

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates June 7, 2019

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 me an email or call the office.

Cover Crops for Prevented Planting

The MSU Extension Cover Crops team has just finished a new fact sheet—[Cover Crops for Prevented Planting](#)—that is timely and will be needed by many farmers throughout the state. If you have any questions about this fact sheet or a particular application on your farm, let me know and I will put you in contact with someone from the team...they are really easy to work with.

Changing Corn Hybrid for Late Planting

As we get later into June, those still wanting to plant corn are wondering if their current hybrid selection is the best choice for early- to mid-June. Purdue's Bob Nielsen has addressed this question in recent articles ([Hybrid Maturity Decisions for Delayed Planting](#) and [Some Points to Ponder as You Struggle With Decisions About Late-Planted Corn](#)) and [a series of videos](#). First, note that the "days to maturity" we're all familiar with is not that accurate and using growing degree days (GDD's, or heat units) is a better indicator. Bob wrote in length on this and even included a quick calculator for adjusting GDD's to blacklayer according to planting date based on their research (i.e., the later the crop is planted, the fewer GDD's are needed to reach maturity). According to Bob, "hybrids planted later than about May 1 mature approximately 6.8 fewer GDDs for every day of delay beyond May 1, through at least the 2nd week of June (the latest planting dates we evaluated in the research)." For example, a hybrid normally requiring 2700 GDD's would only require 2428 GDD's when planted on June 10. Note: using the [U2U tool](#) I have highlighted in previous weekly updates is helpful, but it does not take into account this adjustment in required GDD's, you have to manually enter in the adjusted value yourself.

If you do plan to switch to an earlier-maturing hybrid, Nielsen had this to say.

"Practically speaking, hybrids rated no less than about 2400 GDDs to kernel blacklayer, roughly equivalent to "100-102 day" relative maturity (reasonably adapted to Indiana growing conditions), could be safely planted in the northern tier of Indiana counties through June 15. However, I would strongly encourage you to make sure such hybrids have disease ratings for important foliar diseases like gray leaf spot and fast grain drydown characteristics. Understand, though, selecting a hybrid maturity that just barely reaches physiological maturity before a killing fall freeze in mid- to late October will not have much opportunity for significant field drydown and so grain moisture at harvest will be high. If you search for a hybrid maturity that will reach blacklayer by, say, the end of September, that would provide more time for meaningful grain drydown in the field before harvest."

Another important factor to grain fill and yield is the amount of sunlight received. We all know that crops, especially C4 ones like corn, yield better under sunny conditions as opposed to cloudy ones (all other factors equal). I asked climatologists/meteorologists on a webinar recently whether there are any tools or indicators for expected levels of sunlight in forecasts...nope. So, the next best proxy is looking at forecasts for expected rainfall, assuming that will bring cloudy conditions. NOAA's current 3-month outlook gives equal chance of normal temperatures, so not much help there based on GDD's. However, the models are predicting a 33-40% chance of wetter than normal conditions meaning more cloud cover is likely. If that proves true, we could expect lower relative corn yields—another factor to consider when deciding what (or whether) to plant as we move into mid-June.

AW and BCW Counts

Moth catches continue to trickle in, but many fields still remain with a thick winter annual (and now some summer annual) weed blanket. If you have (or will be) planting into a field that had not been previously burned down or tilled such that there was a “green bridge” in place to the crop, scouting for feeding should be on your post-planting to-do list.

Reports have come in to Purdue about armyworm feeding on soybean planted into fields that had a standing grass cover crop during moth flight. Purdue’s John Obermeyer addressed this in the latest [Pest and Crop Newsletter](#). “Armyworm primarily feed on grasses. As seen in the past, and now being reported this spring, they will feed on no-tilled soybean into a cereal rye cover crop. Weeks ago, armyworm moths were attracted to laying eggs on grasses, in which the hatched larvae were quite content on feeding. Then a burn-down herbicide was applied before/at planting and the armyworm were eventually left with no food except for the emerging soybean seedlings. To satisfy their hunger, armyworm will feed on the soybean, but are unable to properly digest this legume for nourishment. Depending on the size of the larvae, and where they feed on the plant, some soybean seedlings may be killed, Obviously, a rescue insecticide treatment is not needed, as the armyworm slowly starve to death and the tattered plants will give way to undamaged leaves.”

		3-May	10-May	17-May	24-May	31-May	7-Jun
Armyworm	Wheat	64	98	17	25	5	6
	Wheat	8	11	4	3	1	13
	Grass pasture	-	16	3	7	1	3
	Grass pasture	-	27	16	33	31	17
Black Cutworm	Alfalfa	0	0	3	0	0	4
	Grass/alfalfa mix	4	15	6	0	6	6
	Pasture w/ dandelion	1	2	4	0	0	2
	Alfalfa	1	0	3	3	0	2

Moth trap counts for true armyworm (AW) and black cutworm (BCW). Results from Purdue’s northern locations for AW are also included—their weekly reporting frame doesn’t line up exactly with mine, but it’s close.

Weather and Crop Update

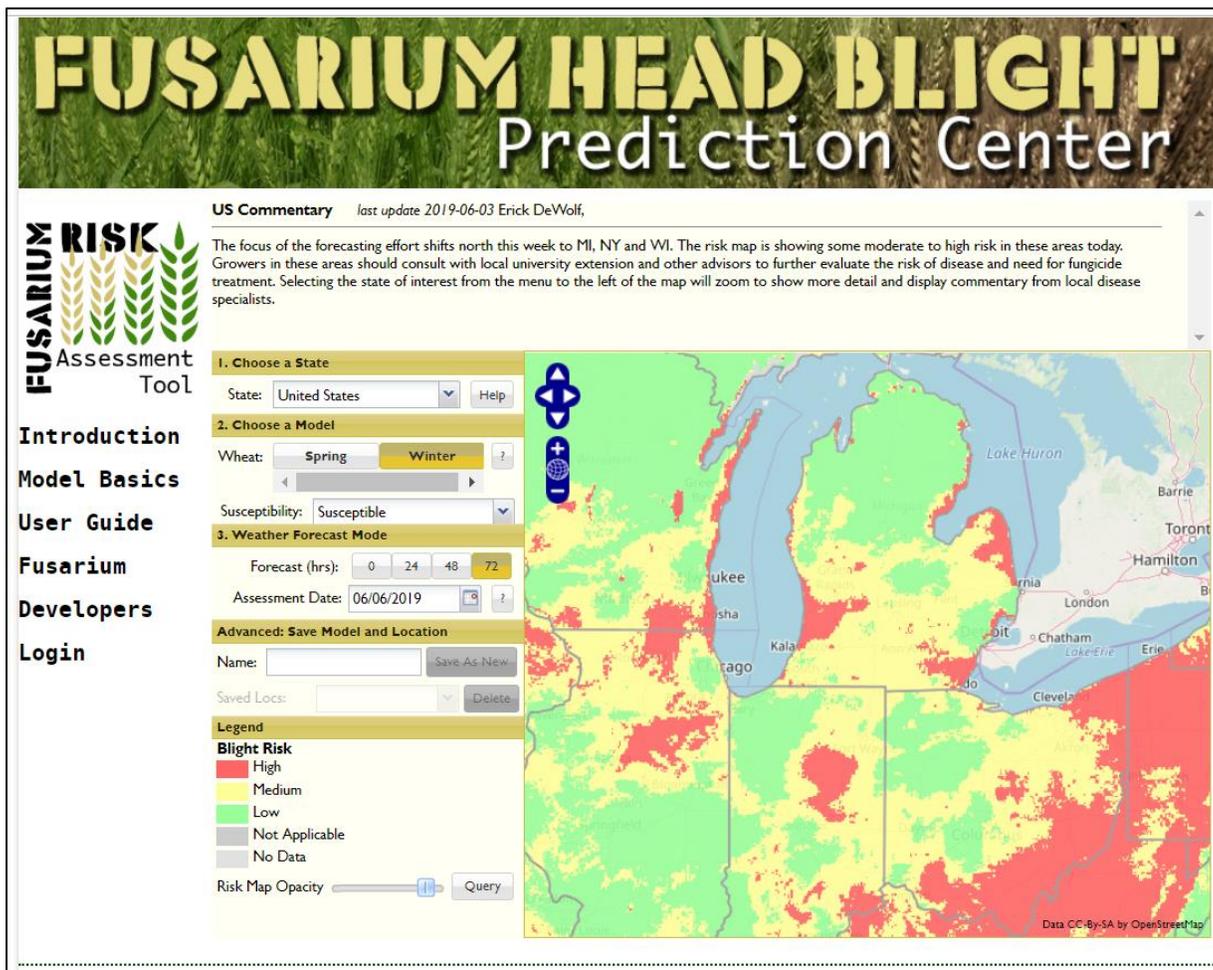
Wheat: The USDA Crop Progress stats from April 2 report that 5% of wheat has headed in MI (39% behind average) which seems very low for what I’m seeing in the region. Only 9% is rated excellent (additional 34% and 35% rated good and fair, respectively). Fields I have visited are now at late flowering (Feekes 10.5.2 or 10.5.3) so the window for applying fungicides for head scab control is open for another few days on these fields, and quite a few fields have been sprayed. Conditions should be about perfect for leaf diseases, so keep an eye on the upper canopy. Risk of head scab over the weekend is predicted to be medium to high for susceptible varieties and low for moderately susceptible ones. Caramba, Prosaro, and Miravis Ace are recommended for those opting to spray. I found some disease symptoms on lower leaves.



Wheat at late flowering in both of these fields with anthers exposed all the way to the base of the head and most anthers fallen off. The window for spraying for head scab is open in these fields for only a few more days.



Lower-canopy powdery mildew in wheat. Fungicides applied for head scab should also keep the flag leaf free of this disease according to MSU's field crop pathologist Martin Chilvers.



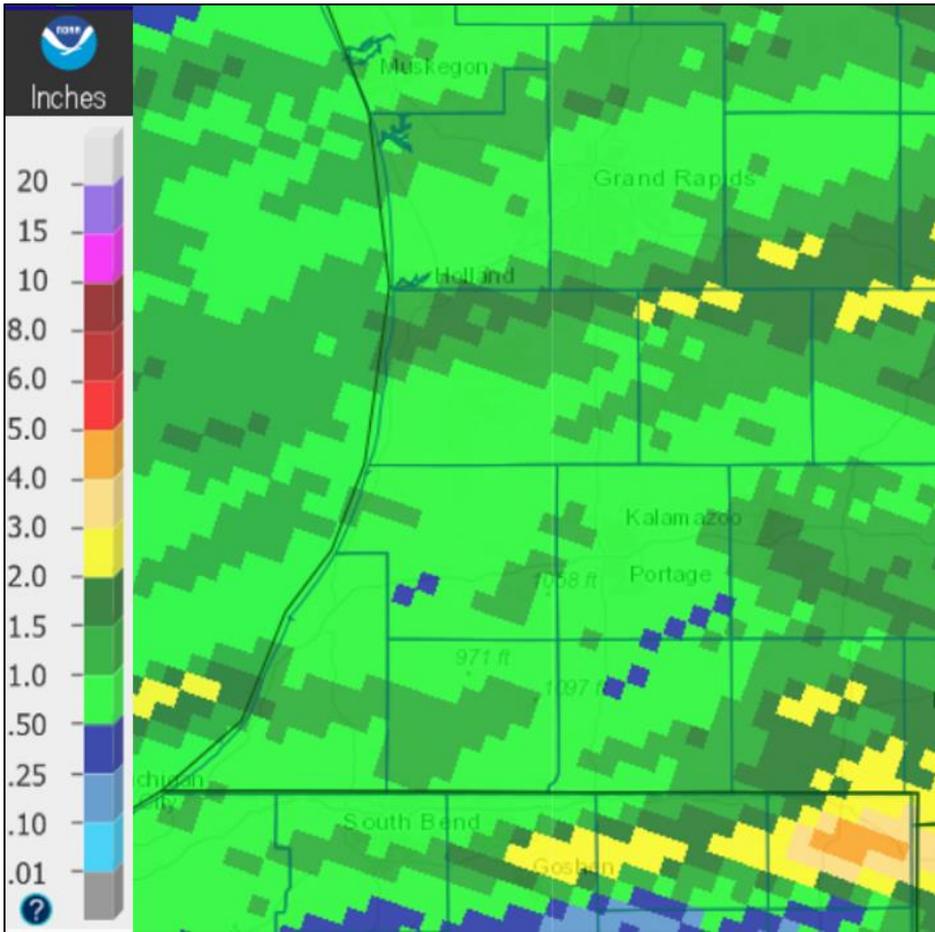
Head scab risk as of June 6 with similar results for the next 72 hours for a susceptible winter wheat variety according to the [Fusarium Head Blight Prediction Center](#).

Corn: According to the latest crop progress report, corn in Michigan was 42% planted and 17% emerged as of April 2nd, but quite a bit of progress was made this past week on lighter soils in the area, and that planted number is probably nearly double that for those soils. Most early planted corn, some in the ground as early as mid-April, looks really good right now. These advanced fields are at V3-V4. A few fields have more yellow than should be expected, and if no N went on preplant or with the planter, sidedress should be done earlier than usual to get those plants on track. Lots of corn that has been planted between showers ranges from V1 to not yet emerged.

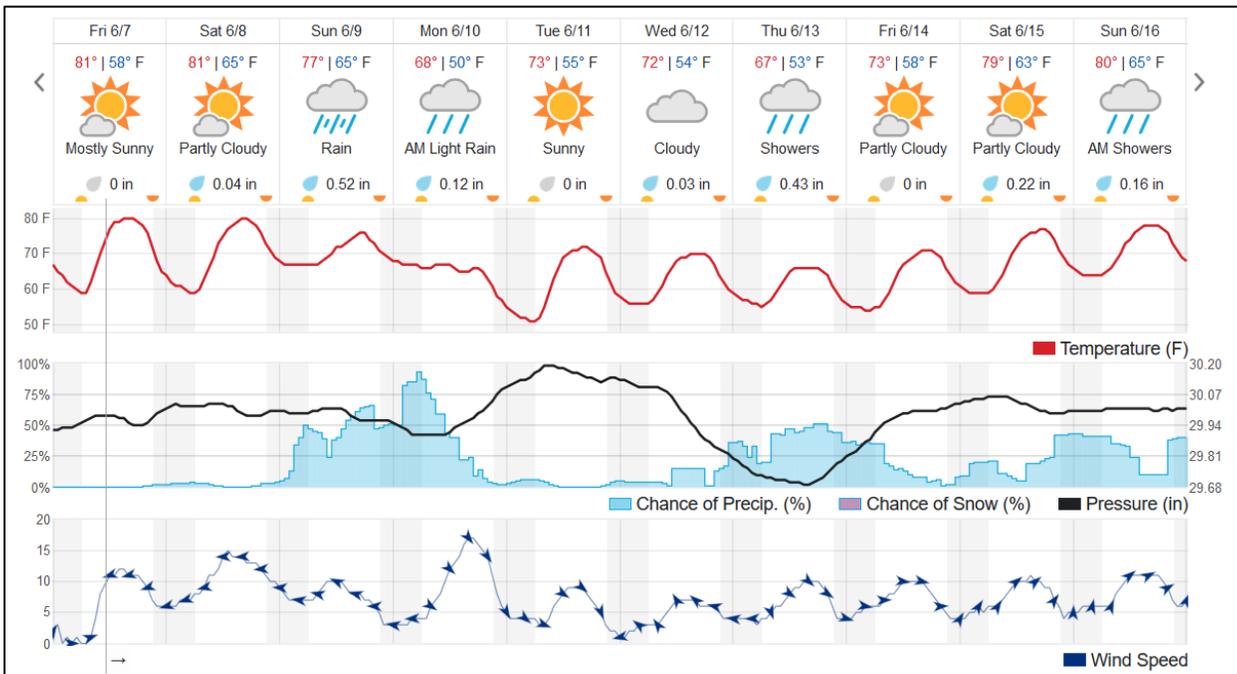
Soybean: According to the latest crop progress report, Michigan was 31% planted as of last week and 13% emerged as of last week. Reports of phytophthora and some insect and slug feeding have come in from around the state. Early-season insect feeding is typically not problematic—see John Obermeyer’s comments above in the AW and BCW Counts section.

Alfalfa: First cutting is underway, but with wet ground and the rain that fell Wednesday morning, it may be challenging getting it dried for those who will be dry baling. Forage educator Phil Kaatz wrote [an article this week](#) with some tips with [an accompanying video](#) looking at early results of a long-term study he is conducting on swath width.

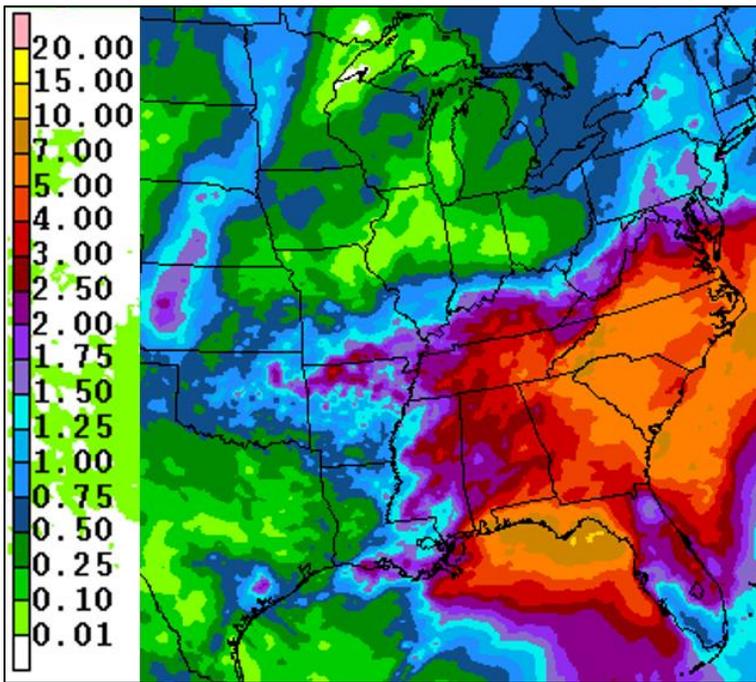
Weather: We received another 1.0-1.5 inches of rain on average in our area this past week—same story, different week. We are now only a few days behind in heat units in southern MI, but soils continue to be waterlogged throughout much of the state. The upper air pattern has changed which has brought dryer weather to Michigan. Friday and Saturday are predicted to be warm and windy which should help dry out soils and hay crops. Some models are predicting Gulf moisture getting as far north as Michigan by late weekend and early next week. Normal to below-normal temps are predicted for mid-June with slight chances for above-normal precipitation.



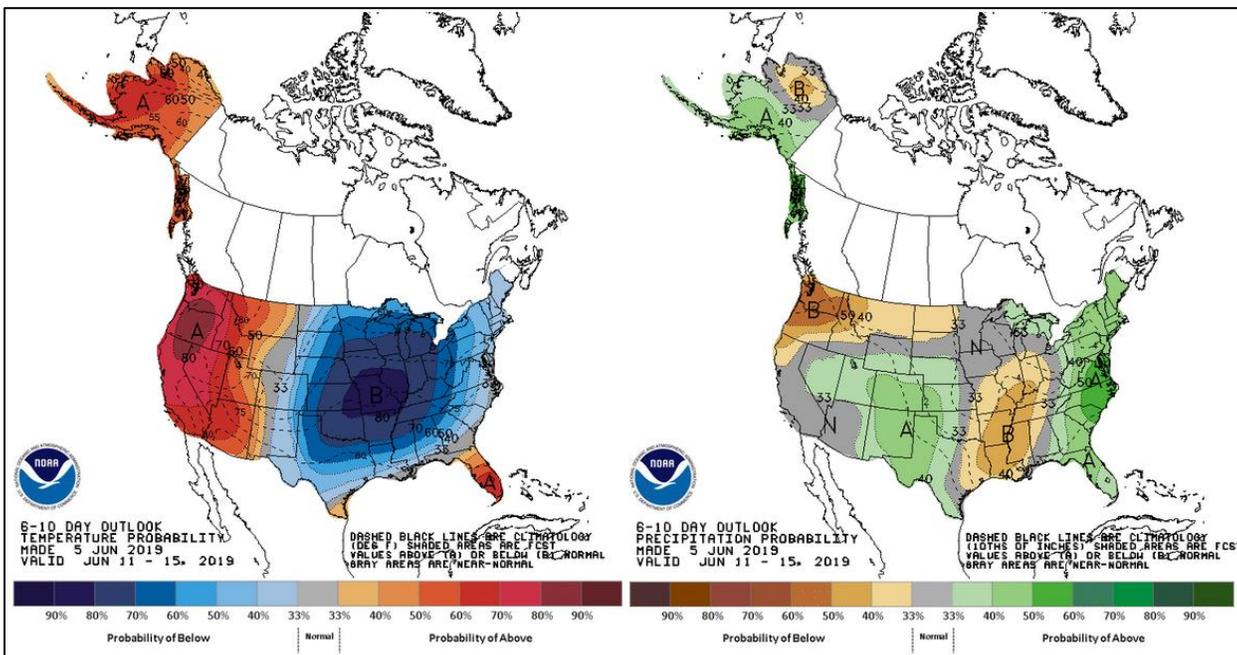
Precipitation totals for week ending June 6, 2019. Rainfall totals ranged from 0.28-1.66 inches at Enviroweather stations in the region with an average of 1.0 inches.



The 10-day forecast for Centreville according to wunderground.com.



Forecast for precipitation totals for the week of June 6-13, 2019. Totals for our region are predicted to be 0.25-0.50 inches.



National Weather Service 6-10 day outlook (June 11-15) for temperature (left) and precipitation (right). The 8-14 day outlook is similar for temperature with a slight chance of wetter than normal conditions.

Calendar

(Note: Titles are clickable links to online content when highlighted and underlined.)

June 12 [Wheat Field Day](#). 8:15am-4:00pm. MSU Plant Pathology Research Center, 3735 College Rd., Lansing, MI. Registration online, cost is free, lunch included.

June 13 [Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Free Webinar](#). Thursdays 7:00-7:30 AM. This week: “Identifying Mid-Season Soybean Issues” with Mike Staton. Join via computer or mobile device (audio and video, <https://msu.zoom.us/j/552324349>) or by phone (audio only, **669-900-6833** and enter meeting ID **552-324-349**). To receive a weekly reminder of the Virtual Breakfast, sign up at <http://eepurl.com/gm-PIv>

- June 14** **Woodlot Management Workshop.** 12-5pm. Hamilton Twp Hall, 52898 Co Rd 352, Decatur, MI. Presentations, snacks, and a guided tour of a woodlot. Please RSVP to 269-657-4030x5.
- June 15** **Van Buren County Pesticide, Hazardous Waste, Old Tire Collection.** 9am-1pm. 801 Hazen St., Paw Paw, MI. Collection will also take place on June 21 in South Haven. Contact the Van Buren Conservation District with questions (269-657-4030x5).
- June 20** **Malting Barley Field Days - Kellogg Biological Station.** 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Kellogg Biological Station, 9702 N 40th Street Hickory Corners, MI. Opportunities to view and learn about malting barley research and interact with industry professionals. Registration encouraged.
- June 26** **MSU Weeds Day.** 8:30am-12:00pm. 4450 Beaumont Rd, Lansing, MI. Registration information will be available soon.
- June 26&31** **Clean Sweep Pesticide Disposal in Benton Harbor.** Available to all MI residents. Collections are for any unwanted pesticides in MI (not fertilizers). Registration is required, forms can be found online or at MSUE and CD offices in Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties.
- July 15** **Deadline for FSA Acreage Reporting.** Deadline for 2019 acreage reporting for spring seeded crops. Contact your local FSA office for details.
- July 26** **Ag Innovation Day.** 8:30am-5:00pm, MSU Research Farm, East Lansing, MI. Day will be split into morning and afternoon tours with a free lunch. Attendees are asked to register beforehand (coming soon) to help with logistics and food ordering.
- August 20-21** **2019 Bridging the Experience Gap.** Saginaw Valley Research and Extension Center, 3775 S Reese Rd, Frankenmuth, MI. This program provides a platform for professionals to gain experience, network with their peers and ask questions from knowledgeable instructors without fear of rejection or criticism. Cost is \$350, supplies and lunches included, register online.

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

Understanding delayed planting decisions in Michigan

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 6, 2019

When it rains it pours! This article walks through options available to producers who have not yet planted their field crops because of poor planting conditions.

Southwest Michigan field crop update – June 6, 2019

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 6, 2019

Small windows—not a great way to build a house with a view or to plant crops, but that is the hand that southwest Michigan growers were dealt this season.

Prevented planting acres and cover crops

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 6, 2019

Consider cover crops to protect and build prevented planting acres.

To plant? Or not to plant?

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 6, 2019

That's the question of the week for corn producers in central Michigan.

2019 MSU Weed Tour scheduled for June 26

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 6, 2019

Participants can compare herbicide programs, evaluate weed management strategies and tour MSU research plots.

Field Crop Virtual Breakfast will discuss recommendations for planting soybeans in June

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 6, 2019

MSU Extension's Field Crop Virtual Breakfast continues June 13 with a discussion on planting soybeans in June featuring Mike Staton.

Using fungicides to suppress Fusarium head scab in wheat

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 5, 2019

Wheat fields are beginning to show signs of head emergence. This marks the time to consider applying fungicides to reduce the risk of head scab and leaf diseases.

Wet spring, wet soils, and wet hay...what should a dry hay producer do?

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 5, 2019

Tips for helping dry hay producers when faced with difficult harvest conditions.

Beginning Farmers DEMaND

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 4, 2019

Introducing the Beginning Farmers DEMaND (Developing and Educating Managers and New Decision-makers) series.

Late planted corn: should I change my seeding rates?

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 4, 2019

Since more than 60% of corn in Michigan has not been planted yet, many are asking if seeding rates should be changed. The short answer is no.

Michigan Wheat Program Field Day set for June 12 in Lansing

PUBLISHED ON JUNE 3, 2019

You can still register for this wheat field day that includes a walking tour at the Mason Research Farm.

A fun, free educational time at the Great Dairy Adventure

PUBLISHED ON MAY 31, 2019

The Great Dairy Adventure is a free, family-friendly event where visitors can learn about the Michigan dairy industry and enjoy dairy-related activities and food.

Southwest Michigan field crop update – May 31, 2019

PUBLISHED ON MAY 31, 2019

With drier weather in the forecast, growers must decide whether they will be able to get planted as soils dry out or consider other options this year.

Introducing the Crop Budget Estimator

PUBLISHED ON MAY 30, 2019

A Microsoft Excel-based tool

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