

# Wheat Outlook

May 1, 2026

Volume 35, Number 28

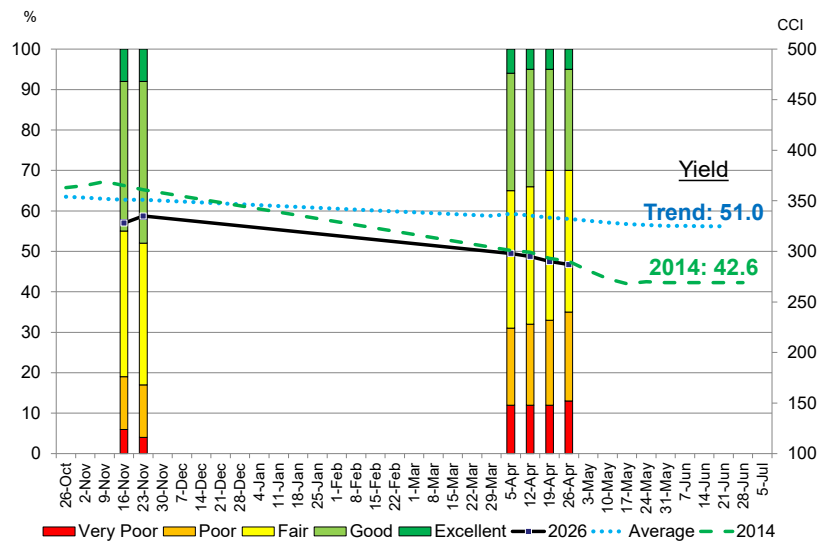
<b>Today's Newsletter</b>	
<b>Market Situation</b>	
Crop Progress and Condition	1
Weather	3
Grain Use	5
Cash Wheat	6
Commitment of Traders	6
<b>Marketing Strategies</b>	
Seasonal Index	10
Marketing Plan	11
<b>Upcoming Reports/Events</b>	
	12



## Market Situation

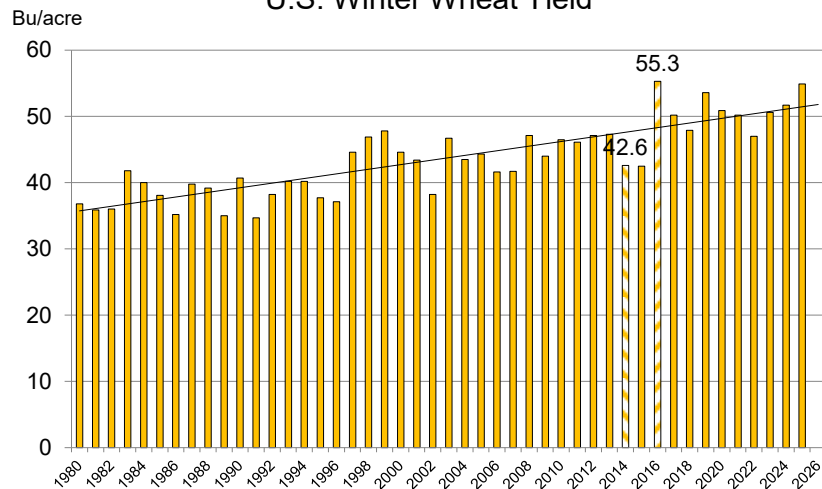
**Crop Progress and Condition.** The condition score for the U.S. winter wheat crop worsened again this week. The share of crop rated very poor and poor increased 2%; fair decreased 2%. That lowered the crop condition index 3 points to 287. The index average for this week of the growing season is 332. The index is currently tracking close to that of 2014, a year when the yield was 42.6 bushels per acre.

2026 U.S. Winter Wheat Crop Condition Ratings, April 26



USDA Crop Progress, April 27, 2026

## U.S. Winter Wheat Yield



USDA, Small Grains Summary September 2025

# Wheat Outlook

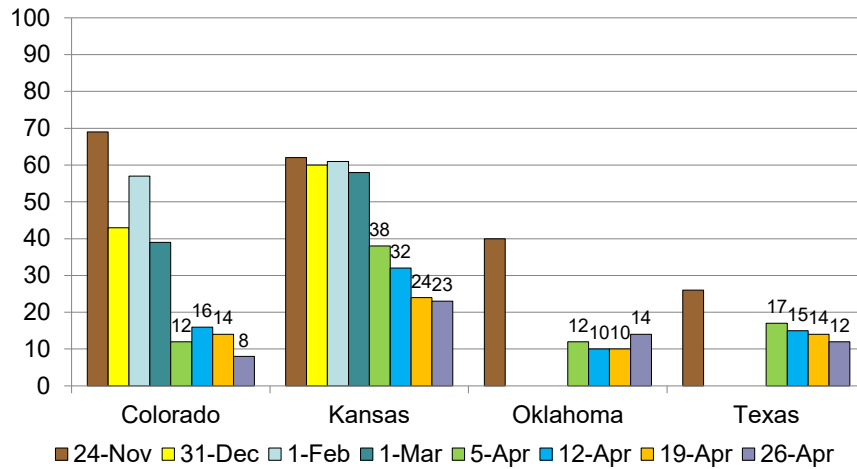
May 1, 2026

Volume 35, Number 28



Across the Southern Plains, the share of crop rated good and excellent was down 6 points in Colorado (8%), down 1 in Kansas (23%), up 4 in Oklahoma (14%), and down 2 in Texas (12%).

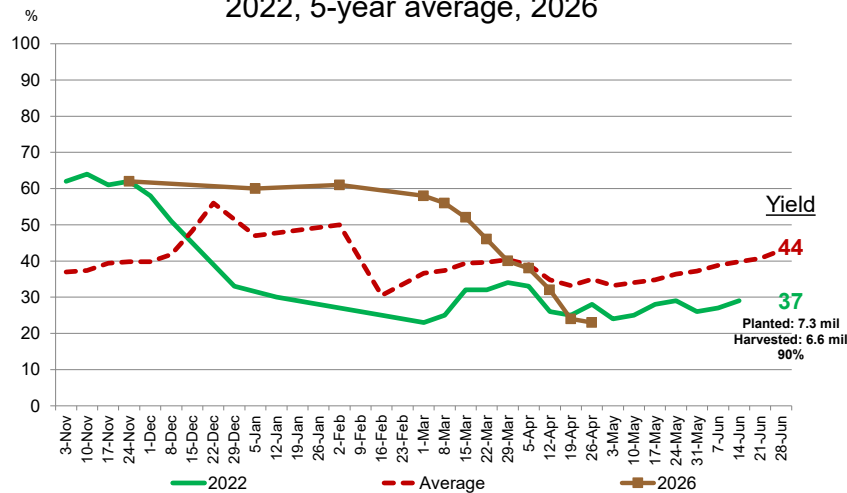
**% of 2026 Winter Wheat Rated Good and Excellent**  
(states accounting for about 43% of winter wheat production)



USDA, NASS, Crop Progress, April 27, 2026

The last time Kansas saw crop ratings at this level in this week of the growing season was 2022 when 25% of the wheat crop was rated good and excellent. The final yield that year was 37 bushels per acre, 7 bushels below average. Conditions were worse in 2023: 14% good and excellent in this week.

**Kansas Winter Wheat Crop Condition Ratings**  
Percent Good and Excellent  
2022, 5-year average, 2026



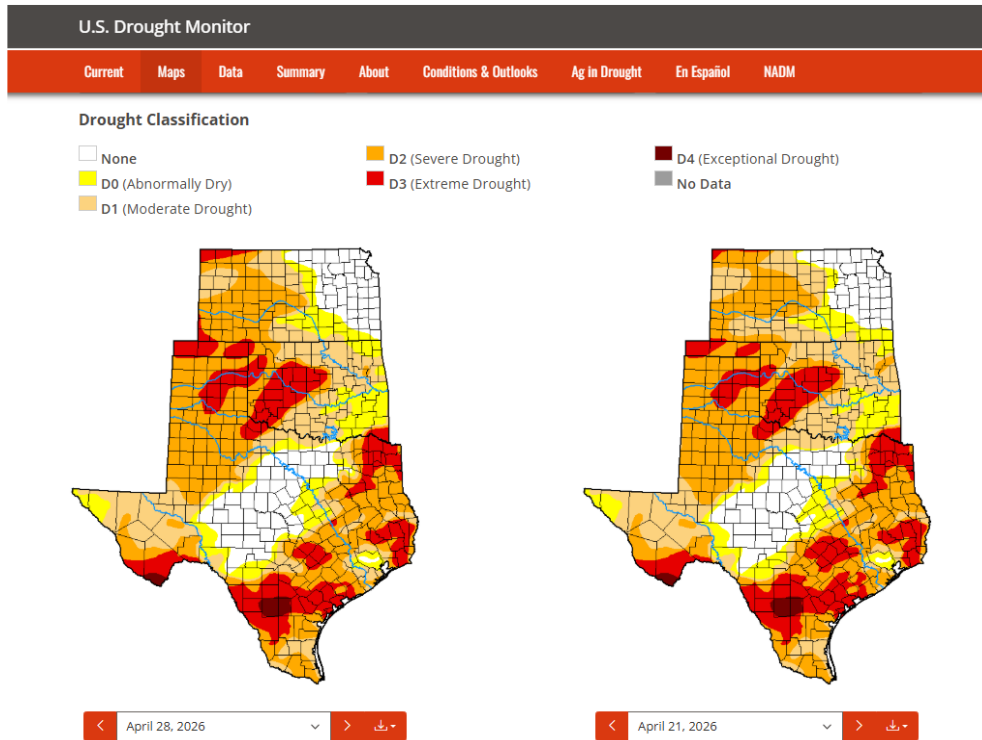
USDA Crop Progress, April 27, 2026

# Wheat Outlook

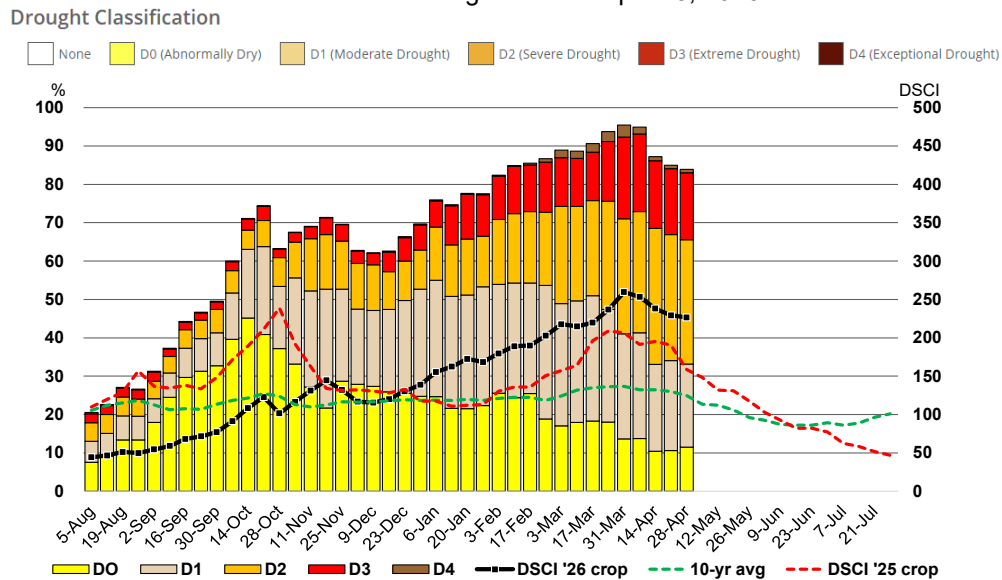
May 1, 2026

Volume 35, Number 28

**Weather.** The drought monitor for the Southern Plains Climate Hub showed slight improvement this week. The area under drought fell from 85% to 84% and the drought severity index fell from 229 to 226, still well above last year and the 10-year average.



Southern Plains Drought Monitor April 28, 2026



Drought Severity and Coverage Index (DSCI) = (D0\*1)+(D1\*2)+(D2\*3)+(D3\*4)+(D4\*5);  
min 0--no drought conditions reported; max 500--100% under exceptional drought conditions

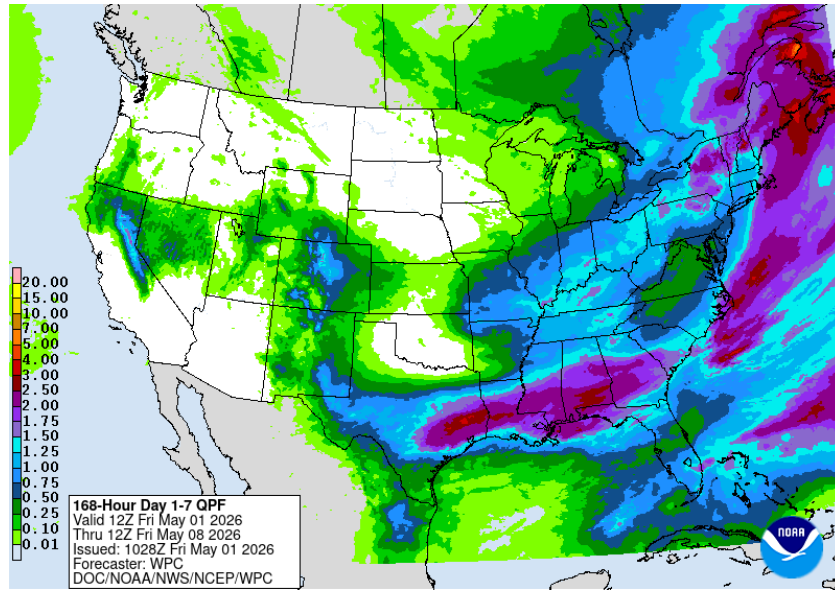
Drought Monitor, 4/30/2026, Southern Plains Climate Hub, <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

# Wheat Outlook

May 1, 2026

Volume 35, Number 28

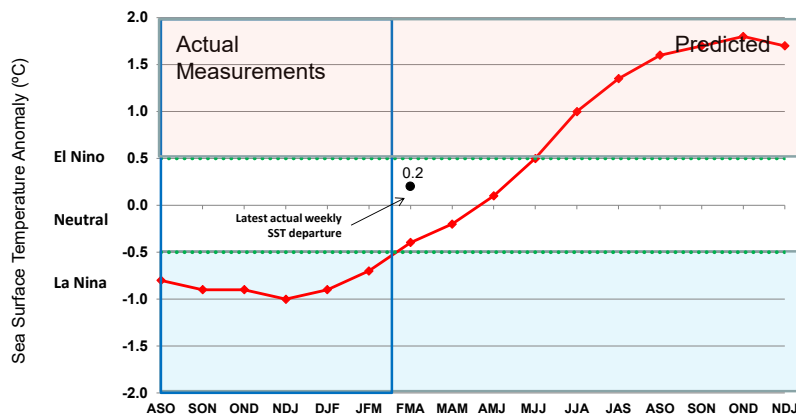
The precipitation forecast for the next 7 days (5/1-5/8/2026) shows much needed rainfall across the Southeastern United States, an area hit hard by drought. Critical areas of the eastern Texas Panhandle and southwest Oklahoma look to miss out.



The ENSO update for April 27 from the Climate Prediction Center notes this is the final La Niña Advisory. The sea surface temperature departure from normal this week is +0.2°C. El Niño conditions are now forecast to emerge in May/June/July (80% chance) and persist through at least the end of 2026.

### Oceanic Niño Index (ONI) ENSO Alert System Status: Final La Niña Advisory/El Niño Watch

CPC: ENSO-neutral conditions favored through April-June 2026 (80% chance). In May-July 2026, El Niño is likely to emerge (61% chance) and persist through at least the end of 2026.



El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Diagnostic Discussion, April 27, 2026  
[http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis\\_monitoring/enso\\_advisory/](http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/)  
Australian Bureau of Meteorology, <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/>

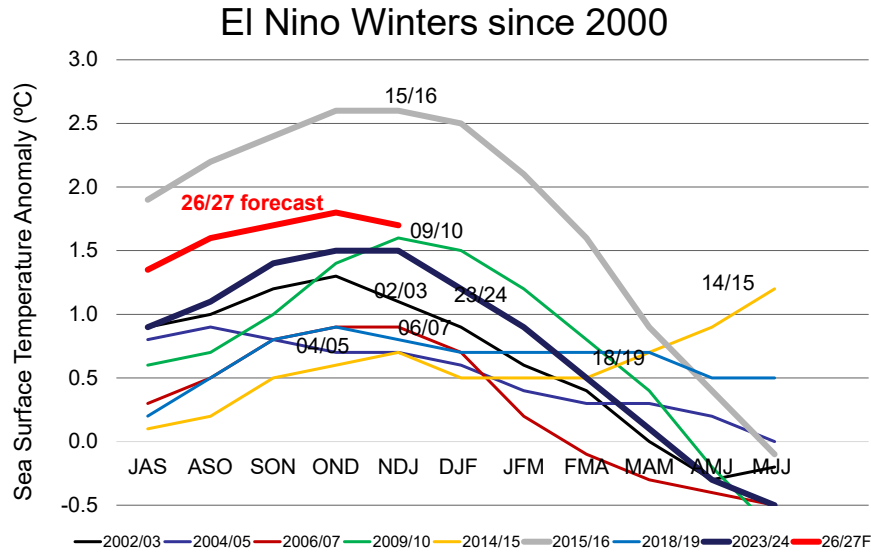
# Wheat Outlook

May 1, 2026

Volume 35, Number 28



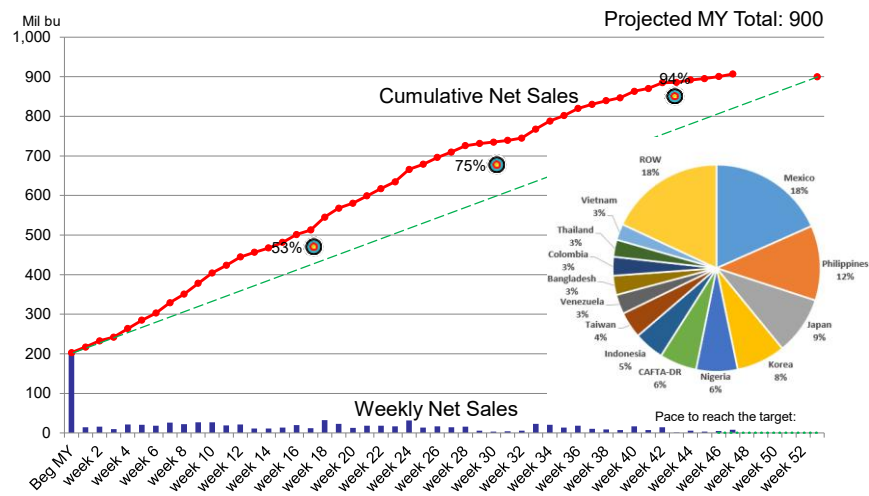
The current forecast shows the temperature deviation in the upcoming El Nino event topping out at about 1.8°C. That would be the second strongest El Nino event since 2000, behind only 2015/16 (the winter wheat yield in 2016 was a record high 55.3 bushels per acre .



El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Diagnostic Discussion, April 27, 2026  
[http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis\\_monitoring/ens0\\_advisory/](http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/ens0_advisory/)

**Grain Use.** Wheat export sales for the week of April 23 were 8 million bushels (Indonesia the top buyer at 2.6 million bushels). That brings the marketing year sales total to 907 million bushels, 101% of USDA’s target.

## 2025/26 U.S. All Wheat Export Sales Commitments



Net Export Sales Commitments reported for 4/23/2026: 8 million bushels (Indonesia, 2.6 million bushels)  
 Total Export Sales Commitments this marketing year: 907 million bushels  
 101% of the 2025/26 MY Export Sales Target of 900 million bushels (April WASDE)

USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service: 4/30/2026

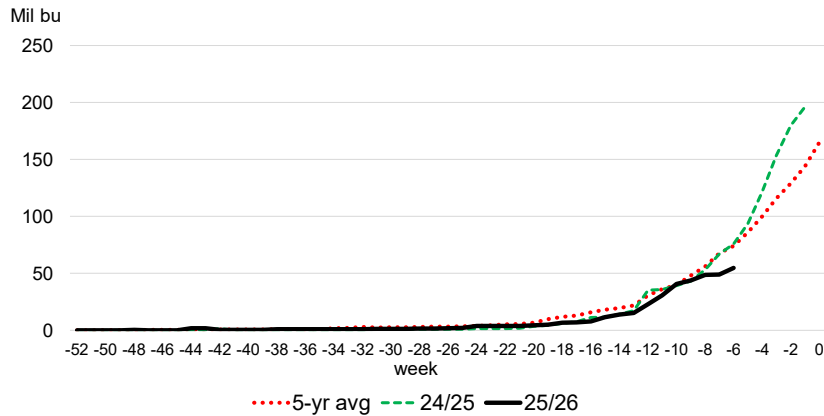
# Wheat Outlook

May 1, 2026

Volume 35, Number 28

April 23 sales reported for the 2026/27 marketing year which begins June 1 were 5.8 million bushels, bringing the total so far to 55 million bushels. Last year at this time, 76 million bushels were on the books for the new crop year.

## All Wheat Export Sales Commitments Next Marketing Year



New Crop Export Sales Commitments reported for 4/23/2026: 5.8 million bushels  
Total Export Sales Commitments next marketing year: 55 million bushels

USDA, Foreign Agricultural Service: 4/30/2026

### Cash Wheat Prices, \$/bu.

	Nearby KC Futures	Avg TX cash elevator	basis	Houston Port	basis	Elevator to Export Spread
April 2	6.16	5.22	-0.94			
April 9	5.91	4.97	-0.94			
April 16	6.43	5.49	-0.94			
April 23	6.67	5.73	-0.94			
April 30	6.78	5.90	-0.88			
10-year avg			-0.46		0.71	1.17

USDA, AMS, Market News: TX cash = average (North, Central, and South Panhandle); Houston Port, StoneX

**Commitment of Traders.** For April 28, speculator positioning in the wheat, corn, and soybean markets showed a variation in market outlook.

By adding to bets for higher prices (long contracts held) and getting out of bets for lower prices (holding short positions), traders in soft red winter Chicago wheat show a positive net long number for the first time since October 2022.

In hard red winter Kansas City wheat, traders held fewer longs and added to shorts even as prices increased to just under \$7 per bushel.

# Wheat Outlook

May 1, 2026

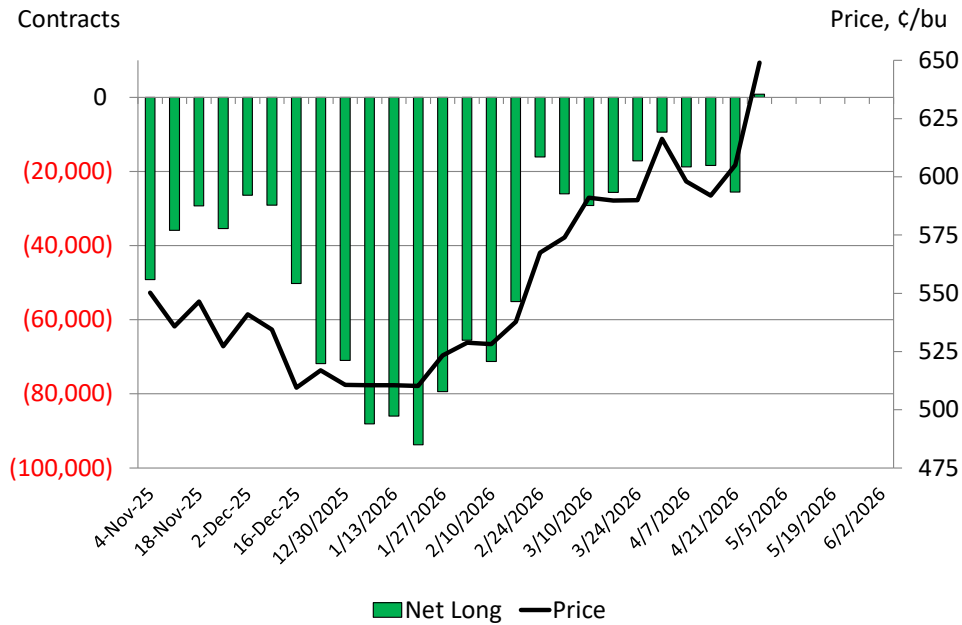
Volume 35, Number 28

For corn, as in Chicago wheat, long trades increased and short positioning decreased. In soybeans, traders got out of both sides of the market, exiting more long trades than shorts.

	Wheat--SRW				Wheat--HRW			
	Long	Short	Net Long	Price	Long	Short	Net Long	Price
4/7/2026	138,222	156,929	(18,707)	598.00	84,688	81,110	3,578	607.50
4/14/2026	128,989	147,355	(18,366)	592.00	70,212	67,104	3,108	622.75
4/21/2026	121,024	146,561	(25,537)	605.00	77,590	63,252	14,338	643.50
4/28/2026	<u>132,336</u>	<u>131,470</u>	<u>866</u>	<u>649.00</u>	<u>76,758</u>	<u>64,118</u>	<u>12,640</u>	<u>696.75</u>
change	11,312	(15,091)	26,403	44.00	(832)	866	(1,698)	53.25

	Corn				Soybeans			
	Long	Short	Net Long	Price	Long	Short	Net Long	Price
4/7/2026	459,961	169,142	290,819	449.00	283,509	75,050	208,459	1158.25
4/14/2026	459,043	210,162	248,881	443.00	277,797	76,075	201,722	1158.00
4/21/2026	480,510	216,778	263,732	453.75	286,201	75,055	211,146	1174.50
4/28/2026	<u>529,281</u>	<u>188,541</u>	<u>340,740</u>	<u>465.25</u>	<u>259,218</u>	<u>65,279</u>	<u>193,939</u>	<u>1173.00</u>
change	48,771	(28,237)	77,008	11.50	(26,983)	(9,776)	(17,207)	(1.50)

## Non-commercial Investment in CBOT Wheat, 4/28/2026



CFTC Legacy Report, Futures Only

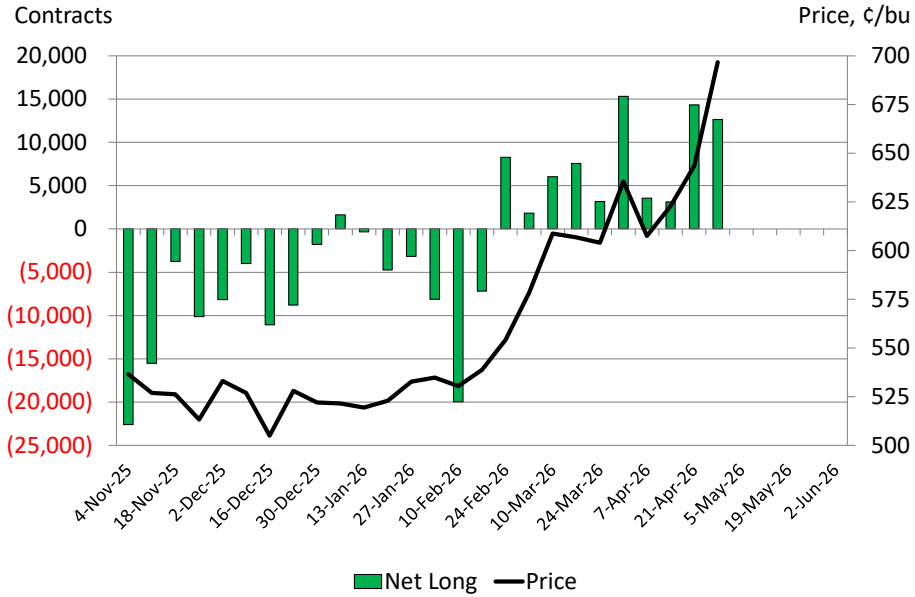
<https://www.cftc.gov/MarketReports/CommitmentsofTraders/index.htm>

# Wheat Outlook

May 1, 2026

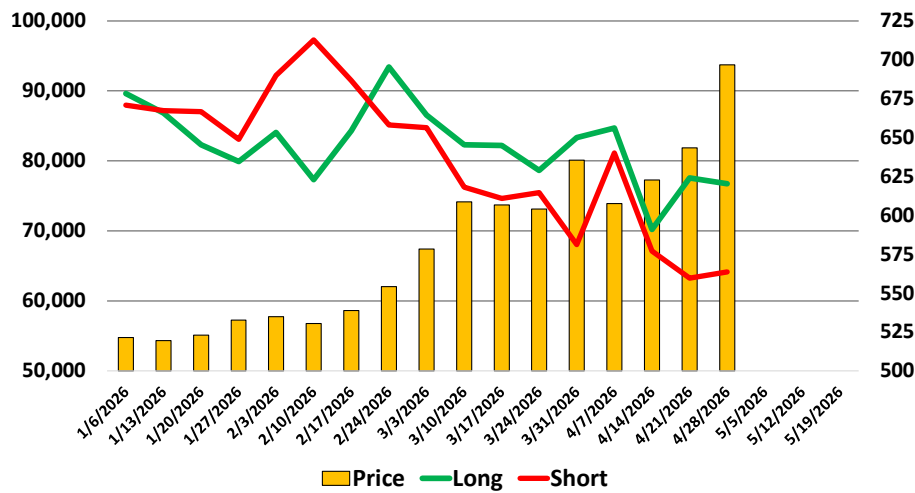
Volume 35, Number 28

## Non-commercial Investment in KC Wheat, 4/28/2026



CFTC Legacy Report, Futures Only  
<https://www.cftc.gov/MarketReports/CommitmentsofTraders/index.htm>

## Speculative Trader Positions Hard Red Winter Wheat



CFTC Legacy Report, Futures Only  
<https://www.cftc.gov/MarketReports/CommitmentsofTraders/index.htm>

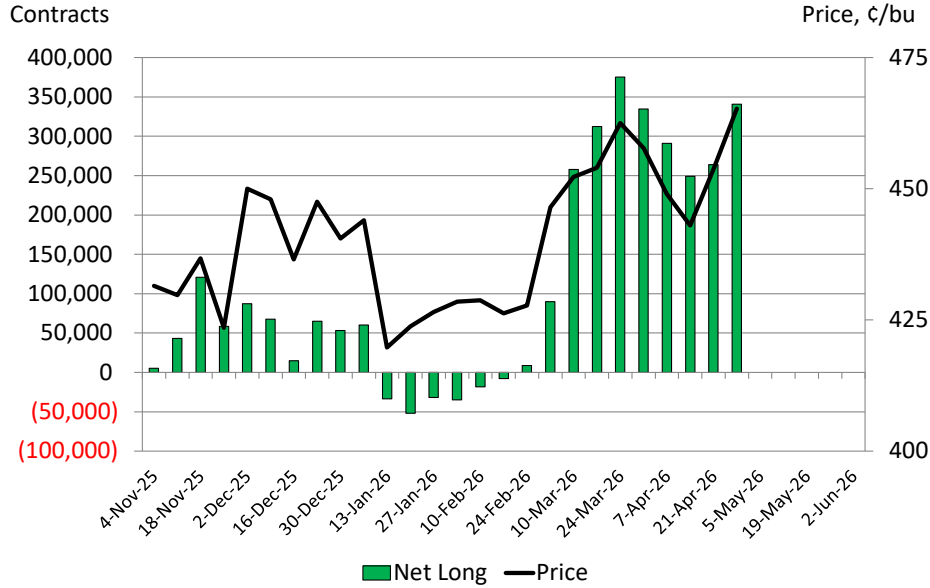
# Wheat Outlook

May 1, 2026

Volume 35, Number 28



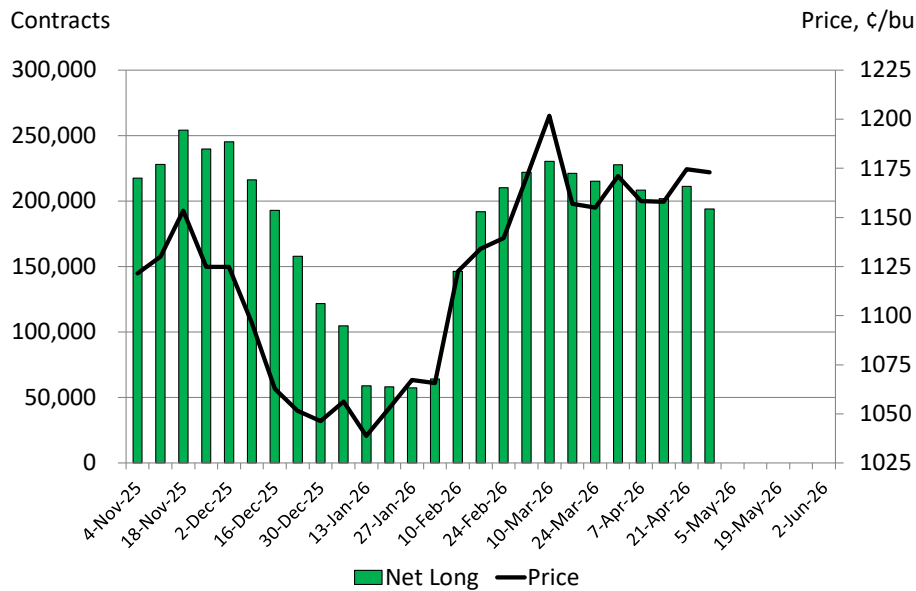
## Non-commercial Investment in Corn, 4/28/2026



CFTC Legacy Report, Futures Only

<https://www.cftc.gov/MarketReports/CommitmentsofTraders/index.htm>

## Non-commercial Investment in Soybeans, 4/28/2026



CFTC Legacy Report, Futures Only

<https://www.cftc.gov/MarketReports/CommitmentsofTraders/index.htm>

# Wheat Outlook

May 1, 2026

Volume 35, Number 28

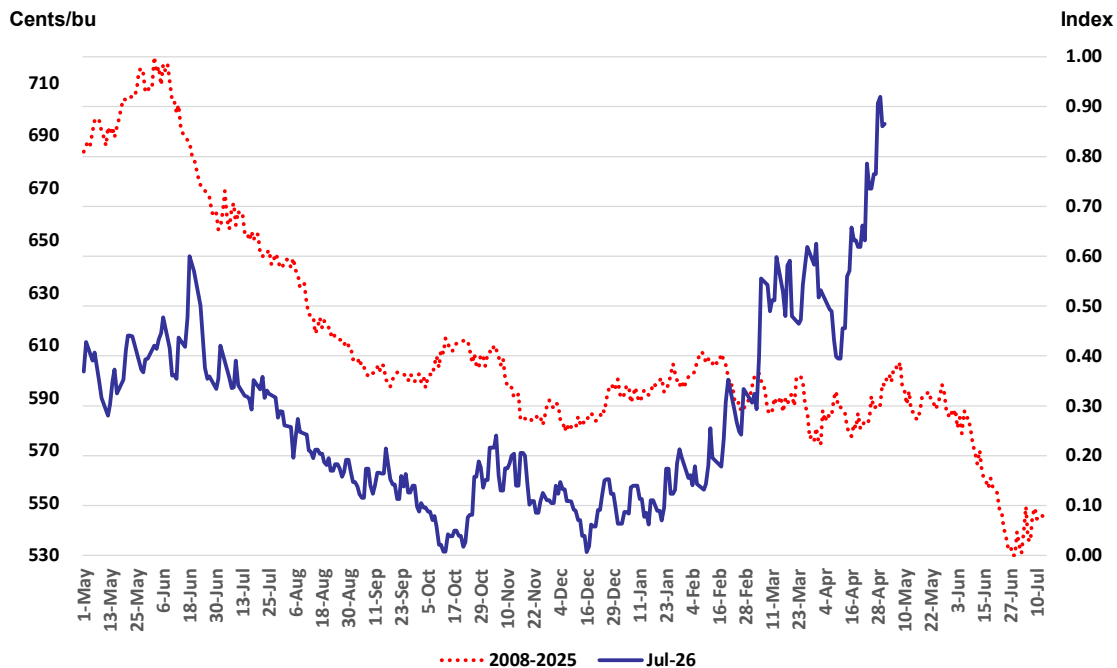
For April 28, based on whether the net long number (long contracts held minus short contracts held) is positive or negative and whether that net long number increased or decreased compared to the week before, speculators were:

- more bullish Chicago soft red winter wheat,
- less bullish KC hard red winter wheat,
- more bullish corn, and
- less bullish soybeans.

## Marketing Strategies

**Seasonal Index.** The seasonal index for the July Kansas City Wheat futures contract shows prices typically declining from the spring before the crop is planted to the end of the calendar year. Better pricing opportunities often come in late-winter to spring associated with early crop condition concerns (February/March) followed by late-season weather risk (April/May) before the seasonal price decline into harvest.

### July 2026 KC Wheat Futures and 18-year July KC Wheat Seasonal Index: 2008-2025



# Wheat Outlook

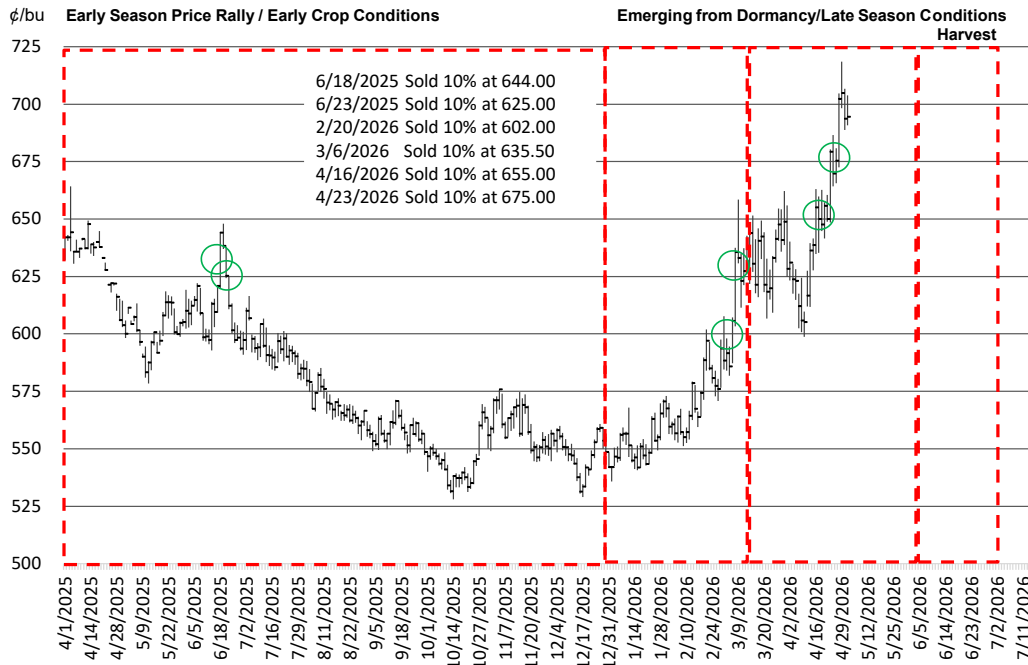
May 1, 2026

Volume 35, Number 28



**Wheat Marketing Plan.** I have taken advantage of this runup in prices to get 60% sold on 2026 wheat and 30% sold on 2027.

## July 2026 KC Wheat and Marketing Plan



### Upcoming Reports/Events

May 8	Employment Situation—April 2026
May 12	WASDE, 1 <sup>st</sup> official estimates for the 2026/27 marketing year Crop Production Short-term Energy Outlook Consumer Price Index
May 19	Chickens and Eggs
May 22	Cattle on Feed
June 16-17	Federal Open Market Committee, Federal Reserve
June 25	Hogs and Pigs
June 30	Acreage Grain Stocks

## Wheat Outlook

May 1, 2026

Volume 35, Number 28

---

**Mark Welch, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Economist**

600 John Kimbrough Blvd, Suite 330B

College Station, Texas 77843

Tel. (979)383-0891

[JMWelch@tamu.edu](mailto:JMWelch@tamu.edu)

*The opinions and recommendations expressed are solely those of the author and are intended for educational purposes only as part of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. The author and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service assume no liability for the use of this newsletter. The Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service provides equal access in its programs, activities, education and employment, without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity.*

*The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating*