

Improving Wheat Protein with Split Nitrogen Applications

1.21.2010 *01/21/10 3:56:10 PM*

Improving Wheat Protein with Split Nitrogen Applications

1.21.2010

After the last two years' of low protein wheat, producers are trying to figure out how to improve wheat protein for 2010. Lately, I have been getting some questions about this issue from some growers. Improving grain proteins by applying nitrogen in-season is one option that has come up in these conversations.

The concept of applying nitrogen in-season to improve protein is not easy. Furthermore, attempting to get an economical response can also be difficult. In 2006, Jochum Wiersma (University of Minnesota Extension Agronomist in small grain production and management) and Albert Sims (Associate Professor of Soil Science at University of Minnesota) wrote an article addressing this practice. They did a nice job addressing both the agronomic and the economic responses to in-season applications of nitrogen to hard red spring wheat.

The good news is that there have been protein increases observed in some of these trials. However, it is important to note, that in one-third of the trials, there was no significant change in protein. Also, the economics can be quite dynamic. Drs. Wiersma and Sims created a correlation between the price of nitrogen per unit and the protein discounts and premiums at the elevator. The challenge is that these both tend to be volatile markets.

Here is the link to the article:

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/cropEnews/2006/pdfs/06MNCN10.pdf>

Please contact your local Halstad Elevator Agronomist if you have any questions or comments.