

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates December 2020

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.

Renewing Pesticide Applicator's License

Renewing pesticide applicator licenses continues to be a topic of concern for numerous farmers this year. MDARD has not opened up in-person testing yet, and with recent elevated COVID restrictions—and the recent announcement from president-elect Joe Biden—I suspect these may not be an option in early 2021 either. There are two ways to renew your Michigan pesticide applicator's license: taking a computer-based test through [Metro Institute](#) or obtaining enough RUP credits before the end of the calendar year. People I've been talking with are split in which approach they're taking. I caught wind that MDARD is working with Metro to make those computer-based tests possible remotely (i.e., they will proctor your test while you take it at home), but there is no timeline yet on that. Below are a few options to obtain plenty of credits this month.

[Thumb Ag Day](#) – Dec. 9., 8:30-11:00AM - 3 RUP Credits (Core, 1A), 2 CCA Credits – free

[Integrated Crop and Pest Management Update](#) – Dec. 16, 8:00-12:30 – 4 RUP Credits (Core, 1A), 4 CCA Credits – \$30 registration

[Great Lakes Fruit and Veg Expo](#) – Dec. 8-10, multiple times and credit opportunities each day

[MSU Extension Online Pesticide Training Course](#) – Taken at your own pace, estimated 8-12 hours to complete – 12 RUP credits (Core) - \$75 registration

COVID Precautions over the Holidays

The following infographics were created by the Ingham County Health department, but the information contained within are widely applicable. Some good information to keep in mind as extended families gather over the holiday season.

IF YOU TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19



With the increase in COVID-19 cases in our area, you might not hear from the health department right away. We ask everyone to follow these steps to help stop the spread.

Start isolating yourself right away. Stay home except for medical care. Let your employer know you have COVID-19.

Notify your close contacts so they can start to quarantine themselves.

- Close contacts = those who were within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes total in a 24 hour period, when the person was contagious.
- Contagious = starts 2 days before symptoms appear (or 2 days before positive test, if no symptoms), through the end of the isolation period.

You can resume normal activities when

- 10 days have passed since symptoms started (or test date if no symptoms),
- you are fever-free for 24 hours, (without fever-reducing drugs) &
- your symptoms have improved.



If you need an isolation or quarantine letter for your employer, you can call the health department @ (517) 887-4517.

Isolation vs. Quarantine

Isolation is for people with COVID-19. It lasts for at least ten days since symptoms started.

Quarantine is for people who have not tested positive for COVID-19. It lasts for 14 days since the person was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

CLOSE CONTACTS: QUARANTINE INSTRUCTIONS

Start quarantining right away if you are told you are a close contact.

Stay home except to get medical care. Close contacts of a positive case (<6 feet, 15+ minutes total) need to quarantine for 14 days from your last contact to COVID+ person while they were considered contagious and monitor for symptoms. If you develop symptoms, get tested.

You cannot test your way out of quarantine, however. Because the incubation period of this virus is long, close contacts need to stay home 14 days from your last contact, even if you receive a negative test result. Close contacts of the quarantined person do not need to quarantine. For example, if a child was exposed at school, the child's parents do not need to quarantine unless their own child tests positive for COVID-19.



CORONAVIRUS

ISOLATION QUARANTINE

WHO?

People who are sick or who tested positive

People who are not sick but were close contacts of those who are sick

WHAT?

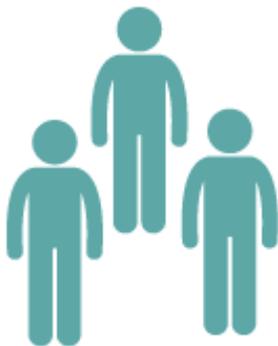
Stay home and keep distance from others

Stay home and keep distance from others

FOR HOW LONG?

At least 10 days
It may be longer depending on symptoms. You must also be fever-free for 24 hours and see symptoms improve. People with severe illness or those who have a compromised immune system should isolate for 20 days.

Always 14 days
A negative COVID-19 test does not end the quarantine.



WHAT IS A CLOSE CONTACT?

A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of a person who is sick for at least 15 minutes or more (can be cumulative) within a 24-hour period. The close contact can occur anytime during the sick person's isolation or two days before the person got sick. This is regardless of face mask use.



Molecular Testing for Resistant Weeds

Recently MSU's new molecular weed scientist, Dr. Eric Patterson, and Erin Hill, weed diagnostician and cover crop specialist, were awarded a North Central Integrated Pest Management grant to begin bringing molecular testing for herbicide resistance in weeds into the MSU Plant & Pest Diagnostics clinic. This will allow for in-season results that we hope will help improve knowledge on weed management options within the season.

While this first phase is on-going this winter, they are also planning for the next step, which is testing this process and increasing its efficiency in the 2021 growing season. They need YOUR HELP in getting fresh leaf tissue samples as soybean fields are scouted this coming season (especially in fields where resistance has not yet been confirmed). They will be targeting the following weeds.

- Palmer amaranth
- Waterhemp
- Common ragweed
- Giant ragweed
- Maretail

Once samples are collected they will arrange to pick them up or specify a drop-off location based on convenience to the sampler. Results would be available in <1 week, ideally a couple of days, from the time they are received and would be sent back to the sampler (or other party involved in applications) via email.

If you, or someone in your company, are interested in participating in this pilot program, contact me (Eric Anderson) or send an email to Erin Hill (hiller12@msu.edu) with your name, business, and counties covered and they will follow up with further details.

Virtual Ag-Citing Field Trip Videos Now Available



The Ag-Citing Experience was developed in 1990 by MSU Extension home economist and nutrition educator Sally Carpenter, 4-H program coordinator Lynn Fiegel and community volunteer Linda Huckendubler. The event was in collaboration with the St. Joseph County Grange Fair and the St. Joseph County Farm Bureau. The program was designed to educate third graders in the county on where their food comes from along with promoting physical activity during a tour at the county fair. Not only did students learn about farm animals, they also learned about crops grown in the area.

This fun and exciting—I guess that would be ag-citing—experience has evolved through the years but remains true to its purpose. In the past 30 years, thousands of students and hundreds of teachers, tour guides, presenters and tractor drivers have participated and assisted MSU Extension in making memories that people still share today. For example, in 2019 alone, over 700 students and 160 teachers and chaperones from 11 different schools participated.

Generations now have been greeted by volunteers and Extension staff to help make the whole farm to table experience something they are sure to remember. MSU Extension community nutrition instructors also offer schools additional follow-up classroom education to increase knowledge of what is needed for their students to be healthy.

In 2020, the St. Joseph County Grange Fair, along with so many other fairs in Michigan, had to shutter its doors for the year due to COVID-19 pandemic concerns. In order to give third graders the opportunity to experience a taste of what they would have seen and heard, MSU Extension staff and a host of generous volunteers produced a virtual version of the Ag-Citing tour. Though references are made to a few crops grown primarily in southwest

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates - December 2020 - 6

Michigan, the majority of the content is widely applicable to youth and adults throughout Michigan and the Midwest who want to learn more about how farmers raise animals and crops and where their food comes from.

The videos are available free of charge in an [Ag-Citing Experience YouTube playlist](#) where closed captioning is also available. The main video, just under an hour long, will introduce you to all the major livestock species and types of crops grown for food and feed. Along with the main video, there are several short bonus features on topics including turning wool into clothing, taking a tour of a dairy farm, horses and horse care, and antique tractors. There is a virtual 4-H showcase where several young people show their animals like they would at a fair.

There are also two versions of a video describing how different animals are born or hatched—a shorter version and a longer one showing actual scenes of live births. After taking this virtual field trip, you will hopefully walk away with a sense of appreciation for all that farmers do to grow the crops and raise the animals that feed our country and our world.

If you have any questions about accessing the videos or about any of the content in the videos, contact Eric Anderson (eander32@msu.edu).



Enjoy some comic relief from Nurse Betty, otherwise known as Betty the Cow, during the 2020 Virtual Ag-Citing Experience video. Photo by Betty Meyer.

MSU Extension Field Crops Team Needs Your Input

Every 3 years, the statewide MSU Extension Field Crops work team asks Michigan field crop producers to help us understand the current needs and interests of their industries. We do this by preparing a short questionnaire and seeking responses from farmers, processors, ag suppliers and support organizations.

We use the information we receive from throughout Michigan to assure that current MSU Extension programs are on-track, and to develop new programs that will be meaningful to the people we serve. Your individual response will be confidential.

This year, to encourage participation, you have the option to be included in a drawing for a \$100 gas gift card. Three cards will be awarded to randomly selected people that complete the online questionnaire and 'opt-in' for the drawing.



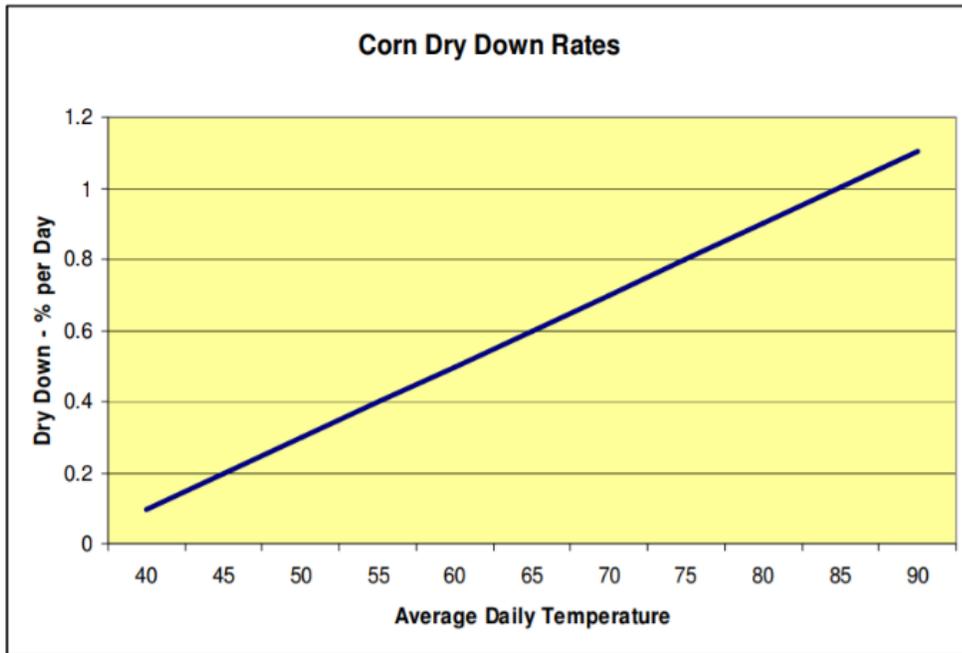
To complete the online MSU Extension statewide field crops needs assessment survey, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/2020FieldCropSurvey> or use this QR code to access it on your smart phone. **Note: You will likely be seeing this request from your commodity groups and other places—you only need to fill out the survey once...“vote early, vote often” doesn't apply here. ;)**

Crop and Weather Update

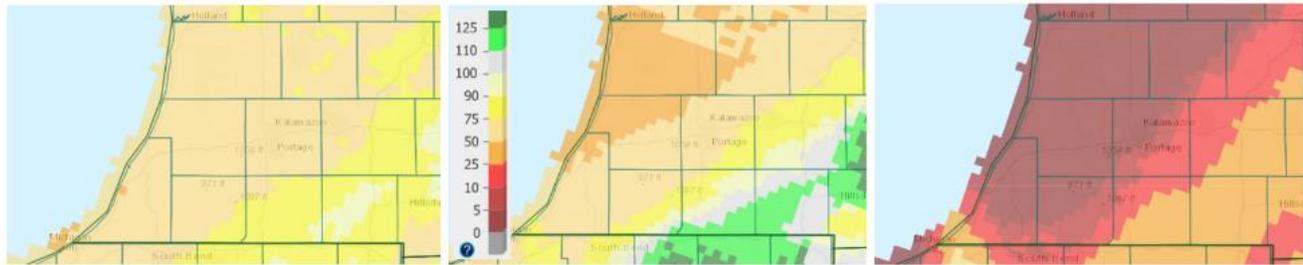
According to the latest USDA Crop Progress report released Nov. 30, corn harvested for grain was 95 percent complete in Michigan with a reported moisture content of 18%. Winter wheat was fully emerged with a reported 73% of the crop rated in good to excellent condition. The weather this past month has been nearly ideal to get crops out of the field with below-normal precipitation for most of the region. For those few straggling fields, the coming week should provide According to research in Indiana, corn dry down rate = (Average Daily Temperature X 0.0202) – 0.7133. The average temperature for this coming week is forecasted at 33 F which means we can

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates - December 2020 - 7

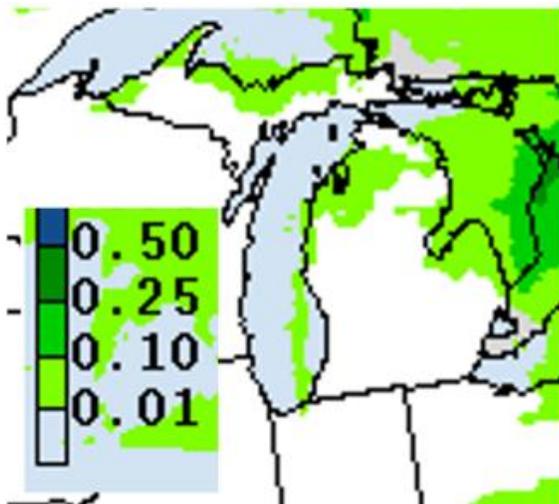
expect little to no dry down. The forecast for the rest of December calls for above-normal temperatures with no definitive direction on precipitation.



Corn dry down rate estimates. Graph courtesy of [Zach Fore, DuPont Pioneer field agronomist](#).

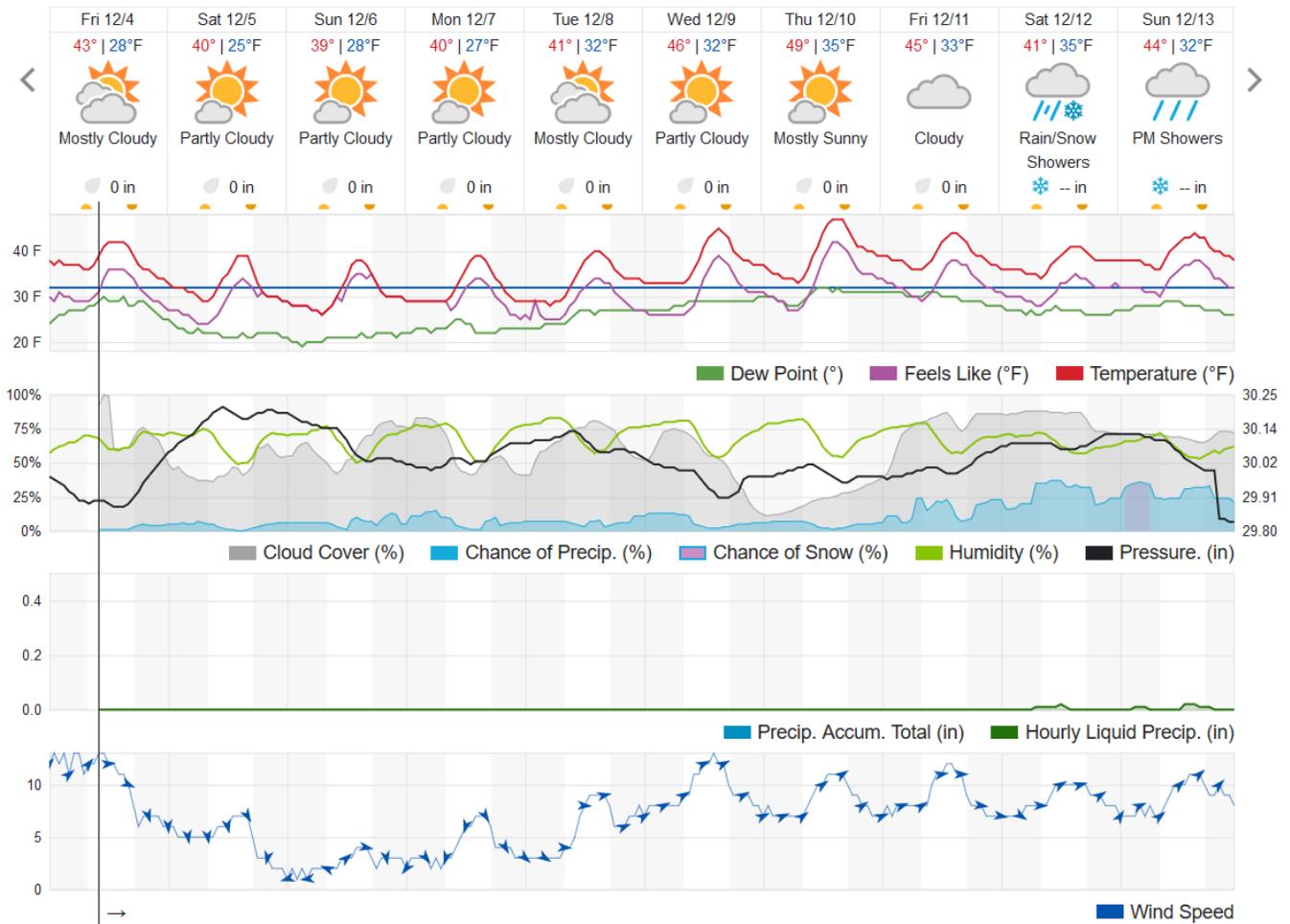


Precipitation percentage of normal for the last 30 days (left), 14 days (center) and 7 days (right). It's been a good fall for getting field work done...let's hope we have sufficient snowfall this winter to replenish soil moisture deficits from this past season.

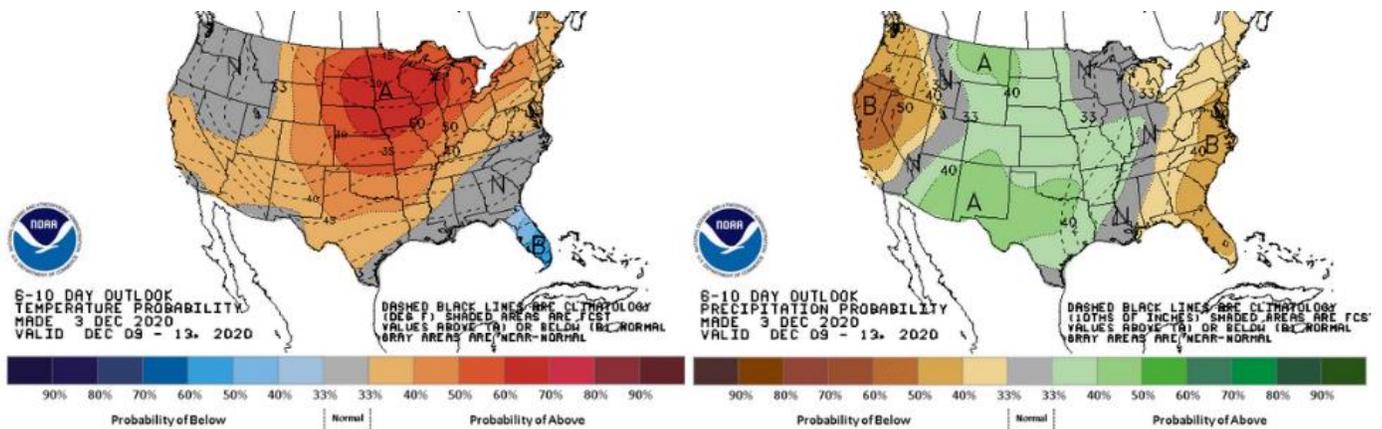


No precipitation in the forecast for Dec. 4-11.

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates - December 2020 - 8



The 10-day weather forecast for Kalamazoo according to wunderground.com.



The 6-10 day outlook (Dec. 9-13) for temperature (left) and precipitation (right). The 8-14 day outlook is similar with a lower chance of warmer weather. The 3-4 week and 30 day outlooks both point to a warmer-than-normal December.

Calendar

Titles are clickable links to online content when highlighted and underlined

- December 8-10** [GLExpo](#). Great Lakes Fruit and Veg Expo will be held online this year. One registration gives you access to numerous sessions on a wide variety of topics. RUP credits offered for a large number of sessions. Visit the website to register or for more information.
- December 11** [CFAP 2 Signup Ends](#). Contact your local USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff members for assistance.
- December 16** [Virtual Integrated Crop and Pest Management Update](#). Normally held at the MSU Livestock Pavilion, this program for agribusiness and farmers features 2021 MSU Extension crop and pest management recommendations, on-farm research data and pesticide certification credits. Cost is \$30, register online. Contact Eric Anderson (eander32@msu.edu or 269-359-0565) for more information.
- January 28** [Purdue's Crop Management Workshop](#). 8:00AM-12:35PM. Looks like a good line-up of Purdue specialists and topics. No Michigan RUP credits offered, only CEU's. \$50 registration.
- January 29** [SW MI Virtual Pest and Crop Management Update 2021](#). 9:00AM-12:00PM. Registration is \$15 including a 2021 MSU Weed Guide compliments of your Michigan commodity check-off programs. Three RUP and CCA credits will be available.

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

VIRTUAL PEST AND FIELD CROP MANAGEMENT UPDATES FOR 2021

PUBLISHED ON DECEMBER 2, 2020

The in-person field crop meetings offered each winter by MSU Extension have moved to online delivery for 2021.

VIRTUAL AG-CITING EXPERIENCE VIDEOS GIVE YOUTH A GLIMPSE INTO WHERE OUR FOOD COMES FROM

PUBLISHED ON DECEMBER 2, 2020

Virtual Ag-Citing Experience videos will show people—young and old, in classrooms or home schools or well past school—how farmers raise animals and crops and give them a sneak peek into where our food comes from.

FINAL CALL TO REGISTER FOR 2020 VIRTUAL INTEGRATED CROP AND PEST MANAGEMENT UPDATE

PUBLISHED ON DECEMBER 1, 2020

This is the final call to register for the Virtual Integrated Crop and Pest Management Update for Agribusiness to receive your 2021 Field Crops Weed Guide in time for the meeting.

LARGEST AGRICULTURE TRAINING PROGRAM FOR MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS IN U.S. CONTINUES EXPANSION

PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 30, 2020 Heroes to Hives announces state partnerships to bring beekeeping education to more veterans.

EVALUATING SEEDLING WHEAT STANDS THIS FALL

PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 30, 2020

Before snow blankets the fields, evaluating wheat fields may be helpful.

FALL WHEAT EMERGENCE AND THE VERNALIZATION PROCESS

PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 30, 2020

If late planted wheat doesn't emerge, can it still survive, vernalize and produce good yields?

Dairy Margin Coverage Sign-up Through December 11, 2020

November 24, 2020 | Stanley Moore & Marianne Buza

Connecting with the consumer is an important part of marketing farm commodities.

USDA GRANT PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY

PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 23, 2020

Grant will support the development of an online tool for farmers to improve water quality.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS WITH YOUR FIRST REAL CHRISTMAS TREE

PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 20, 2020

Consider these tips for relieving the stress of buying and setting up your farm-grown Christmas tree this holiday season.

3 EASY STEPS TO MAKE YOUR REAL CHRISTMAS TREE LAST THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 20, 2020

Fresh tree, fresh cut and fresh water are essential in keeping your real Christmas tree fresh and hydrated throughout the holiday season.

PESTICIDE COURSE OFFERED FOR PRIVATE AND COMMERCIAL PESTICIDE APPLICATORS

PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 17, 2020

New online course for restricted use pesticide applicators offering 12 credits.

MICHIGAN PESTICIDE APPLICATOR RECERTIFICATION CREDITS AVAILABLE ONLINE BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR

PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 17, 2020

Growers needing a few more credits to renew their pesticide applicator license have some online opportunities available.

NEW EDITION OF "PREPARE YOUR FARM FOR TAX SEASON NOW" WEBINAR TO BE HELD ON DEC. 1

PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 12, 2020

Get your feet wet about farm recordkeeping and taxes in this one-hour webinar. Take action and stop stressing.

Beginning farmers DEMaND: resources for new farm managers

November 12, 2020 - Jon LaPorte

For beginning farmers, knowing how to manage through roadblocks is often one of their greatest challenges.

Eric Anderson

Michigan State University Extension

Field Crops Educator - St. Joseph County

612 E. Main St., Centreville, MI 49032

(269) 359-0565 (Home Office)

(269) 467-5511 (Extension Office)

eander32@msu.edu
