U.S. and Kansas Winter Wheat Yield Outlook for 2026

Week 19 - (5/11/26) - Final estimate before USDA Report

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May 11, 2026

0.1 This week's prediction

U.S. wheat estimate for week 19 (May 11, 2026)
Yield range from 45.2 to 49.9
Predicted yield of 47.5
Acreage range from 23,251 to 24,876 (1,000 acres)
Predicted acres of 24,063 (1,000 acres)
Production range from 1,050 to 1,241 million bu
Predicted production of 1,144 million bu
Total U.S. is 18% below last year

0.2 Introduction

On Tuesday, May 12, at noon, the USDA will release its May Crop Production Report. This report will provide the first estimate of winter wheat production for the U.S. and the leading wheat-producing states. Ibendahl's current estimate, which is discussed here, is released on May 11. Readers can verify whether Ibendahl's wheat models have any predictive power. This report includes both a national estimate and more detailed information about Kansas, the largest winter wheat state, which significantly impacts the national wheat yield.

The USDA collects weekly data on crop conditions throughout the growing season, rating crops on a scale from very poor to excellent. For winter wheat, these estimates are provided over several weeks in late fall and 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 19 (May 11, 2026). The U.S. estimates compile data from the 18 leading winter wheat states, with adjustments made for the remaining states.

For a complete description of the procedures and model used, readers are encouraged to refer to **Kansas Wheat Yield Outlook for 2026**. This publication outlines how both yields and acreage are estimated. While USDA crop condition reports can help predict yields, the models used to forecast wheat yields are generally less reliable than those for corn and soybeans. Wheat can often appear to be in poor condition in the field and still produce good yields.

0.3 Results

Figure 1 presents a Likert graph depicting U.S. crop conditions over the past 30 years. The graph is centered on the "fair" category, facilitating easier year-to-year comparisons. The number on the left side of the figure represents the total for the "very poor" and "poor" categories, while the number on the right side indicates the total for the "good" and "excellent" categories.

Figure 2 is also a Likert graph showcasing U.S. crop conditions for the current year. It's important to note that not all states reported data for week #13, which may affect the reliability of the U.S. figure for that week.

Figure 3 illustrates the estimated harvested acres for the leading wheat-producing states, with the U.S. total adjusted to account for the other wheat states. Estimating harvested acres can be challenging, as evidenced by the low R-squared values in many states. The estimate reflects the percentage of planted acres that are actually harvested, rather than the total acres.

Figure 4 displays the estimated yield for each of the leading wheat states, while Figure 5 shows the estimated wheat production. Since yields per acre across individual states cannot be summed, the national yield per acre is calculated by dividing total production by total harvested acres. The total U.S. wheat production is determined by adjusting the output from the 18 leading wheat states upward based on the historical relationship between U.S. production and those states'. Finally, Figure 6 illustrates the historical predictions of the national yield during the current growing season.

Figures 7 and 8 illustrate the crop conditions and estimated yields for Kansas during the current growing season. Typically, the estimated yield begins to align closely with the final yield by this stage of the season. However, in week 19, there was a significant drop in the estimated yield for Kansas. This decline raises concerns about the reliability of the yield

estimates. As mentioned earlier, the wheat models that use crop condition reports are not as accurate as those for corn and soybeans.

0.4 Contact

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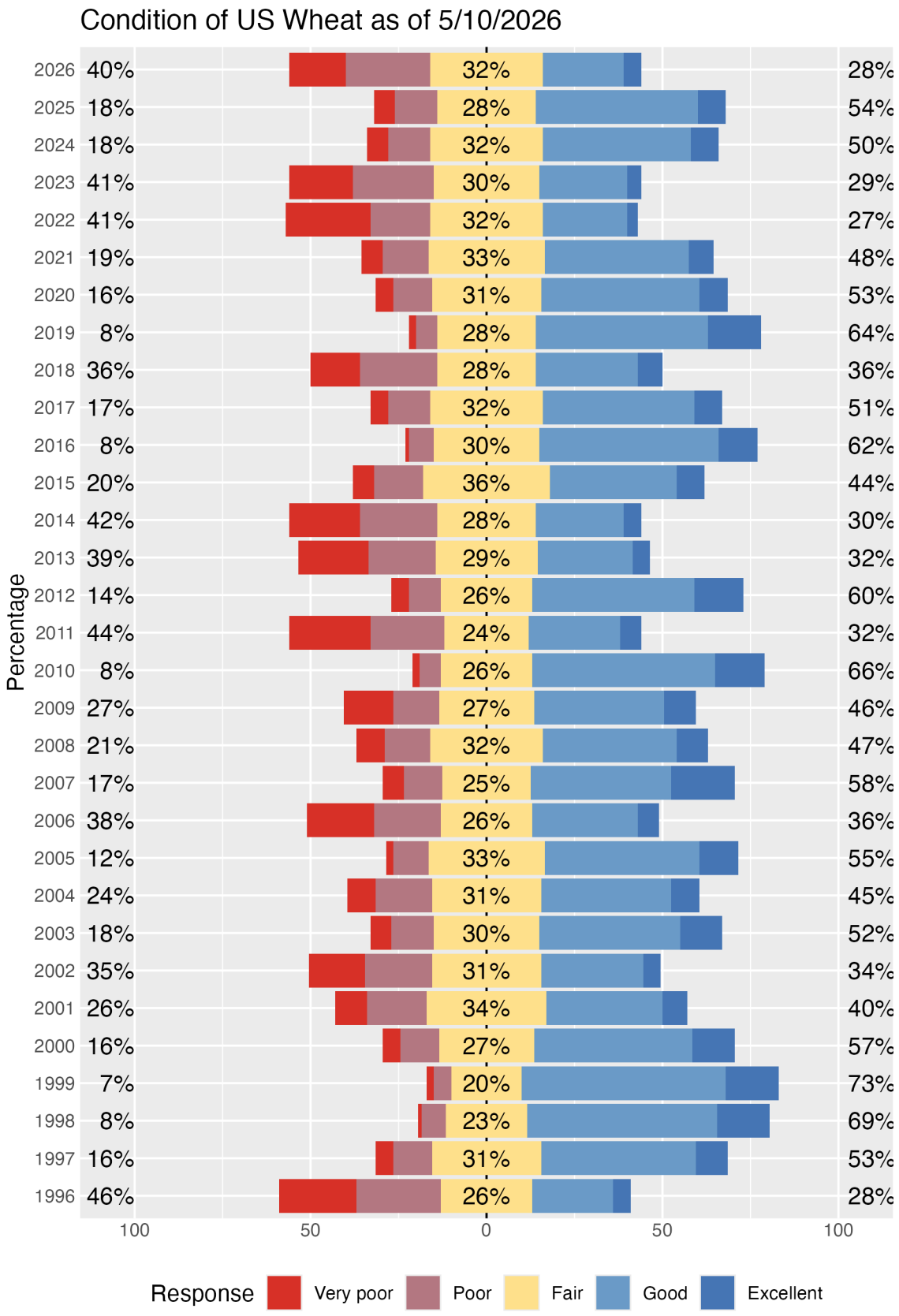

Figure 1: Historic Wheat Crop Conditions for U.S. for Specific Week

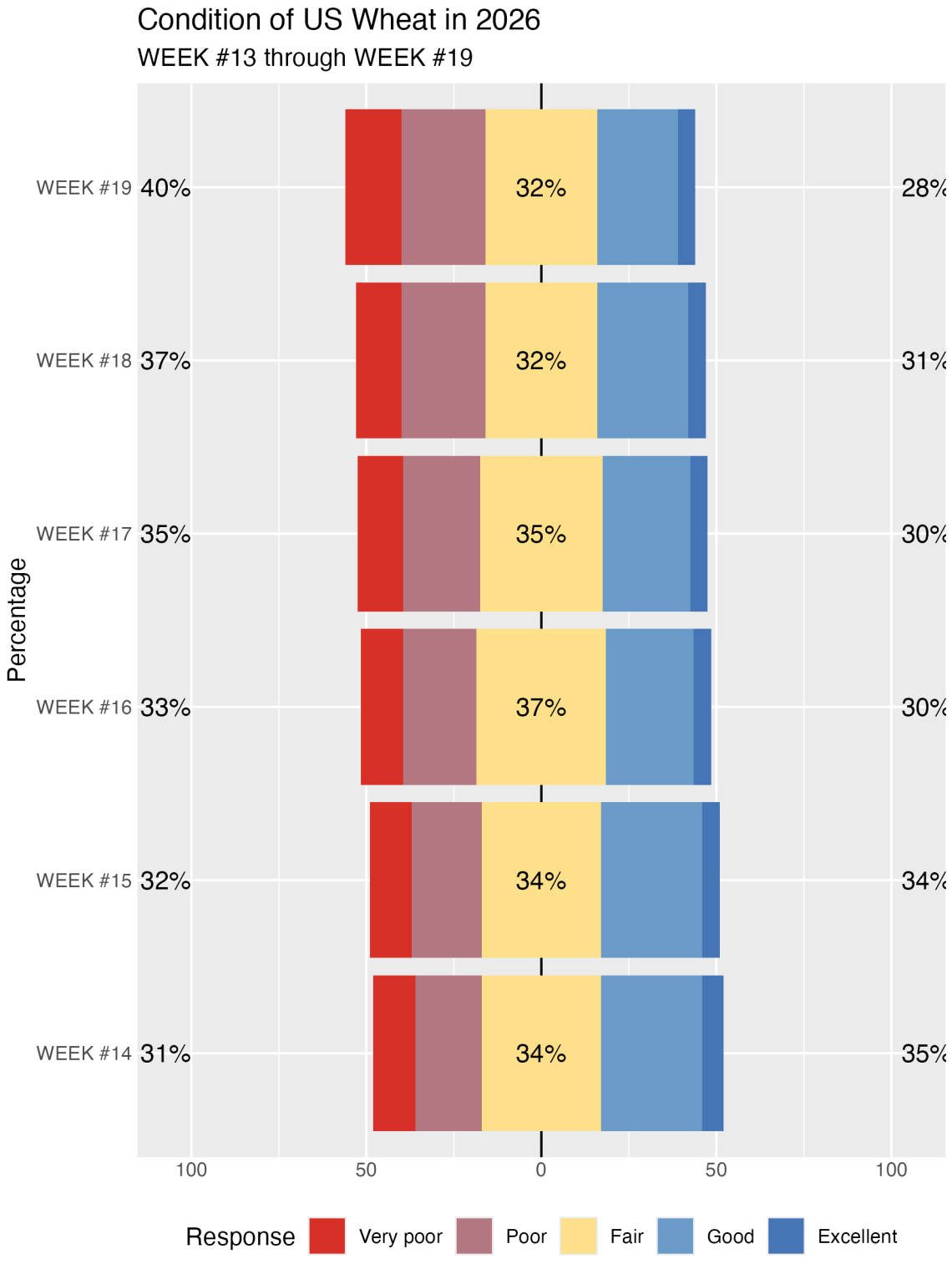

Figure 2: U.S, Wheat Crop Conditions for Current Year

Wheat Harvested Acres by State - 5/10/2026

1,000 acres

			2026 harvest estimate			
State	Last year	Planted acres	Lower CI	Predicted	Upper CI	R squared
Arkansas	70	110	79	85	91	0.00
California	110	290	123	144	165	−0.04
Colorado	1,870	2,050	1,555	1,607	1,660	0.69
Idaho	720	810	751	759	766	0.01
Illinois	700	720	670	678	686	0.77
Indiana	240	300	258	265	273	0.03
Kansas	6,800	7,000	5,847	6,003	6,160	0.60
Michigan	490	520	489	496	502	0.29
Missouri	460	610	489	510	532	−0.03
Montana	2,120	1,900	1,697	1,731	1,764	0.73
Nebraska	805	900	599	659	719	0.52
North Carolina	270	330	249	262	275	0.10
Ohio	530	540	506	515	524	0.32
Oklahoma	2,800	4,400	2,730	2,844	2,958	0.31
Oregon	740	750	716	724	732	0.14
South Dakota	630	690	478	513	549	0.50
Texas	2,300	5,700	2,356	2,532	2,708	0.53
Washington	1,790	1,850	1,779	1,790	1,801	0.34
US	25,508	32,410	23,251	24,063	24,876	NA

Figure 3: Estimated Harvested Acres by State

Wheat Yields per Acre by State - WEEK #19 - 5/10/2026

Bushels per harvested acre

			2026 prediction				
State	Last year	Yearly trend	2026 trend yield	Lower CI	Predicted	Upper CI	Model R^2
Arkansas	57.0	0.2	56.9	56.0	57.5	59.1	0.35
California	86.0	0.3	78.6	75.6	81.0	86.5	0.10
Colorado	38.0	0.2	37.9	26.1	30.3	34.4	0.45
Idaho	99.0	0.4	89.8	87.4	90.0	92.7	0.23
Illinois	88.0	1.1	82.1	81.3	83.3	85.4	0.80
Indiana	89.0	1.0	84.8	83.1	85.1	87.2	0.79
Kansas	51.0	0.2	44.2	34.7	37.1	39.5	0.70
Michigan	90.0	1.0	87.5	85.7	87.4	89.0	0.83
Missouri	80.0	0.9	69.8	70.5	72.7	74.9	0.77
Montana	47.0	0.5	47.9	45.1	47.1	49.2	0.49
Nebraska	47.0	0.3	47.5	27.6	33.7	39.8	0.55
North Carolina	60.0	0.6	62.0	42.0	46.7	51.4	0.77
Ohio	86.0	0.8	81.5	78.7	80.8	82.9	0.73
Oklahoma	38.0	0.1	33.7	26.6	28.4	30.3	0.71
Oregon	71.0	0.2	62.9	59.5	62.1	64.8	0.47
South Dakota	50.0	0.6	54.0	48.6	51.0	53.5	0.61
Texas	37.0	0.1	32.9	29.7	31.1	32.4	0.43
Washington	68.0	0.0	65.8	67.4	70.7	74.1	0.41
US	54.9	0.3	51.9	45.2	47.5	49.9	NA

Figure 4: Estimated Yield per Acre by State

Total Wheat Production by State - WEEK #19 - 5/10/2026

1,000,000 bushels

State	Last year	2026 prediction		
		Lower CI	Predicted	Upper CI
Arkansas	4	4	5	5
California	9	9	12	14
Colorado	71	41	49	57
Idaho	71	66	68	71
Illinois	62	54	57	59
Indiana	21	21	23	24
Kansas	347	203	223	243
Michigan	44	42	43	45
Missouri	37	34	37	40
Montana	100	76	82	87
Nebraska	38	17	22	29
North Carolina	16	10	12	14
Ohio	46	40	42	43
Oklahoma	106	72	81	90
Oregon	53	43	45	47
South Dakota	32	23	26	29
Texas	85	70	79	88
Washington	122	120	127	133
US	1,402	1,050	1,144	1,241

Figure 5: Estimated Wheat Production by State

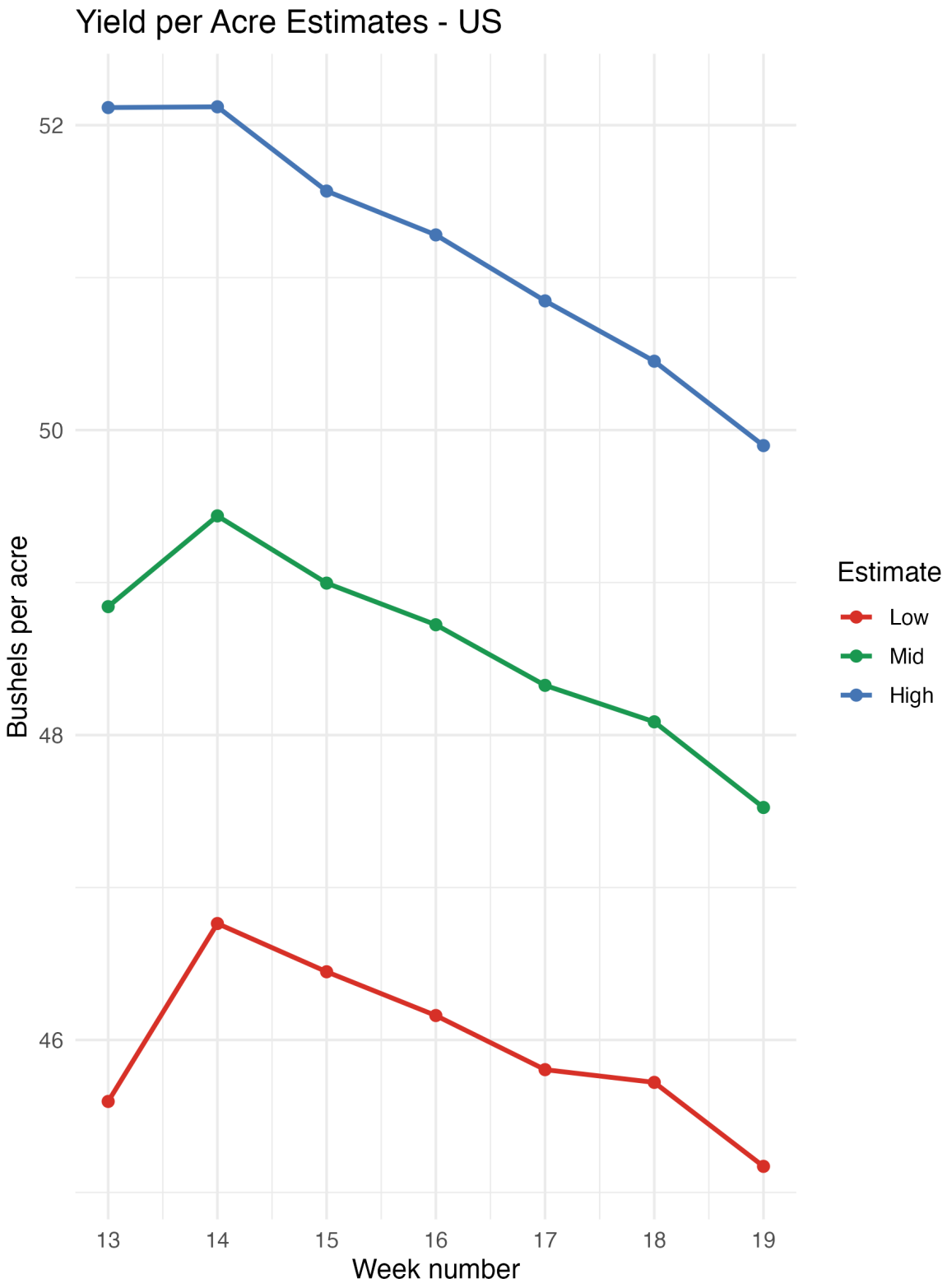

Figure 6: Estimated U.S. Yield by Week of Estimation

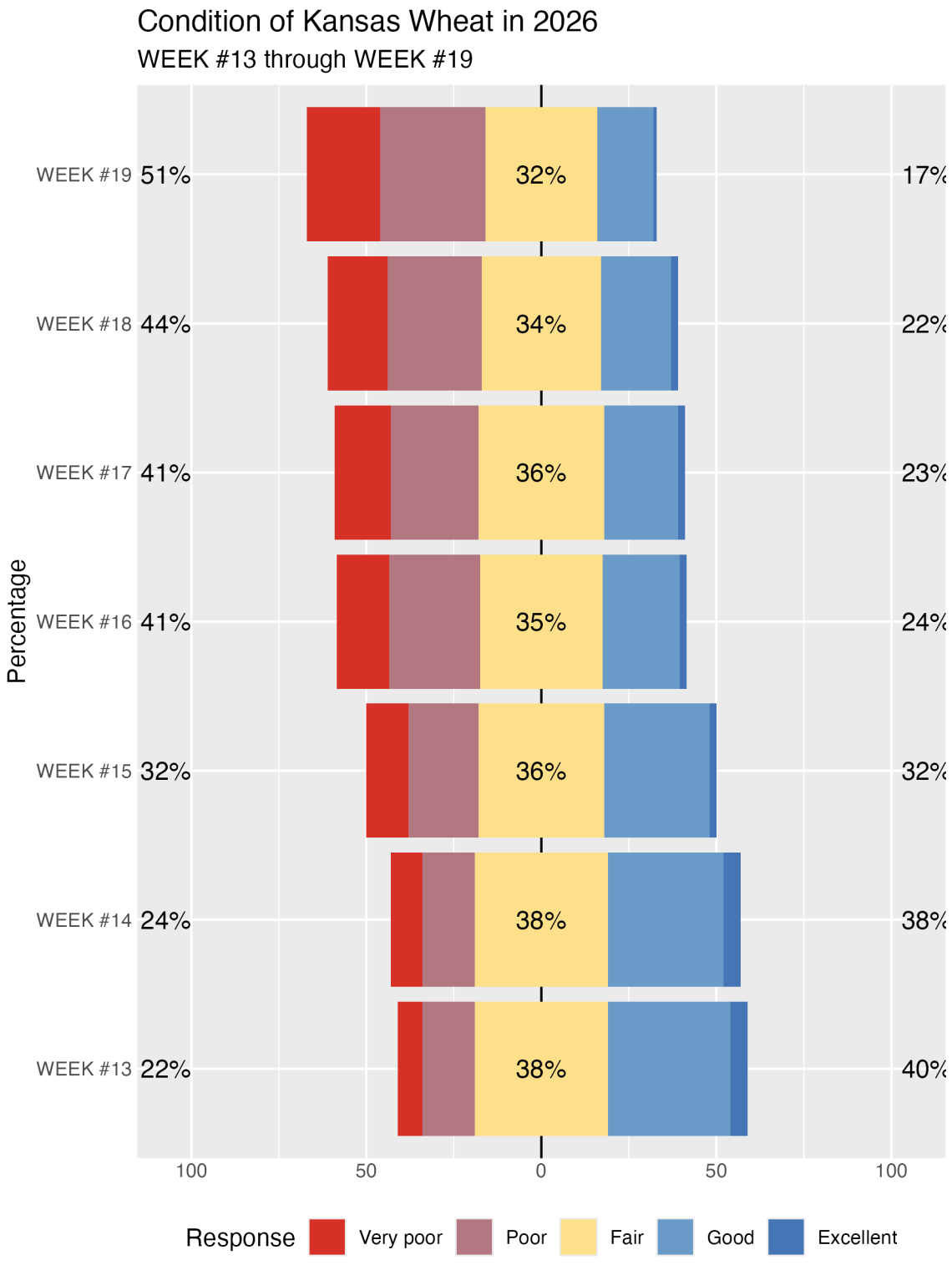

Figure 7: Wheat Crop Conditions for Kansas for Current Year

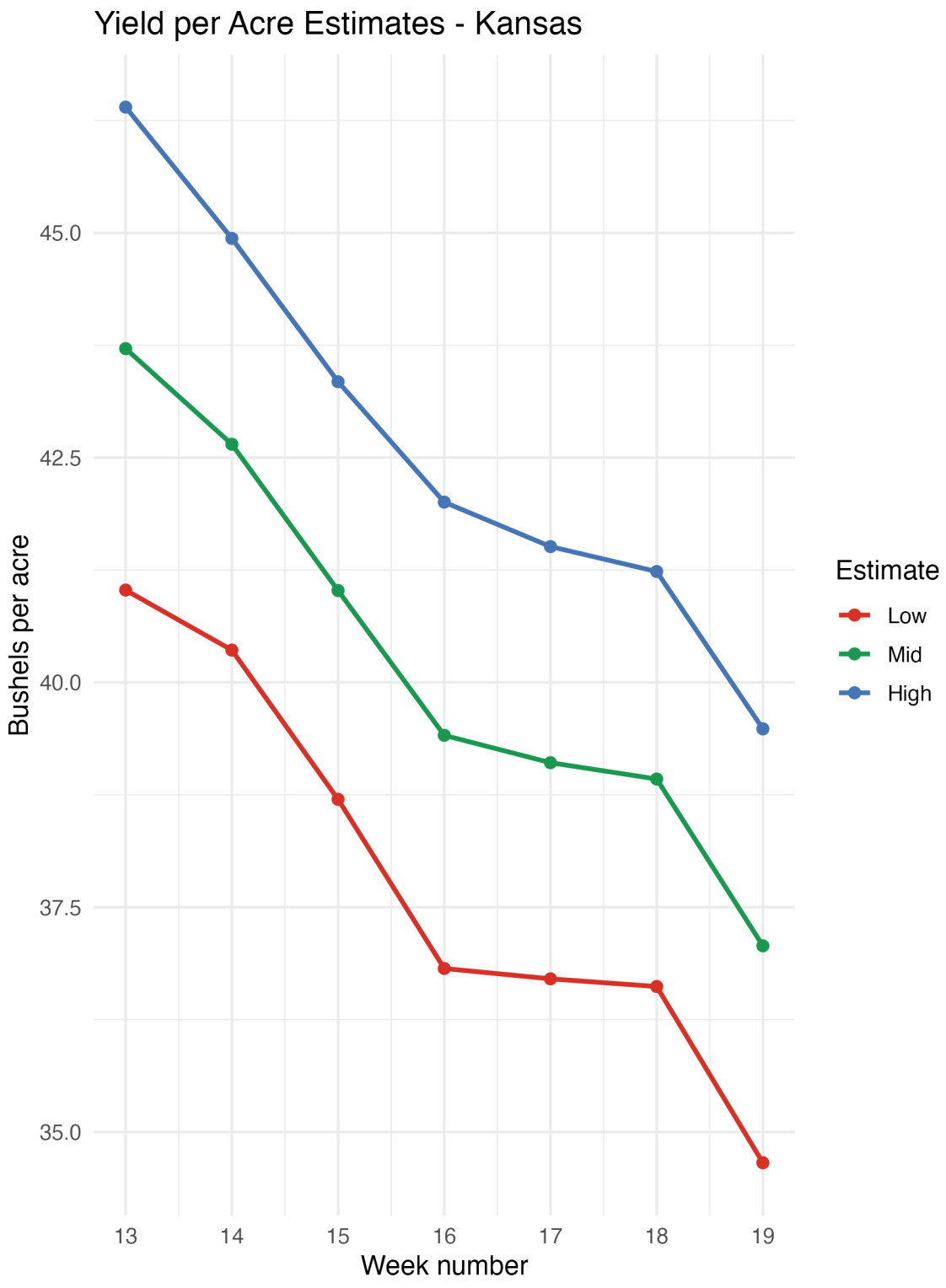

Figure 8: Forecast Yields for Kansas at Estimated Week