

**United Wheat Growers
Chairman's Annual Report
5/06/21**

The 2021 Harvest has again, for most been very successful, with average yields only slightly behind last year's exceptional results. While a very good result, like every year, average, is just that, so for some, this will not have been the result. My thoughts are with those who were unfortunately in the path of a hailstorm, this year, going through South Canterbury, striking in Waimate, St Andrews, Geraldine and into Timaru. Particularly tough for farmers in these areas, as, like many others they were also dealing with drought conditions. Also, for the growers around Balfour who were again hit with flood, a tough time for those with crops in the pathway.

The Insurance Scheme had a lot less claims than last year, however the scheme has again proved it's worth for over 30 growers who have been unfortunate enough to be caught in one of these events.

Since harvest, Canterbury had been stuck in a serious autumn drought. However, thanks to timely showers or irrigation, most autumn wheat has gone in the ground on time, and in good condition. We are as an Arable Industry very fortunate, that when the drought ended abruptly, during a 1 in 100 year rain event, very little damage has emerged for Arable Farmers. So many people had their farms severely damaged in this storm, my thoughts are with them as they try and rebuild their farms and livelihoods.

Insurance

The Directors continue to enjoy a good working relationship with FMG as insurance providers for our Disaster Relief Scheme. Following last year's high number of claims and large payout, FMG increased the levy slightly. However, with the new Levy Order coming into effect in January this year, we did not need to pass the increase onto farmers. This is because of the, newly agreed to, Collection Fee that was reduced from 5% to 1.5%. We are grateful for how this is working and for the firms support to make this happen.

Wheat Competition

With this event cancelled last year due to Covid, it is pleasing to have it running again. After several years with Ruralco as our main sponsor, we are pleased now to not only have kept Ruralco as a sponsor, but also have Bayer as a major sponsor of the now UWG Bayer Wheat Awards.

New this year, is a class for Agronomists with the aim of recognising the support and advise growers are receiving from their industry reps, as well as an incentive for raising both profile and performance through some competition in this area. We are thrilled to have partnered with NZGSTA in developing this, also for their support in sponsoring it.

This Event is aimed to raise the profile of wheat growing in New Zealand, UWG is pleased to be organising, thanks to Guy Wigley, the teams at Federated Farmers Arable and NZGSTA for all your work. Of course, any competition needs some rewards, so a huge thankyou to the many prize sponsors, this is very much appreciated.

United Wheat Growers support the Wheat Industry through our involvement with AIMI, also holding a position on AFIC, we are a member of SGRR, the Arable industry GIA signatory.

We administer QAgainz for the Grain Industry and the Directors are members of the Taskforce that runs it.

We also have good links with FAR and Federated Farmers Arable to promote the views of wheat growers. We work well with them, and a good example of this, is with the work done and continuing over the changes we have seen with the procurement of milling wheat and the effect this is having on grower confidence in this sector.

Steve, Michael and Guy, thanks for your contribution to UWG and for the support, advise and help you give me, it's much appreciated. Thanks to the team at Brown Glassford. A special shoutout to Chelsea, we've introduced you to the complex world of wheat and arable farming. I really appreciate your ability and enthusiasm to understand the industry, and the quick and positive way you get things done. Thank you.

To the Electoral Committee, thank you for the support. The last two years has seen a lot of insurance claims that have needed assessors, I'm very grateful for the way so many of you have made yourselves available, often at very busy times of the year. This remains a very important asset of the insurance scheme, to be able to put professional wheat growers in to assess losses, a key strength of the scheme. So important to maintain. The more of us that can share this job, the better, so thank you.

Brian Leadley
Chairman