

'Good crop' '09 wheat harvest winds down

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

High moisture the past two months has led to an extremely good wheat crop, excluding any hailed wheat, reported local elevator representatives this week.

Steve Young of Grainland Co-op estimated harvest to be 85-90 percent complete Monday, July 20, and Steve Bahnsen of Paoli Farmers Cooperative figured about 90 percent completion by early this week.

Both said by the end of this week, the bulk of the wheat harvest will be finished.

Quality of the wheat crop is excellent, with very good yields. Young said he's heard of yields anywhere from 30-80 bushels per acre, with the average yield in the upper 50s and lower 60s. Bahnsen said around 50-plus bushels per acre would sum up the overall average yield.

Protein is low, but that's not a surprise, added Young. Good yields typically mean the plant is not stressed, so there's not a lot of protein. Bahnsen added low protein is just a sign of good volume or high yields.

Test weights started out real good, but every time wheat is rained on, a little bit is lost, noted Young. He and Bahnsen both said test weights will still average more than 60 pounds per bushel.

The last three years, coming off a drought, have seen big crop seasons in the area, said Bahnsen. He anticipates this year's crop at Paoli Co-op is even bigger than last year's.