



November 2022

VULGAMORE
Family Farms

Greetings Friends & Landowners:

We often quip about the similarities between farming and football, like how Mother Nature whipped our tails by drying up our offense and forcing us on defense. It's more fun to consider this crop season as a "rebuilding year" rather than a failure, because we have hope for the future!

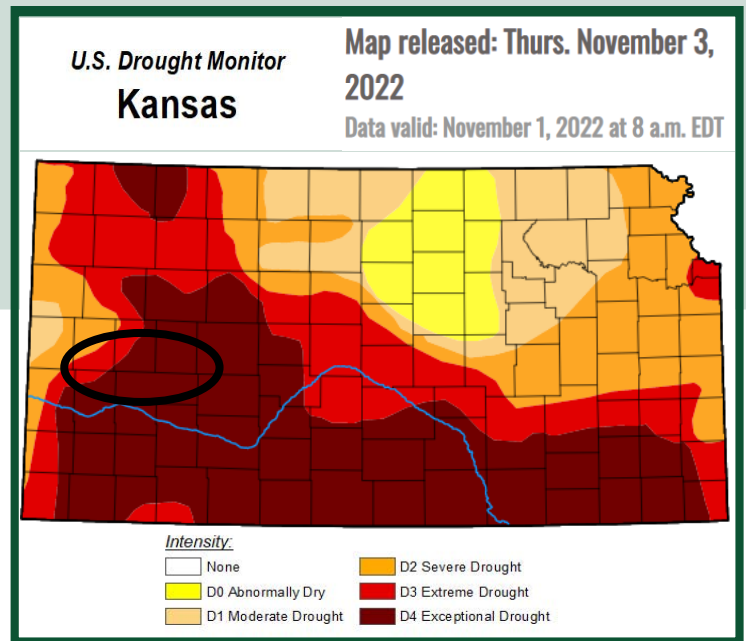
We are proud of how our team responded to the many challenges. After our continuous wheat couldn't finish the season, we didn't give up. It took some extra effort and hustle, but we planted all the failed wheat acres back to milo, which proved to be a great defensive strategy. The milo left us in excellent field position with abundant crop residue to protect the soil from erosion.

Our best highlights of the season came from Wichita County where the right timing and right rotation yielded 80-100 bu/ac corn and milo. This glimmer of hope has kept us excited for next year!



Football provides a much needed diversion!

The best medicine for the mental anguish of harvesting a poor crop is having some good football to look forward to on the weekends. For many of us, it starts on Friday night with the Scott City Beavers, who finished with an 8-2 record. They made it to the 2nd round of the state playoffs before losing by 1 point (27-28) to a talented Cheney team. Our VFF team had 1 junior, 3 sophomores, and 1 freshman playing for the Beavers this year. Much like the crop season, we can't wait for next year!



The drought spreads and intensifies!

Since our June update, the drought has spread to include all of Kansas, with most of Southwest Kansas in the D4 (exceptional) category. The black circle on the map depicts the majority of VFF's farm in Kansas.

We can attest to a BIG difference in yields between the D2, D3, and D4 levels of drought on our farm. Generally speaking, our yields in the D2 (severe) area were 50-70 bu/ac better than in the D4 (exceptional) area. Our best yields were clearly on the west side of the farm.

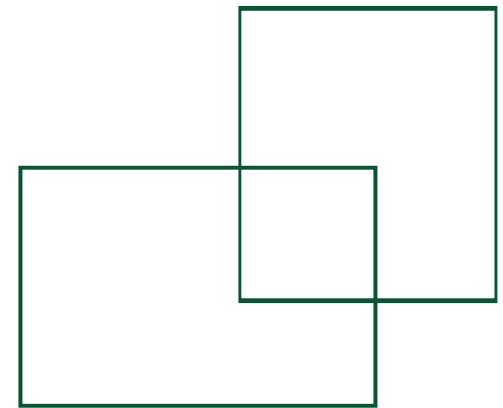
This is the second consecutive year that we've received more rainfall on the west side of the farm, and it's contrary to normal. Typically, rainfall decreases by 1 inch for every 20 miles from west to east across Kansas.

We have recorded 10.01" of precipitation at the VFF headquarters since last November, which is 50% of normal. We officially track our rainfall at the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, & Snow Network website (www.cocorahs.org). VFF's official gauge is KS-SC-6.



VFF continues to support the mission of the Spencer Flight and Education Center.

2022 corn harvest summary by the numbers:



2022 milo harvest summary by the numbers:

Only 90% of our dryland milo was worthy of harvest in 2022. Milo yields ranged from 0 to 104 bu/ac, with an average of 26.9 bu/ac across all planted acres. By crop rotation, the average yields were 34.6 bu/ac for milo planted into wheat stubble, 17.6 bu/ac into failed wheat, and 11.3 bu/ac into milo stubble.

For reference, our worst milo year in the past 25 years was 2011, with an average yield of 5.2 bu/ac, compared to our best year in 2015 at 134.5 bu/ac. Our 25-year average milo yield is 84.5 bu/ac.

The silver lining of the poor milo harvest is the price, which also bolsters our safety net provided by crop insurance. The average cash price during harvest at the local elevators was \$7.50/bu, and that's one of the best milo prices we've seen in the last 25 years!

Drought cuts triticale yields in half, increasing demand for fall forage

Above, irrigated triticale is swathed, windrowed, and chopped. The intensive harvesting process leaves little crop residue behind, making forage a poor choice for no-till dryland acres where crop residue is critical. Irrigated corn acres that can be chopped for corn silage will be in high demand this fall.