U.S. Winter Wheat Yield Outlook for 2026

Week 16 - (4/20/26)

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April 20, 2026

0.1 This week's prediction

U.S. wheat estimate for week 16 (April 20, 2026)
Yield range from 46.2 to 51.3
Predicted yield of 48.7
Acreage range from 23,686 to 25,089 (1,000 acres)
Predicted acres of 24,387 (1,000 acres)
Production range from 1,093 to 1,287 million bu
Predicted production of 1,188 million bu
Total U.S. is 15% below last year

0.2 Introduction

The USDA collects weekly crop condition data throughout the growing season. Crops are rated on a scale from very poor to excellent. For winter wheat, these estimates are reported over a few weeks in late fall, then resume in the spring. In this publication, Ibendahl estimates U.S. winter wheat yields, harvested acres, and total wheat production based on the crop condition report from NASS for week 16 (April 20, 2026). The U.S. estimates are an aggregation of the 18 leading winter wheat states with an adjustment for the remaining states.

For a full description of the procedures and model, readers are encouraged to read **Kansas Wheat Yield Outlook for 2026**. This publication describes how both yields and acres are estimated. While USDA crop condition reports can be useful for predicting yields, models predicting wheat yields are not as reliable as those for corn and soybeans. Wheat can often look terrible in the field yet still produce good yields.

0.3 Results

Figure 1 is a Likert graph of the U.S. crop conditions for the last 30 years in the U.S. The Likert graph is centered on the fair category to make comparisons among years easier. The number on the left-hand side of the figure is the total for the very poor and poor categories, while the number on the right-hand side is the total for the good and excellent categories.

Figure 2 is a Likert graph of the U.S. crop conditions for the current year. Not all states were reporting data for week #13, so the number for the U.S. is suspect (week #13).

Figure 3 is the estimated harvested acres for the leading wheat states with the U.S. total scaled to account for the other wheat states. Estimating harvested acres can be a challenge as evidenced by the low R-squared values in many states. The estimate of harvest acres actually estimates the percent of planted acres that are harvested instead of acres directly.

Figure 4 is the estimated yield for each of the leading wheat states, while Figure 6 is the estimated wheat production. Because the yield per acre from the individual states can't be summed together, the national yield per acre is calculated from the total production divided by the total harvested acres. Total U.S. wheat production is calculated by adjusting the production from the 18 leading wheat states upward based on the historic relationship between U.S. production and the production from the 18 leading wheat states.

0.4 Implications

Drought conditions continue to impact large areas where winter wheat is grown. A visual inspection of the Drought Monitor would suggest this national forecast will worsen over the next few weeks. Currently, U.S. production is 15% below last year. However in Kansas, wheat production is estimated to be 30% below last year.

0.5 Implications

Producers should consider these results as a guideline. The low R-squared values across many states suggest that producers should consider the confidence interval carefully and not rely solely on the estimated value. While rains could certainly improve this forecast, the drought monitor and reports from farmers suggest it could get a lot worse.

0.6 Contact

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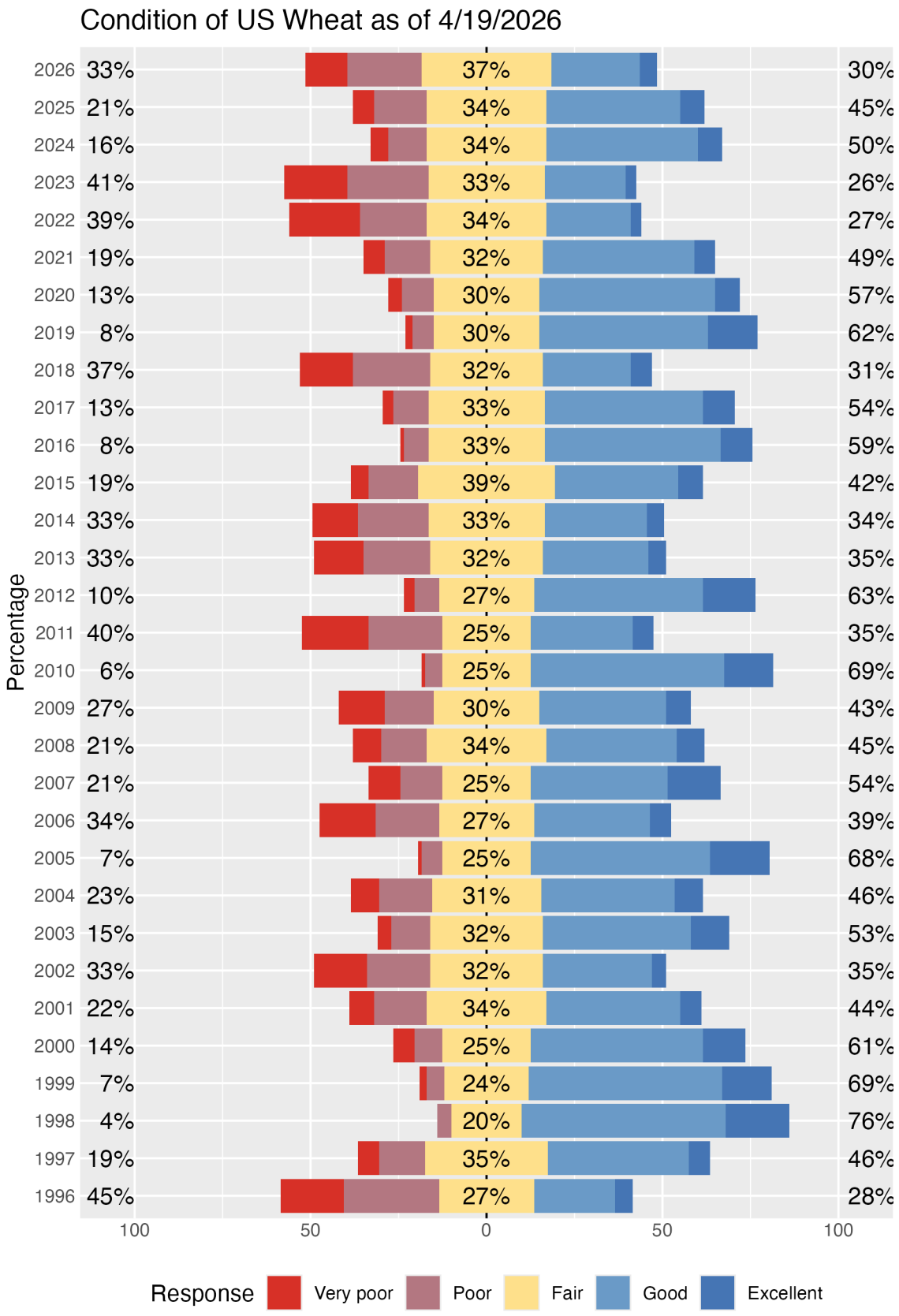

Figure 1: Historic Wheat Crop Conditions for U.S. for Specific Week

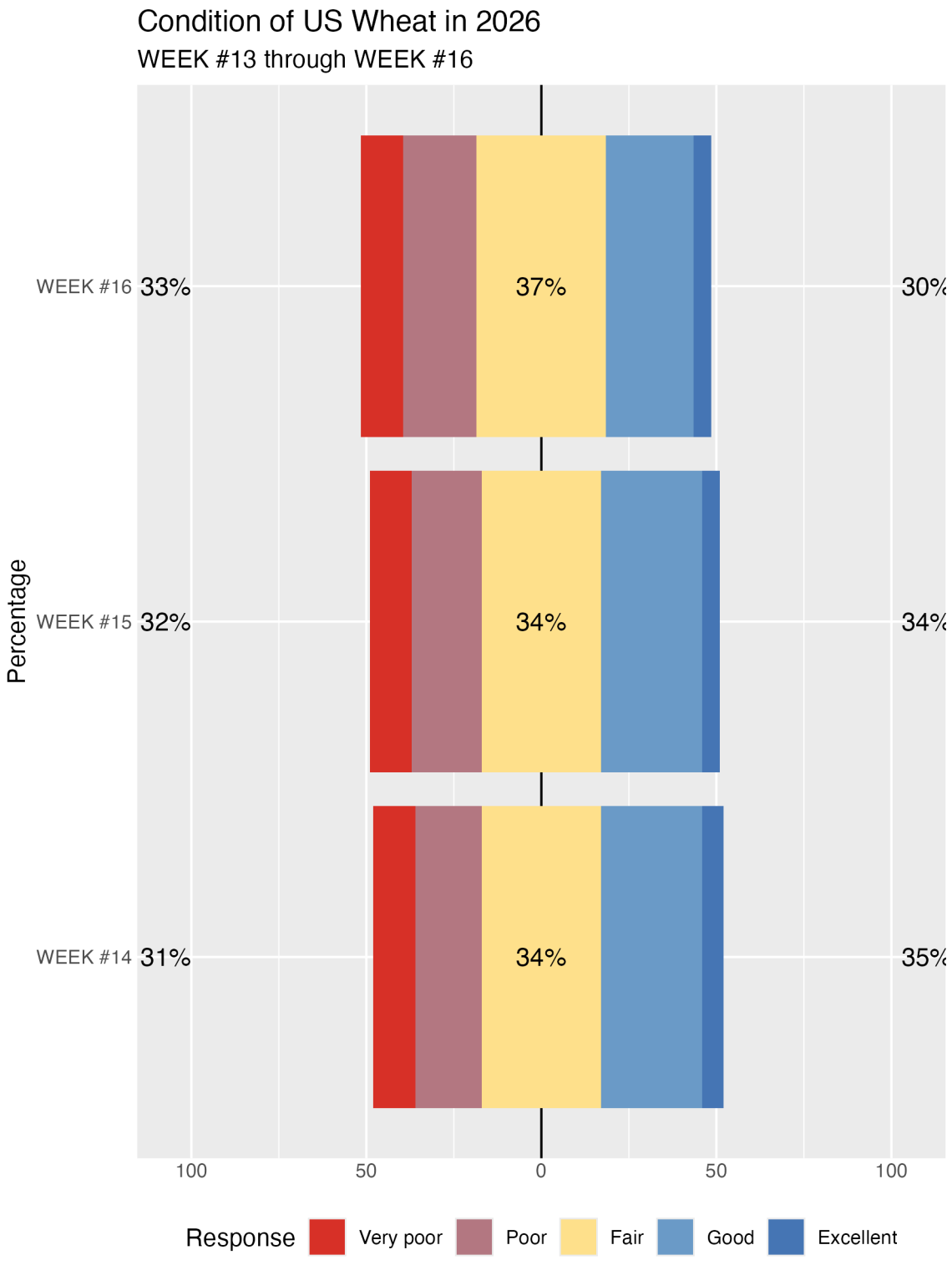

Figure 2: U.S, Wheat Crop Conditions for Current Year

Wheat Harvested Acres by State - 4/19/2026

1,000 acres

State	Last year	Planted acres	2026 harvest estimate			
			Lower CI	Predicted	Upper CI	R squared
Arkansas	70	110	79	87	96	−0.02
California	110	290	123	144	165	−0.04
Colorado	1,870	2,050	1,688	1,726	1,763	0.63
Idaho	720	810	752	760	767	0.05
Illinois	700	720	663	671	680	0.76
Indiana	240	300	259	266	273	0.02
Kansas	6,800	7,000	5,996	6,095	6,195	0.77
Michigan	490	520	488	495	501	0.25
Missouri	460	610	490	511	531	−0.02
Montana	2,120	1,900	1,718	1,763	1,808	0.55
Nebraska	805	900	745	765	786	0.60
North Carolina	270	330	253	268	283	−0.02
Ohio	530	540	500	508	516	0.18
Oklahoma	2,800	4,400	2,797	2,903	3,009	0.30
Oregon	740	750	718	725	731	0.34
South Dakota	630	690	439	484	530	0.46
Texas	2,300	5,700	2,283	2,450	2,617	0.61
Washington	1,790	1,850	1,780	1,794	1,808	−0.01
US	25,508	32,410	23,686	24,387	25,089	NA

Figure 3: Estimated Harvested Acres by State

Wheat Yields per Acre by State - WEEK #16 - 4/19/2026

Bushels per harvested acre

State	Last year	Yearly trend	2026 prediction				
			2026 trend yield	Lower CI	Predicted	Upper CI	Model R^2
Arkansas	57.0	0.2	56.9	53.6	55.3	57.0	0.40
California	86.0	0.3	78.6	73.3	77.9	82.5	0.07
Colorado	38.0	0.2	37.9	28.9	32.7	36.5	0.35
Idaho	99.0	0.4	89.8	87.4	90.0	92.6	0.23
Illinois	88.0	1.1	82.1	80.0	81.9	83.9	0.80
Indiana	89.0	1.0	84.8	82.8	85.0	87.2	0.76
Kansas	51.0	0.2	44.2	36.8	39.4	42.0	0.55
Michigan	90.0	1.0	87.5	85.1	87.1	89.0	0.77
Missouri	80.0	0.9	69.8	69.4	71.4	73.4	0.75
Montana	47.0	0.5	47.9	44.4	46.6	48.7	0.49
Nebraska	47.0	0.3	47.5	35.4	39.4	43.5	0.52
North Carolina	60.0	0.6	62.0	44.3	50.4	56.5	0.61
Ohio	86.0	0.8	81.5	79.5	81.8	84.1	0.67
Oklahoma	38.0	0.1	33.7	27.3	29.2	31.1	0.66
Oregon	71.0	0.2	62.9	62.4	65.2	68.1	0.47
South Dakota	50.0	0.6	54.0	48.9	51.4	54.0	0.56
Texas	37.0	0.1	32.9	30.0	31.4	32.8	0.36
Washington	68.0	0.0	65.8	68.8	73.3	77.9	0.37
US	54.9	0.3	51.9	46.2	48.7	51.3	NA

Figure 4: Estimated Yield per Acre by State

Total Wheat Production by State - WEEK #16 - 4/19/2026 1,000,000 bushels				
		2026 prediction		
State	Last year	Lower CI	Predicted	Upper CI
Arkansas	4	4	5	5
California	9	9	11	14
Colorado	71	49	56	64
Idaho	71	66	68	71
Illinois	62	53	55	57
Indiana	21	21	23	24
Kansas	347	221	240	260
Michigan	44	42	43	45
Missouri	37	34	36	39
Montana	100	76	82	88
Nebraska	38	26	30	34
North Carolina	16	11	14	16
Ohio	46	40	42	43
Oklahoma	106	76	85	94
Oregon	53	45	47	50
South Dakota	32	21	25	29
Texas	85	68	77	86
Washington	122	122	132	141
US	1,402	1,093	1,188	1,287

Figure 5: Estimated Wheat Production by State

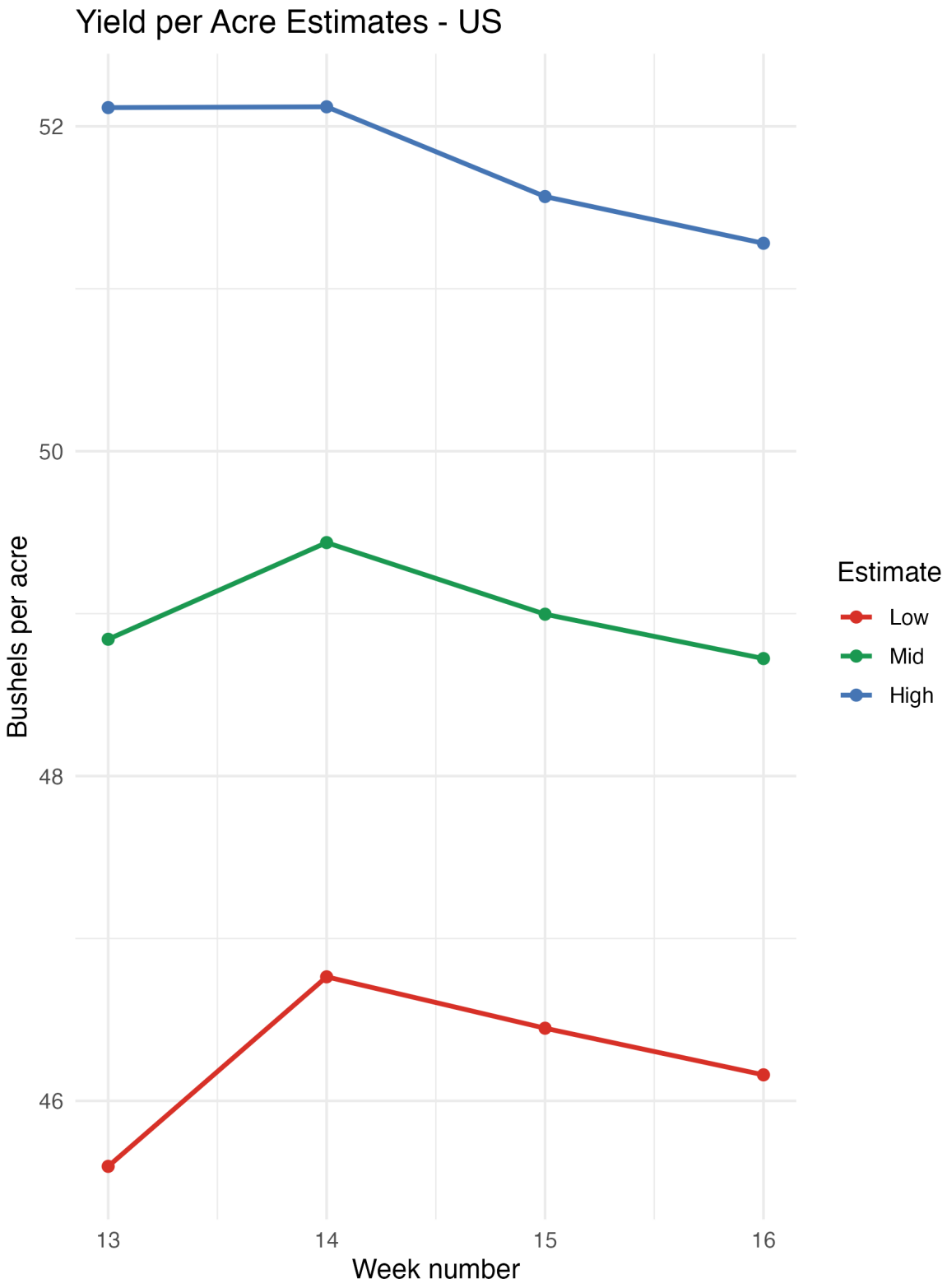

Figure 6: Estimated U.S. Yield by Week of Estimation