



# SOUTH DAKOTA WHEAT PRODUCTION

*South Dakota is one of the leading wheat producing states in the U.S. Fifty percent of the wheat produced in South Dakota is exported to foreign markets. If the United States allows the commercialization of genetically modified wheat, South Dakota and other wheat producing states risk losing their export markets.*

## South Dakota Wheat Production

South Dakota farmers plant an average of 3.5 million acres of wheat a year. South Dakota exported \$186 million of wheat in 2000, ranking it 10<sup>th</sup> in the U.S. in wheat and wheat product export sales. In 2001 South Dakota ranked:

- 5<sup>th</sup> in Durum Wheat production, harvesting 576,000 bushels of wheat valued at \$1.9 million.
- 4<sup>th</sup> in Spring Wheat production, harvesting over 64,000 bushels worth over \$186 million.
- 9<sup>th</sup> in total wheat production harvesting more than 76 million bushels valued at over \$219 million.

## Genetically Modified Wheat

Monsanto plans to introduce a strain of genetically modified hard red spring wheat into commercial markets in 2005. This wheat, called Roundup Ready wheat because of its resistance to Roundup herbicide, could result in the loss of export markets for South Dakota wheat farmers.

Genetic engineering is the process of inserting genes from one kind of organism into another, creating an entirely new organism that is then patented.

The top importers of US spring wheat, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan, require mandatory labeling for even the smallest amounts of genetically modified organisms, and they do not want to buy genetically modified wheat.

The Japanese Millers Association, representing 90% of Japanese wheat processors, has stated that it will not buy wheat from the U.S. that contains any level of genetically modified organisms.

The flour miller Rank Hovis, which controls 30% of the milling and baking industries in the United Kingdom, says not only that it will reject genetically modified wheat, but it will no longer buy *any* wheat from the United States if genetically modified wheat is grown here, because it will be impossible to guarantee that conventional or organic wheat will be completely GMO-free.

The current grain shipping system is not designed to segregate genetically modified grain from conventional grain. This makes it impossible to meet the GM-free requirements of export markets.

## South Dakota Wheat Production - 2001

Commodity	Planted (acres)	Harvested (acres)	Yield (bushels/acre)	Production (bushels)	Value (dollars)
All Wheat	3,025,000	2,044,000	38	76,766,000	219,949,000
Durum	25,000	24,000	24	576,000	1,958,000
Other Spring (HRS)	1,700,000	1,650,000	39	64,350	186,615,000
Winter	1,300,000	370,000	32	11,840	31,376,000



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**Other Disadvantages of GM Wheat**

Genetically modified crops can cross pollinate with certain weeds, creating superweeds that are resistant to herbicides.

Conventional crops can also become contaminated with genetically modified organisms from neighboring fields and are difficult to reclaim.

**Genetically Modified Soybeans**

Monsanto claims that planting crops resistant to Roundup herbicide will decrease production costs and increase yields. However, a study conducted in 1999 by Dr. Chuck Benbrook found that genetically modified soybean seed and weed management systems cost 50% more than conventional systems of the same variety.

**Legal Liability**

A farmer deciding to plant genetically modified seeds must enter into a technology agreement, giving him license to use the patented technology. Monsanto's technology agreement prohibits farmers from saving or selling seeds, and requires farmers to use specific herbicides in a company-directed weed management plan. If the terms of this agreement are violated, Monsanto reserves the right to impose fines as much as 120 times the technology fee paid by farmers who enter into the agreement.

Monsanto's technology agreement states that the company will not be held liable for damages caused by planting genetically modified crops. This means that farmers are held liable if their crops contaminate a neighboring field. Monsanto has sued farmers when genetically modified seeds were found in their crops, even when the farmers did not plant or buy the seeds.

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