

# Media Release

For immediate release

## Growing Winter Wheat Helps Avoid Wheat Midge

*Reduced pesticide use just one more way winter wheat helps improve farm profitability.*

August 18, 2008 – Edmonton, AB – Wheat midge has been emerging in fairly significant numbers across many areas of Alberta in the past few weeks. Midge is an important insect pest in wheat crops. It can significantly reduce spring wheat yields and lower the grade of the harvested grain. But while the insect is a serious threat to spring wheat, winter wheat has the ability to escape midge pressure.

With its early maturity, winter wheat does not have to be sprayed for midge because it is generally flowering before adult midge emerge. Once wheat flowers, it becomes an unsuitable host to midge because the plant changes chemically. When wheat flowers it produces a substance called ferulic acid. The presence of ferulic acid makes the wheat an unsuitable host for wheat midge and larvae.

While winter wheat producers will realize significant savings by not having to spray for midge, there are additional benefits of growing winter wheat such as reduced herbicide costs. Winter wheat is an excellent weed competitor and often does not have to be sprayed for wild oats. In times of high input prices, this means producers can save \$24-30/acre. So, the reduced inputs required to grow winter wheat help improve farm profitability.

In addition to reduced inputs, winter wheat is a high yielding crop. Long term production averages across Alberta indicate that winter wheat yields 15-20% more than spring wheat. Extra bushels in the bin make the winter wheat bottom line even more attractive.

With the right planning, winter wheat can provide growers with excellent rotational options, higher yields and cleaner fields. And it's great for the ducks too as it helps improve nesting conditions for waterfowl. For more information and to learn more about growing winter wheat visit [www.wintercereals.ca](http://www.wintercereals.ca).

*Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) has designated August "Winter Wheat Month", using this opportunity to share valuable information about the many ways winter wheat can benefit producers' operations while assisting conservation efforts.*

*Since 1938, DUC has conserved, restored and managed wetlands and their associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. These habitats also benefit other wildlife and people.*

-30-

For more information, please contact:

Melissa Stanford  
Conservation Programs Specialist  
Ducks Unlimited Canada  
P (403) 327-1363  
E [m\\_stanford@ducks.ca](mailto:m_stanford@ducks.ca)

Janine Paly  
Conservation Programs Specialist  
Ducks Unlimited Canada  
P (780) 930-1257  
E [j\\_paly@ducks.ca](mailto:j_paly@ducks.ca)



Ducks Unlimited Canada  
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

Active by nature.