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SUNDAY, JUNE 26, 2016

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Farmers bask in glow of 'once-in-a-lifetime' yields

By **AMY BICKEL**
 Kansas Agland

DIGHTON – It's unheard of – especially in this part of the High Plains where drought has prevailed for several years.

Yet something incredible is happening in the wheat fields of Lane County.

"It's truly a once-in-a-lifetime deal – you just got to pinch yourself and realize it is real," said Lane County farmer Vance Ehmke, who stood amid a thick carpet of stubble, watching custom cutters circle through his wheat crop.

"Seventy-five to 90 bushels an acre – we have had yields up there before, but it was never on the whole damn farm."

Here, in the heart of the plains,

"It's truly a once-in-a-lifetime deal – you just got to pinch yourself and realize it is real."

Vance Ehmke, Lane County farmer

wheat is surpassing all predictions.

In coming days, some western Kansas elevators could be bursting at the seams. For a few packed to the brim, wheat could go on the ground. The line of trucks ready to be dumped at elevators is getting longer.

Ehmke and his wife, Louise, are certified seed growers and have 35 to 40 bins on the farm. "And every one is going to be stuffed. We are going to end up hauling a hell of a lot of good seed wheat to the

elevators because we don't have a place to put it."

One of Ehmke's custom cutters – Nebraskan Zach Shaw – said he has four combines and has parked one by the edge of the field as his four



Amy Bickel/The Hutchinson News

Lane County farmer Vance Ehmke, left, talks Wednesday to his custom cutter, Chad Brink, who is helping harvest the Ehmke family's bountiful harvest. Top: Threshed wheat piles up in the tank of a combine.

Top photo by Jesse Brothers/The Hutchinson News

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TAKE A ROAD TRIP TO RICE COUNTY

The News shares a tour of off-the-path sites and sights in nearby Rice County. From Lyons to Sterling, history, entertainment and unique stories abound in this special section, **INSIDE**

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