

Wheat growers' association president wants GM wheat introduced to improve crops

Farmers need a strong voice in Washington, but also in their respective state capitols, notes the current president of the National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG). That is why since the late 1990s, Paul Penner has been giving his input during policy discussions and beyond.

“The primary driver for my involvement in a grassroots based organization like the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers (KAWG), and now NAWG, is how I answer a fundamental question,” said Penner. “If not me, then who will decide for me? The only way we can ensure that agriculture has a say in how legislation affects farmers is to be at the table.”

Among his goals while NAWG president is to move the wheat industry closer to the introduction of biotechnology in wheat, said Penner. “For too long wheat acres have declined, thanks primarily to the lagging trend line in yield of wheat, compared to other grains like corn and soybeans. Farmers choose to plant crops that bring them the most profit, and that choice comes at the expense of acres planted to wheat. Who can blame them for planting what makes them more money?”

Wheat could benefit from GMO technology, he said, and make it a crop of choice once again. “We can utilize improved disease resistance and increased resistance to head scab. We can benefit from traits like improved heat tolerance, drought tolerance and better nitrogen efficiency, not to mention higher yields.

Read the full, original article: [Head of Wheat: Kansas takes national reins](#)