

17. Estimating Potential Yield of a North Carolina Wheat Crop

By Randy Weisz

At various times through the growing season, it can be helpful to have a means of evaluating the potential yield of a given wheat crop. This can assist in determining how well the crop is developing, if additional inputs may be beneficial, or if the crop should be abandoned for full-season beans. One of the simplest approaches to estimating potential yield in a wheat crop is to count the number of heads in a given area. Since wheat yields are directly proportional to head density, counting heads per unit area can provide a good estimate of potential yield. If the crop has not headed out, but is close to jointing, the number of heads per square foot can be estimated by counting the number of tillers with at least three leaves.

Figures 17-1 through 17-4 show how average wheat yields relate to the number of heads per square foot for the most common soft red winter wheat varieties grown in North Carolina.

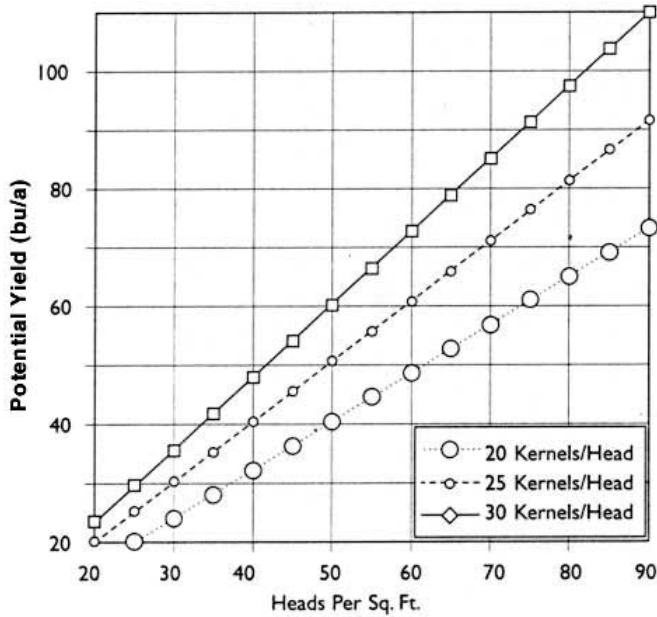


Figure 1. Low-seed-weight varieties (18,000 seeds/lb).

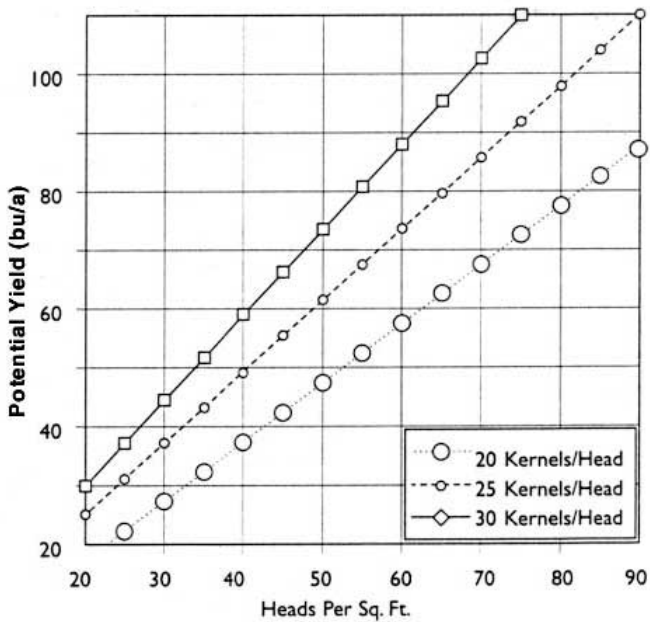


Figure 2. Medium-low seed weight varieties (15,000 seeds/lb).

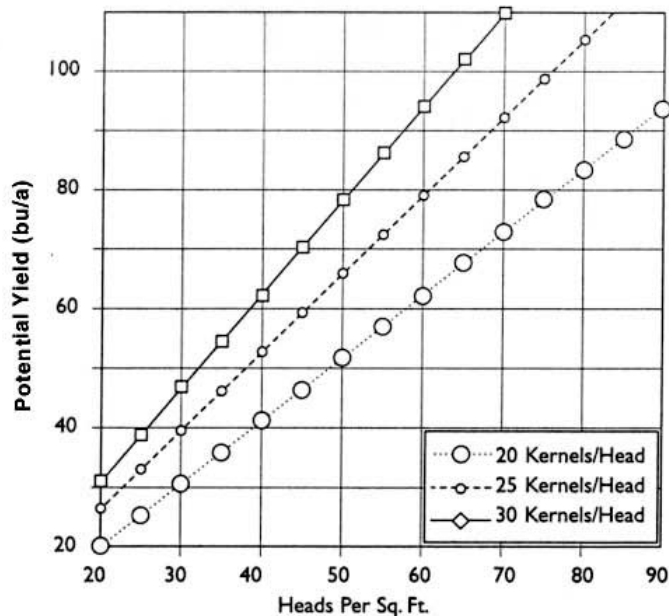


Figure 3. Medium-high-weight varieties (14,000 seeds/lb).

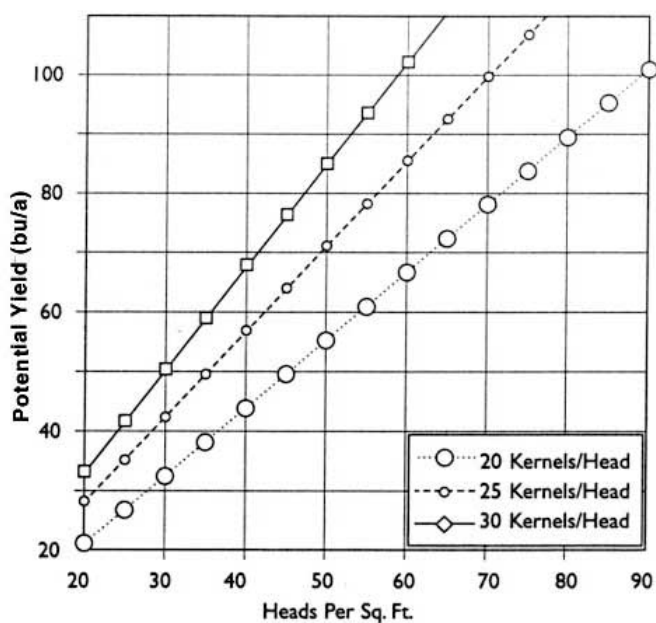


Figure 4. High-seed-weight varieties (13,000 seeds/lb).

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