellogg's and Kashi will be giving away cereal bars and General Mills will have a drawing for free cereal for a year.

Mr. Robertson was instrumental in the decision by Case/I-H to supply a combine complete with grain head for the event—no small feat in bringing a machine of that size to downtown New York City. “To be a part of this event—showing what Nebraska wheat producers do to feed the world—makes me smile,” said Robertson.

In addition to the hands-on component of the Urban Wheat Field, live Internet video feeds, video clips and a blog from Wheat Foods Council President Marcia Scheideman will help tell agriculture's story to Web visitors beyond New York City. Scheideman will serve as media spokesperson during the three-day event.

The wheat industry is counting on the novelty of a wheat field planted in the middle of New York City to introduce wheat production agriculture to the national and urban media, adult consumers and children. "Every component of the wheat industry, from wheat producers to millers to bakers to manufacturers, will be participating," Schaneman said.

The educational and media exhibit – the largest in the history of the Wheat Foods Council, according to Scheideman – will be staffed by volunteers from a number of state wheat boards and grower associations, the Home Baking Association, the U.S. Wheat Associates and National Association of Wheat Growers. The Nebraska Wheat Board is a supporting member of The Wheat Foods Council, Plains Grains, Inc. and U.S. Wheat Associates. The Nebraska Wheat Growers Association is a supporting member of the National Association of Wheat Growers.

Additional information about the Urban Wheat Field can be found on the Wheat Foods Council Web site, www.wheatfoods.org.

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