

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update April 16, 2026

Here are updates from the MSU Extension Field Crops team in Southwest Michigan. If you have any items you would like me to include in future email updates - whether events you want others to know about or topics you would like to have addressed - please send an email or call the St. Joseph County Extension office.

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REMINDER: 2,4-D Restriction in Grape Growing Areas Apr 1 through Oct 1

Full notice included at the bottom of the newsletter.

Pesticide Applicator Business License (PABL)



A pesticide application business license is required for anyone who advertises or performs pesticide applications for hire or compensation in Michigan. Certification or registration as an applicator alone does not allow someone to operate a pesticide application business. For more information, check out this recent article: [How to obtain a pesticide application business license](#).

Cover Crop Grazing and Variety Trial Field Day March 12 at Kellogg Biological Station

To test a prototype of a new app for real-time biomass estimation; rate different cover crops traits in the National Cover Crop Variety Trial plots; and see cover crop grazing in action along with more in-depth grazing conversation. Thanks to generous support from the Midwest Cover Crops Council, we're able to offer a **free lunch from 12:30-1:30pm** for additional networking and discussion.

Register here: <https://forms.gle/u7QZaRSxLPnVuqqr9>

Cover Crop Grazing & Variety Trial Field Day

3 CCA
CEUs

May 12, 2026
9:00am-12:30pm

Kellogg Biological Station
9693 N 40th St.,
Hickory Corners, MI 49060

Help your clients take their cover crop
management to the next level!

Topics covered

- Tour cover crop variety plots
- Grazing cover crops
- App for in-field measure cover crop biomass

Training intended for farmer advisors
and farmers

This cover crop training is intended to build
on the October 2025 event at KBS, though
previous attendance is not required.

REGISTER BY MAY 4

Registration is free but
please preregister

Lunch included!

tinyurl.com/4drzb9wb



Food-Grade Grains Field Day June 17 at Kellogg Biological Station

What: Food-grade Grains Field Day: Highlighting the Steps from Field to Mug, Spoon & Jug

When: Wednesday, June 17, 2026 from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM (lunch included at noon; optional field tour & discussion on canola from 1-3pm)

Where: MSU's Kellogg Biological Station, 9693 N 40th St., Hickory Corners, MI 49060

Registration: Required, no fee. Registration closes June 3 or **up to 100 participants**. [Register here](https://forms.gle/u7QZaRSxLPnVuqqr9).

Credits: RUP & CCA credits are pending approval.

Food: is catered from Zingerman's Bakehouse and Field & Fire

2026 Soybean On-Farm Research Projects Revealed!

Every year, the Michigan Soybean Committee partners with MSU Extension to conduct on-farm research throughout the state. The projects for this year are as follows. If you are interested in hosting a trial or would like to know more, contact me (ritchi67@msu.edu or 269-858-8739) or Eric Anderson (269-359-0565 or eander32@msu.edu).

1. **Pre-plant sulfur fertilizer.** This project will evaluate the impact of sulfur fertilizer applied just prior to planting on soybean yield and income. Choose sites with light-textured soils and low organic matter.
2. **Planter box treatment.** This project will determine the yield and income benefits of applying BioBoost Soy planter box treatment. **Product provided.**
3. **Planting date x seeding rate.** This project will provide farmers with the optimum planting date (PD) and seeding rate (SR) for a given field as determined by Agroptimizer, a model developed at UW-Madison from a large nationwide database.
4. **Planting date x maturity group.** This project will measure the effect that planting date (PD) and maturity group (MG) have on soybean yield and income.
5. **Seeding rate.** This project will identify the optimum agronomic and economic seeding rate for a given planting scenario. Ideally, this will be done with a planting prescription using numerous seeding rates—we will provide you with a prescription .shp file once a field is selected.
6. **Deer repellent.** This project will determine the efficacy of two applications of M-Pede as a deterrent to deer feeding in soybean and their effect on yield and profitability. The ideal trial field will have good yield potential, a history of moderate deer feeding and the possibility of a trial layout that could be fair to test product performance. **Product provided.**
7. **Residual herbicide.** This project will evaluate the effect of a residual herbicide applied preemergence (PRE) or postemergence (POST) on soybean yield and income. This trial is especially beneficial to producers who 1) do not plan to apply a residual herbicide prior to soybean emergence (PRE) or 2) will apply a PRE residual herbicide but do not plan to include a residual with their POST herbicide application (layered residual), particularly in fields with late-season flushes of grass and Amaranth (pigweed) species. **Product provided.**
8. **Nexta supply foliar.** This project will evaluate the impact on yield and income from an application of Nexta Supply which contains a bacteria that colonizes the plant and converts atmospheric nitrogen (N) into ammonium that can be metabolized by the crop when existing N supplies are depleted. This product has been found to be most beneficial in soybean crops that exceed 65 bushels per acre (bu/A). **Product provided.**
9. **Micronutrient foliar.** This project will evaluate the effect of MicroStrike Bean, a micronutrient product (2.25% B, 2.25% Zn, 0.75% Mg, 1.25% Mn) on soybean yield and profitability. **Product provided.**
10. **Cobra herbicide for white mold.** This project will evaluate the effect of a single foliar application of Cobra herbicide on soybean yield and income when applied to fields having a history of white mold. **Product provided.**
11. **Fungicide for high yield.** This project will evaluate the effect of a single foliar application of an inexpensive fungicide—Trevor TRZ DRV from Innvictis Crop Care, LLC—on soybean yield and income when applied in environments with no specific expected disease pressure. **Product provided.**

SJCCD Native Plant Sale

This year's sale features regionally native species that support pollinators, wildlife, and healthy, beautiful local landscapes! Order pickup dates are May 28 and 29 from 9 am to 4 pm. Reach out to Kaitlin Renehan (kaitlin.renehan@macd.org) with questions or to place an order.



Rough Blazing Star
Liatris aspera

2026 Native Plant Sale

Hosted by the
**St. Joseph County Conservation District
& SMIST Cisma**

Prices listed on the attached Order Form

Order Pickup Dates:
Thursday, May 28th & Friday, May 29th
9am - 4pm

**Species availability subject to change.*

To place an order or request additional information

Email: kaitlin.renehan@macd.org

Call: (269) 467-6336 ext.5

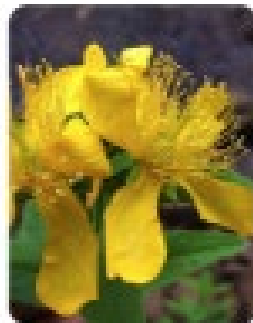
Visit: 693 E. Main Street, Centerville MI



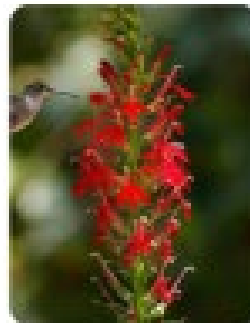
Culver's Root
Veronicastrum virginicum



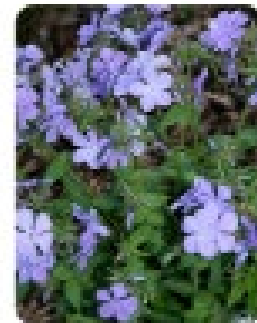
Canada Anemone
Anemone canadensis



Giant St. John's Wort
Hypericum ascyron



Cardinal Flower
Lobelia cardinalis



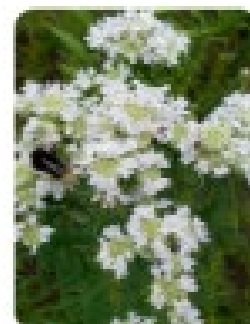
Woodland Phlox
Phlox divaricata



Wild Columbine
Aquilegia canadensis



Indian Grass
Sorghastrum nutans



Mountain-Mint
Pycnanthemum virginianum



Yellow Coneflower
Ratibida pinnata

**Additional native plants grown from seed by The District may be offered at time of pick up.*

Conservation Easements Within Succession Planning Webinar Recording Available

The recording of the March webinar “Conservation Easements within Farm Succession Planning” is now up on the MSU Extension [website](https://www.canr.msu.edu/videos/conservation-easements-within-farm-succession-planning-recorded-webinar). Farmland conservation experts Kim Hayes and Will Manty provide details about when and how conservation easements can be set up for farmland. They describe how easements can fit within a larger succession plan, discussing both the benefits and challenges that can occur. View the video at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/videos/conservation-easements-within-farm-succession-planning-recorded-webinar>.

It's Not Too Late to Join the Great Lakes Cover Crops Project and Make \$50/Field

If you are growing any overwintering cover crop in the 2025-2026 season, consider joining the Great Lakes Cover Crops Project! What we need from you: fill out an online management survey (~20 minutes) and submit cover crop photos and heights in the spring. You will receive \$50/field and a personalized cover crop report with biomass and nutrient estimates. Scan the QR code or follow the link to join the network of over 150 farmers: <https://forms.gle/YK91afHdpYusLUaw5>

Scouting School 2026 to be held in Frankenmuth

Do you have field crop scouts working for you this summer? Consider sending them to field crops Scouting School. Spread out across three days (May 21, June 18, and July 16), this group will be a cohort for all sessions. Enrollment is limited to 30 participants to ensure hands-on participation. Learn more and register [here](#).

Crop and Pest Update

After a less wet weekend, some field work occurred in the beginning of the week, including cover crop burndown, tillage and spreading of fertilizer, lime and manure. Peak flight and egg laying for **seedcorn maggot** (SCM) occurred on April 10 based on the Constantine Enviroweather station data. Fields planted close to peak flight are at higher risk of SCM damage, especially in tilled high residue or manured fields. The wet weather has prevented planting within a week of peak flight, and warm temperatures next week are promising for getting seeds out of the ground quickly (if planting occurs next week). Overall, SCM risk is probably likely to be low this season.



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True armyworm (TAW) counts spiked in St. Joseph County over the past week, likely carried up on the southerly winds with the storms.

Bucket traps in Berrien (near Berrien Springs), St. Joseph (Centreville) and Van Buren (Lawrence) Counties have caught the following:

True Armyworm

Date	Berrien 1	St. Joseph	Van Buren
3/30	--	1	0
4/6	1	20	0
4/13	9	105	11

Black Cutworm

Date	Berrien 1	St. Joseph	Van Buren
3/30	--	0	1
4/6	7	8	11
4/13	6	11	13

Winter wheat is at Feekes 6 (jointing). At this stage, the wheat head starts to move up the stem. Identify Feekes 6 by running your fingers from the base of the stem upward. When you feel a distinct bump, the wheat is at Feekes 6. You can slice the stem lengthwise to see that the head is starting to move up it. Nitrogen applications have gone out on several fields over the past few weeks as weather permitted.



So far, there haven't been symptoms of foliar disease, but with the recent warm and wet week, diseases may develop in the near future. In St. Joseph County, **TAW** counts spiked over the past week, so scout for larvae in wheat and small grains in the next week or so.

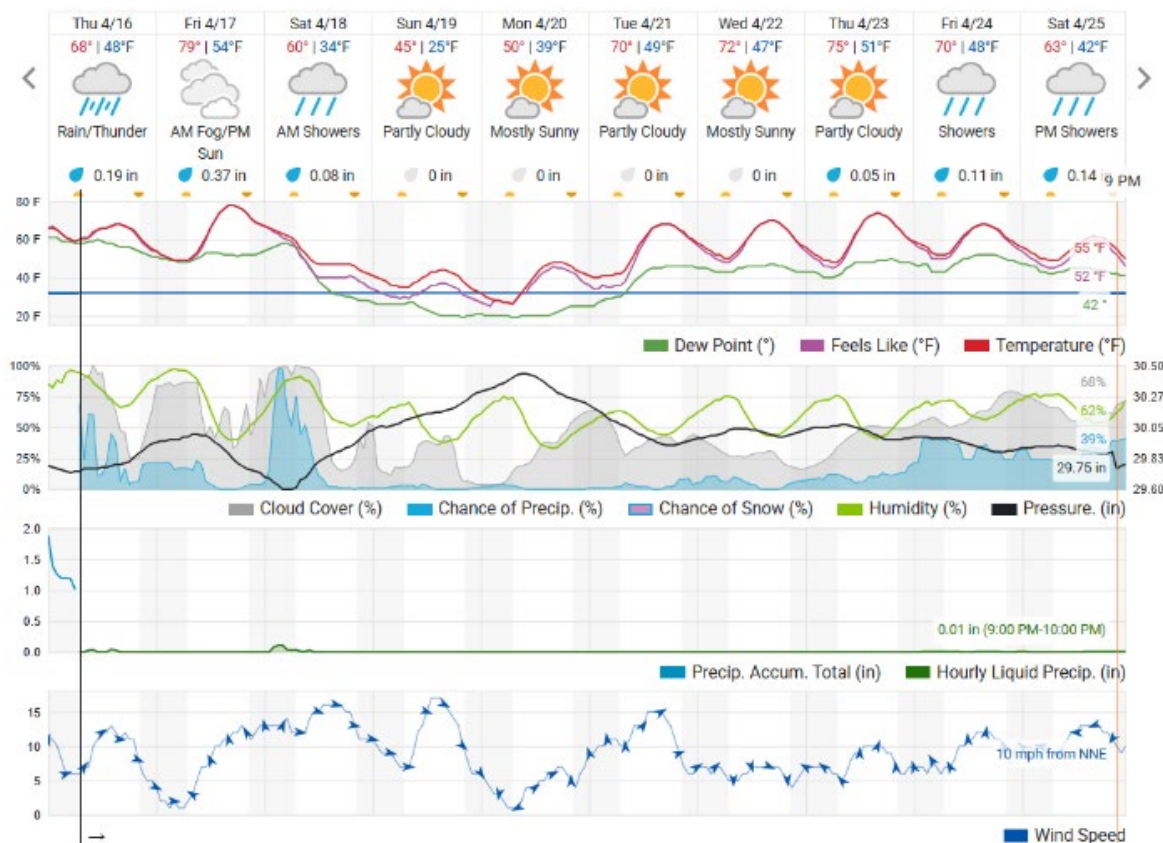
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Potato planting started mid-late March and has continued as weather permitted over the past month. **Alfalfa** and **forages** are actively growing. **Alfalfa weevil** adults are present in fields, but no significant feeding damage or larvae populations have been found at this point.



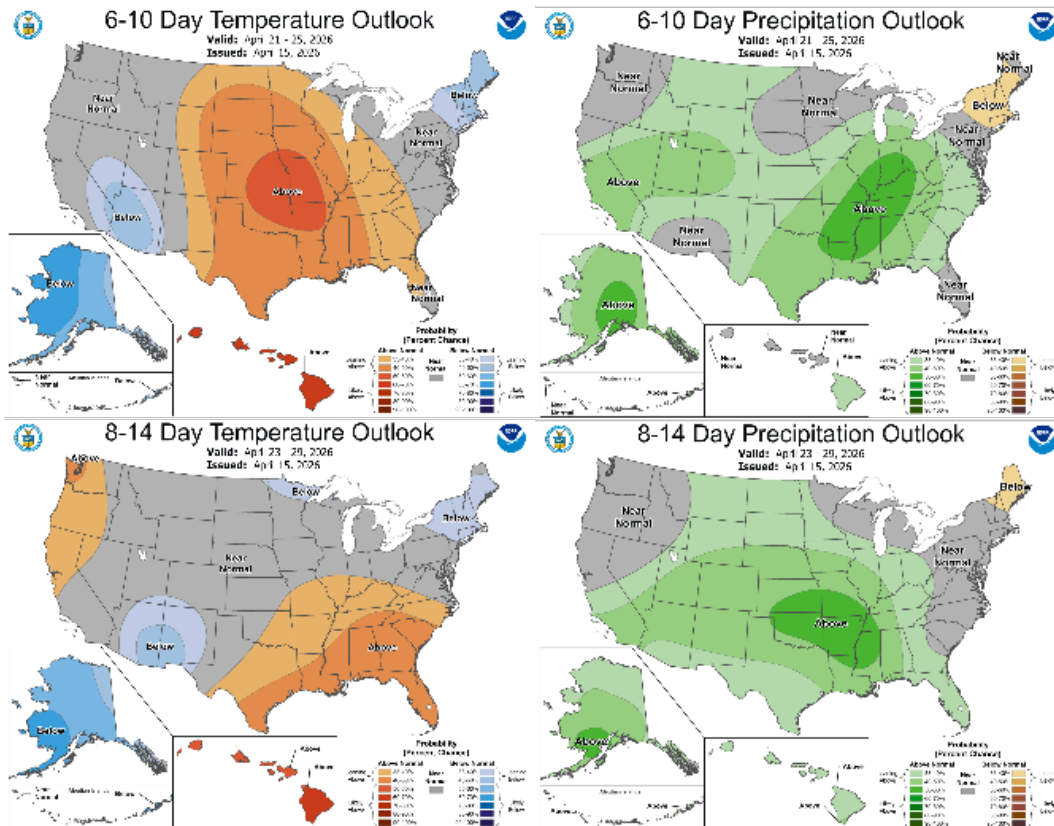
Weather Update

Persistent precipitation over the past week has slowed down field work and led to flooding or standing water in some places. Although it's been rainy, temperatures have been quite warm, which is expected to continue into next week. A stretch of dry weather throughout much of next week will be followed by light precipitation heading into next weekend.



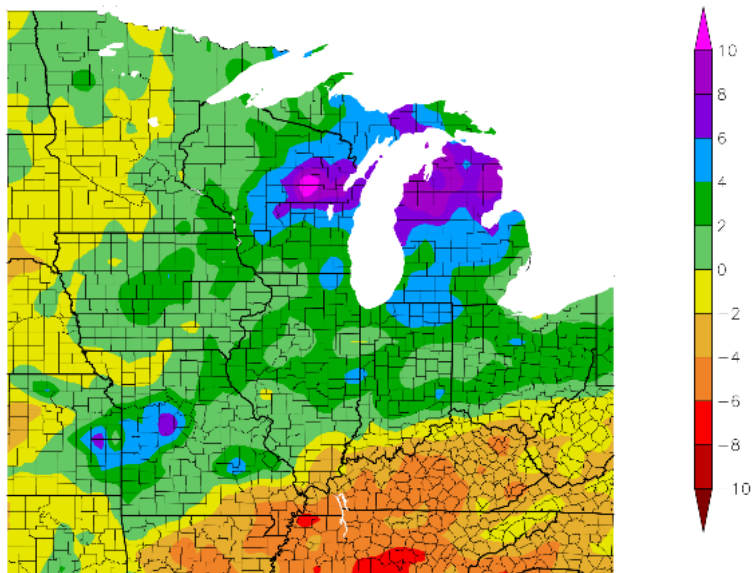
Ten-day weather forecast for Kalamazoo according to wunderground.com.

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The 6-10 day (Apr 21-25, top) and 8-14 day (Apr 23-29, bottom) outlooks for temperature (left) and precipitation (right).

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)
2/14/2026 – 4/14/2026



Generated 4/15/2026 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

The departure from normal precipitation over the past 60 days throughout the Midwest according to the High Plains Regional Climate Center.

Calendar

[Note: Titles are clickable links to online content when highlighted and underlined.]

- Apr 23** **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Optimizing Alfalfa Harvesting Schedules.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season.
- Apr 30** **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Early Season Pest Control.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season. **1 RUP**
- May 7** **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Post Weed Control.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season. **1 RUP**
- May 12** **Cover Crop Grazing and Variety Trial Field Day.** 9am-12:30pm. Kellogg Biological Station. Participants will test a prototype of a new app for real-time biomass estimation; rate different cover crops traits in the National Cover Crop Variety Trial plots; and see cover crop grazing in action along with more in-depth grazing conversation. Free.
- May 14** **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Disease Management in Wheat.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season. **1 RUP**
- May 15** **Spanish Pesticide and Irrigation Safety Workshop.** 8 am – 12 pm. St. Joseph County MSU Extension Office (612 E Main St., Centreville, MI 49032). This workshop will cover pesticide and irrigation safety, including how to reduce drift and leaching. Free. Lunch not included. **4 RUP**
- May 21** **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Wheat Scouting and Management Considerations.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season. **1 RUP**
- May 28** **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Michigan Dry Bean Update.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season. **1 RUP**
- Jun 4** **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Integrated Pest Management in Sugar Beets.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season. **1 RUP**
- Jun 11** **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Herbicide Resistance Update.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season. **1 RUP**
- Jun 17** **Food Grade Grains Field Day.** 9am-1pm. Kellogg Biological Station. This event will touch on relevant information for farmers, millers, maltsters, food manufacturers, brewers, distillers, CPGs, researchers, and

those invested in improving food-grade grain production and processing in the Upper Midwest. Free, but registration capped at 100 participants. RUP/CCA

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

Attend a 2026 regional wheat field day near you

Published on April 16, 2026

Join MSU Extension and the Michigan Wheat Program for a small regional wheat field in Huron, Gratiot and Allegan counties.

Stand your ground against early-season insect pests

Published on April 16, 2026

The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast on April 30 will feature management considerations for seedcorn maggot and other early insect pests. One RUP/CCA credit is available.

Repairing your flood-damaged fields

Published on April 15, 2026

Management options for restoring productivity in flood-damaged areas.

Paraquat and certain dicamba products require additional applicator training

Published on April 14, 2026

EPA requires pesticide applicators using paraquat and dicamba to complete label-mandated training.

Corn cost of production projection tool for 2026 now available

Published on April 13, 2026

New cost of production Excel-based tool for non-irrigated and irrigated corn now available from MSU Extension.

Soil Health Service Provider Directory

Published on April 13, 2026

The purpose of this document is to highlight some of the businesses that offer cover crop related services to farmers across Michigan.

How to obtain a pesticide application business license in Michigan

Published on April 13, 2026

Businesses applying pesticides for hire in Michigan must obtain a pesticide application business license. Understanding certification, experience, insurance and application requirements helps ensure compliance and legal operation.

2026 Corn Projected Cost of Production

Published on April 10, 2026

The MSU Extension 2026 Projected Cost of Production for corn tool is intended to serve as a starting point for discussions on both expected income and expenses for individual farms.

Farmers invited to join national study on farming practices and soil health

Published on April 9, 2026

Farmers and ranchers are invited to participate in a free soil health evaluation and contribute to research supporting profitable, resilient and sustainable agriculture.

Taming farm fuel costs using farm level planning

Published on April 9, 2026

Adjusting 2026 farm budgets with rising diesel prices.

Systems approach to early soybean planting in Michigan

Published on April 8, 2026

Strategies for enhancing rewards and reducing risk associated with early planted soybean.

Bulletins Live! Two Tracker Report available now

Published on April 7, 2026

To raise awareness of pesticides currently impacted by the new EPA Bulletins Live! Two pesticide label directive, Michigan State University Extension will be generating a Bulletins Live! Two Tracker Report twice a month.

There is still time to report large or significant water use

Published on April 3, 2026

Agricultural water users in both Indiana and Michigan are required to report their water use for water sources with the capacity to pump 70 gallons per minute.

Why and how to read a pesticide label?

Published on April 2, 2026

Understanding the importance of pesticide labels and how to read the label is extremely important to achieve effective pest management in crop production.

Michigan's Soil Health Investment Program: A collaboration success story

Published on April 2, 2026

Through its partnership-based, farmer-informed approach, SHIP has boosted conservation practice adoption to improve nutrient retention and soil productivity.

Evaluating nitrogen rates for corn with high fertilizer prices

Published on April 2, 2026

Maximizing profitability begins with optimizing nitrogen's return on investment.

REMINDER: 2,4-D Restriction in Grape Growing Areas Apr 1 through Oct 1 (cont.)

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT
P.O. Box 30017, 525 West Allegan, 6th Floor
Lansing, Michigan 48909

NOTICE

Restriction of Use of 2,4-D or MCPA in Grape Growing Areas

In accordance with Act No. 6 of the Public Acts of 1959, as amended, notice is hereby given that orders heretofore issued on April 16, 1963, subsequent to public hearings and publication, shall continue in effect during the period from May 1 to October 1, 2026, unless a petition for modification or rescission of the order, signed by 10 or more grape growers or 50 or more persons not grape growers in the affected area, is filed with the Director of Agriculture on or before April 15.

The grape growing areas affected by the orders are described as follows:

Order No. 1

All of Antwerp, Paw Paw, and Porter Townships; Sections 11, 12, 13, 14, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36, Waverly Township; Sections 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 36, Lawrence Township; Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 35, and 36, Decatur Township; Sections 1, 2, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36, Alma Township; and Sections 24 and 25, Hamilton Township; Van Buren County, Michigan; all of Texas Township; and Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35, Oshtemo Township; Kalamazoo County, Michigan.

Order No. 2

All of the land contained in Hagar, Benton, Bainbridge, Coloma, Watervliet, Sodus, Pipestone, Berrien, Oronoko, Royalton, St. Joseph, Lincoln, Lake, Baroda, and Chikaming

Townships; Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, and 33, Weesaw Township; Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, and 24, Buchanan Township; Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18, Niles Township; Berrien County; Sections 6, 7, 18, 19, 30, and 31, Pokagon Township; Sections 5, 6, 7, 8, 17, and 18, Silver Creek Township; Cass County; Sections 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35, Keeler Township; Sections 17, 22, 23, and 28, Hartford Township; Sections 14, 23, 26, 31, 32, 33, 34, and 35, Covert Township; and Section 36 West of Covert Township; Van Buren County; all part of the State of Michigan.

It is ordered that pursuant to the authority granted the Director of Agriculture by Act No. 6 of the Public Acts of 1959, as amended, any and all persons shall cease and desist from the use of the volatile ester forms of 2,4-D and MCPA within the above described areas during the period of May 1 to October 1, 2026, and that the amine forms of 2,4-D and MCPA be applied at sprayer pressures not to exceed forty pounds and that sprayer booms be operated over crops at a height not greater than 25 inches.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Boring". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tim" and last name "Boring" clearly distinguishable.

March 2, 2026

Dr. Tim Boring, Director



Nicolle Ritchie

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