Manitou, a hard red spring wheat variety, was developed by the Agriculture Canada, Plant Breeding Station, Winnipeg. It was produced by the backcross method using Thatcher as the recurrent parent, Kenya Farmer as the donor parent of the stem rust gene Sr7, PI 170925 (a Red Egyptian type) for Sr6, and Frontana for a gene for adult plant leaf rust resistance. The pedigree is:

Thatcher\(^7\) → Frontana \(^5\) → Thatcher\(^6\) → Manitou

Kenya Farmer

The first cross was made in 1951, the final one in 1959, and Manitou was named and licensed in Canada in February, 1965. Manitou is very similar to Thatcher, apart from its rust resistance and quality, which are superior.

The spike of Manitou is fusiform, mid-dense, smaller than most varieties, apically awnleted; glumes are mid-long, mid-wide, glabrous, white; beaks are short, mid-wide, obtuse to acute; shoulders are mid-wide, predominately square, but slightly rounded at the base of the spike and slightly elevated at the tip. The kernels are small to mid-size, ovate, short to mid-long, mid-wide, hard, light to medium red; crease is mid-wide to wide, mid-deep; cheeks are angular to rounded; brush is small to mid-size, mid-long and the germ is mid-size, oval.

Manitou is adapted to the area in which Thatcher was successful in the past. Its leaf rust resistance is superior to that of Selkirk and Pembina and it is expected to supplant these varieties, as well as much of the acreage of Canthatch and Thatcher. Manitou is resistant to loose smut, head discoloration and common root rot, but is susceptible to bunt.

Breeder seed will be maintained by the Canada Department of Agriculture from 112 permanent breeder lines.