

## OK Wheat Commission Executive Director Mike Schulte Ready to Close the Books on this Year's Harvest

*Wed, 21 Jun 2017*

Much of Oklahoma's farmers are just about ready to close the book on this year's harvest, with really only the Panhandle region of the state left to combine. Radio Oklahoma Ag Network Farm Director **Ron Hays** caught up with **Mike Schulte**, executive director of the Oklahoma Wheat Commission, to get his take on this year's wheat crop. You can listen to their entire conversation, simply by clicking or tapping the LISTEN BAR, located at the bottom of this story.

"From the Oklahoma/Texas line to the Oklahoma/Kansas line, I would say really, harvest is complete in most regions," Schulte reported. "The majority of harvest is now taking place in the Panhandle region of the state. So, I'm calling the harvest, 88 to 90 percent complete right now."

If you recall, Oklahoma experienced much the same scenario in parts of the state in 2016 as what transpired this year during harvest.

"We were a week and a half earlier than normal," he said. "People began cutting on the 17th of May. Then right when they started cutting we got rain. It kept them out of the field for four to five days."

By Memorial Day, though, combines were rolling practically all across the state. However, with later plantings and more farmers involved with crop rotations this year, Schulte suggests that we really saw two separate crops come about in Oklahoma.

"It's been a month-long event for Oklahoma, but overall I think things have been very well for us," Schulte commented.

Schulte continued, offering a breakdown of the numbers for this year's harvest based on his observations from the field and compared them to the US Department of Agriculture's estimates. According to him, he is expecting the statewide average to reflect a 60 lb./bu. test weight, with a good kernel size and a 10.5 to 11.5 percent protein level, roughly a 36 bu./acre yield and – he is optimistic that the state will harvest approximately 97 to 100 million bushels total.

"We're hopeful that the quality of this crop is going to be good," he said. "We're not as high as we would have liked to be on protein levels, but we're excited about these numbers."