

## Wrapping up cutting in Last Chance

*A Colorado sunset with the grain cart and dust.*

Photos by Sierra Sammons.



Sage Sammons

**Wednesday, July 21**

We were able to finish up in Last Chance, Colo., fairly quickly, as we cut a total of only five days. The wheat was decent for the area, as it averaged over 35 bushels an acre. We were able to cut every morning bright and early, and the only reason we shut down at night was because of the 60-mile drive back to our camp. Usually when we are in Colorado, we get a little bit of downtime. We usually make it into Denver at least once, but this year was a completely different story. But I'm not complaining.

As we finished up, Dad changed his mind about what we were going to do about 15 times. On one hand he wanted to take both machines and the grain cart to South Dakota to cut. On the other, he thought about taking just one machine and the grain cart to South Dakota and bringing the last combine to Montana to be prepared once the wheat is ready to cut. He eventually choose the latter, since he had to double back for one machine anyway.

*Dad stands in front of the convoy after we got everything ready to roll.*



I was given the duty to drive Dad's motor home to Fort Benton, Mont., as the rest of the Colorado crew headed to South Dakota. Their trip went seamlessly, and they were able to make it all the way in one day. My trip, however, was more of an adventure.

I took off from Last Chance at 5:30 a.m., and by 7 a.m., I was battling over heating issues with the coach. I figured the header I was pulling was the cause of the issue, so I found the Case IH dealer in Greeley, Colo., and dropped the header there. Since it is on Dad's route home, he will be able to pick it up. As soon as I got back on the interstate, the overheating issues returned. I limped up to Cheyenne, Wyo., and initially had trouble finding a place that could look at it. After I went to three shops, Wyoming Machinery was able to work me in later in the afternoon. Since the engine compartment is in the rear of the coach, the motor sits in front of the radiator. The oil overflow tube had blown a little oil into the radiator, causing it to attract dirt. That then made a sort of gunk that caused the motor to overheat. The solution was to pressure wash the gunk off. They also made a tube around the radiator so the problem will not persist.

After seven hours in Cheyenne, I was ready to get back on the road but only made it to Casper, Wyo. I stopped there to eat dinner with my dad's eldest sister, who I haven't seen in a while. It was good to catch up with her, but after dinner I was back on the road. I shut down right before midnight in Sheridan, Wyo. The next day went flawlessly, and I was able to roll into my destination at lunchtime.

Dad is currently on his way back to Colorado tonight to pick up the last machine, and he should be in Fort Benton either Friday or Saturday.

The wheat in Montana is expected to be very good but still isn't quite ready yet. Dad is hoping to be cutting either Sunday or Monday, depending on the weather. So right now I sit and wait once again, but it is good to be back in the cooler weather and be home for a little bit.



*Snapshot of me driving the Peterbilt back to the field.*



The bad weather looks like it is about to set in here in Cut Bank, so I better post my blog before the Internet goes down. I will have an update very soon on how the rest of the crew is progressing in South Dakota.

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## Finished in Colorado, moving on to Montana



Jenna Zeorian

**Wednesday, July 21**

I'm starting to feel a little antsy here in Limon. It feels like it has taken far too long to get the crop out this year. Between green wheat, wet wheat and the occasional rain shower—harvest has taken more time than it should for us.

We finished one job over the weekend and moved on to our second (and last) job on Saturday. Between last night and this morning, the fields received enough rain to keep us from cutting today. The worst part is that we're only about 15 acres short of being finished.

Once we get those few acres knocked out, we'll be done here in Colorado and thinking about getting up to our next stop in Jordan, Mont., which is also our final stop for the summer. I'm trying to figure out how that's possible—where has the summer gone?

**Thursday, July 22**

Good news! The final 15 acres that I posted about on Tuesday have

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*Mom running the combine.*  
Photos by Jenna Zeorian.



*Callie and Dad eating supper.*

**All Aboard**  
**Wheat Harvest continues . . .**

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**Jenna's wheat harvest story continues . . .**



Taylor cleaning the wheat chaff out of the back of the grain truck.



Mom vacuuming the tool pick-up.

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been cut. Those acres were the few that were keeping us from being finished with harvest here in Limon.

Yesterday afternoon we were able to get in the field and get them taken care of. We finished just in time, too, because last evening a storm came through that dropped a pretty good amount of rain. There was more rain today as well.

From what I've heard, the crop in Montana is supposed to be good this year. Our job in Jordan, Mont., is usually ready around the beginning of August, so by the time we get things ready to go and make the two trips north, we should be just about right on time.

**Saturday, July 24**

I don't have a lot of news from the wheat world to share today. The Z crew spent the afternoon cleaning vehicles, trucks and equipment, and getting things ready for the big move to Montana.

This evening, a couple who we cut for here, Steve and Kathy, invited us to their farm for supper. We had a nice barbecue and good time just hanging out.

We're aiming to leave here on Monday. I know Dad has a few more things to do tomorrow to prepare for the move. We girls might possibly have to—want to—make a trip to Denver. But we'll see.

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Photos by Jenna Zeorian.

**Great wheat in Gettysburg**



Jada Bulgin



Cutting winter wheat in Gettysburg, S.D.

**Sunday, July 25**

Hoffman Harvesting is about ready to wrap up our last day of winter wheat harvest here in Gettysburg, S.D. The wheat has been really good with yields ranging from 60 to 70 bushels per acre and test weights of 60 to 63.

The spring wheat is a little ways off from being ready, so we might get a little break between harvesting the two. There may be a few fields ready sooner, but the majority of farmers are saying their spring wheat won't be ready for another two to three weeks.

It looks like rest, relaxation and recreation will soon be on our agenda for awhile. We are also praying for rain in our area. Things are getting a little dry and some rain is much needed for the fall crops.

**Monday, July 26**

So what does a South Dakota harvest crew do when they can't cut? They go to the river. Hoffman Harvesting is still in Gettysburg and waiting for the green spring wheat to get ready. We received rain while we were harvesting our last 180 acres of winter wheat and were unable to cut it until yesterday. Some of our crew headed to the Black Hills while the rest of us went to the river (weather permitting) to bide our time while waiting on the wet wheat. We were hanging out with Sugden Harvesting, Thurman Harvesting and Larry Franke of Franke

Harvesting. That evening Rick and Jodi Sugden made us one of their specialty recipes—fish fritters. This includes beer batter with hashbrowns, onions, green peppers and Johnny's seasoning salt mixed together with the fish. It is then fried and served hot. Yummy!

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Cloudy, rainy weather has kept us out of the field.



Leon opens up a field in Gettysburg, S.D.



Spring wheat still has a ways to go before it's ripe. Probably two to three weeks.

Photos by Jada Bulgin.

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