

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates April 24, 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.

Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program for Farmers and Ranchers Affected by COVID-19

Farmers and ranchers will soon be eligible for Economic Injury Disaster Loans, in anticipation of the \$484 billion aid relief bill passing the House and being signed into law this week. The EIDL program provides an emergency grant of up to \$10,000 for small businesses suffering a loss of revenue because of COVID-19. [Farm Commons](#), a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering farmers to resolve their own legal vulnerabilities within an ecosystem of support, is hosting a webinar to explain the specifics of eligibility and how to submit an application through the Small Business Administration. Issues with how the program has performed over the past few weeks will also be in the discussion. This is a valuable opportunity, especially for farms unable to receive a Paycheck Protection Program forgivable loan. They will discuss how EIDL works with other relief options, too. (This webinar is in anticipation of the \$484 billion aid relief bill passing the House and being signed into law today.)

Monday, April 27th, 4pm EDT

[Register in advance for the Monday, April 27th date at this link.](#)

Also, the **same webinar** will be held on Wednesday, April 29th, 4pm EDT

[Register in advance for the Wednesday, April 29th date at this link.](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar. This webinar will be recorded and available on demand for those that cannot attend or if we reach capacity: Just click the registration link at any time to watch the recording. We will also live stream the event over Facebook.

Check their [website](#) and podcast for more information about farm law and COVID-19.

MSU Extension Farm Stress Program

Farmers can now access counseling with licensed therapists via teletherapy. [Michigan State University Extension's Farm Stress Program](#) is now equipped to connect farmers experiencing stress and mental health issues with online counseling. Through this pilot project, MSU Extension can link farmers with a licensed mental health therapist via teletherapy. What is online counseling? [Online counseling or teletherapy](#) provides mental health and counseling services through the internet rather than in-person. Traditional therapy is typically conducted during face-to-face meetings in an office. Teletherapy is a counseling session that is completed through video chat between mental health care providers and clients. This advanced approach provides flexibility for people to access behavioral health supports in the comfort of their own environment. Even with the current “Stay Home, Stay Safe” executive order in Michigan, farmers can access behavioral health services.

The pilot project does have funding limitations. Primary insurance plans with behavioral health coverage will be billed to offset costs. Those without insurance or without behavioral health coverage still qualify for participation. Farmers will be supported on a first come first serve basis while funding is available. Farming is a demanding and

stressful occupation. There are characteristics and demands of the agricultural industry that are unique to farmers. Through this partnership, therapists will have a connection with the agricultural community and an understanding of farming practices and lifestyle.

There are two ways farmers can access services with the pilot project. You can reach out to [Eric Karbowski](#), MSU Extension farm stress educator, at 989-317-4079 or karbows8@msu.edu, or self-refer for services by calling [866-852-4001](tel:866-852-4001). Please note that self-referrals must state “MSU Extension Teletherapy” to qualify for the pilot project.

Cost of Compost Production Information Needed

A colleague of mine within Extension is working on a project to better understand the cost of producing compost on agricultural operations. He would like to talk to farmers and other operators who are generating compost regardless if they are using it in their own cropping systems, giving it away, or selling it to others. He is looking for some basic information including costs associated with equipment (tractor/loader, windrow turner, bagger, etc.), operations, shipping, etc. If you produce compost and can help provide this information, please contact Charles Gould at gouldm@msu.edu or (616) 994-4547

Deer Damage Permit Guidance

Earlier this spring, MSU Extension worked with regional Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff and others to produce a webinar recording on deer management. The recording is available here. Part of the Q&A session that followed included a discussion of how farmers can quickly obtain deer damage kill permits during the growing season before crop damage is extensive. Though applications are required to go through your regional DNR wildlife biologist, there are some things you can prepare ahead of time to speed up the process if you do need to apply for a permit.

First, keep records of pertinent information that will be required for the permit paperwork. Michigan DNR wildlife biologist Ken Kesson says: “To facilitate the permitting process those requesting permits should have the following information available when calling: the property tax ID numbers for properties they wish to use permits on; a shooter list with license numbers, address and contact information for proposed hunters; photographs clearly showing damage; a description of damage and any other information that will be useful in evaluating the request (i.e. summary of last year’s hunting efforts, history of receiving permits, damage estimates, population comments, how this impacts your operation).”

Second, you need to know who your wildlife biologist is. The three covering most of the counties represented by this readership are: [Ken Kesson](#) (269-244-5928) covering Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph and Branch Counties; [Don Poppe](#) (269-673-2430) covering Allegan, Van Buren and Kalamazoo Counties; and [Randy Heinze](#) (269-795-3280) covering Barry, Eaton, and Calhoun Counties. You need to contact your biologist to initiate the process of determining the extent of the damage and the potential need for a depredation permit.

A few things to keep in mind (from Ken Kesson):

- Applicants for either program (in-season or out-of-season permits) must have permission from any landowners listed on the parcel ID section of the application to manage deer hunting on listed lands from the actual landowner(s).
- There is no shooting and leaving permitted under any DNR issued deer population control permits. [The meat must be utilized by someone.]
- Hunters should be aware of and follow all deer hunting regulations, as if in the regular season, when using out of season permits.

We in Extension are working with DNR to make some helpful resources available to inform you and streamline the process of applying for permits. I will write more about this in a future newsletter. If you have questions, feel free to reach out to me or to one of the regional DNR biologists directly.

USDA Reports Record Enrollment in Key Farm Safety-Net Programs

Producers signed a record 1.77 million contracts for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2019 crop year, which is more than 107 percent of the total contracts signed compared with a 5-year average. USDA also reminds producers that June 30 is the deadline to enroll in ARC and PLC for the 2020 crop year.

Producers interested in enrolling for 2020 should contact their FSA county office. Producers must enroll by June 30 and make their one-time update to PLC payment yields by September 30. FSA attributes the significant participation in the 2019 crop year ARC and PLC programs to increased producer interest in the programs under the 2018 Farm Bill and to an increase in eligible farms because of the selling and buying of farms and new opportunities for beginning farmers and military veterans with farms having 10 or fewer base acres. Enrollment for 2019 ended March 16.

USDA Service Centers, including FSA county offices, are open for business by phone only, and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

For more information on ARC and PLC, download the [program fact sheet](#) or the [2014-2018 farm bills comparison fact sheet](#). Online ARC and PLC election decision tools are available at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc. To locate the nearest USDA Service Center, visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

Black Cutworm and Armyworm Report

Since I am not able to currently do my own moth trapping, I am relying on my Purdue counterparts to provide us with an estimate of if/when we can expect peak flights of two of our main early-season pests: black cutworm and true armyworm. We are not concerned with absolute numbers (remember, Purdue uses Hartstack traps which capture large numbers of moths) but rather with relative timing of peak flight times. We can use this to estimate when we need to begin scouting for larval damage. The key is that black cutworm female moths look for dense broadleaf vegetation to lay eggs (Ex. purple deadnettle, dandelion, chickweed) while armyworm females prefer grasses (Ex. wheat, cereal rye). If your fields have been plowed or burned down before we experience these peak flights, they have a much lower risk of having larval feeding damage later.

By the way, Purdue's crop entomologist John Obermeyer noted that the freezing temperatures we experienced over the past week or so were unfortunately not enough to kill off these early-season pests.

Black Cutworm	Wk 1 4/2/20- 4/8/2020	Wk 2 4/9/20- 4/15/2020	Wk 3 4/16/20- 4/22/2020
Allen	1	1	1
Allen	2	3	0
Allen	6	2	4
Elkhart	7	12	5
Fulton	0	0	1
Jasper	0	0	0
Jasper	12	11	12
Lake	60*	35*	26*
Lake	4	22*	6
Lake	5	21*	6
LaPorte	6	9	23*
Marshall			
Newton	0	4	4
Porter		1	0
Pulaski			4
Pulaski	31*	28	
Stark			
St. Joseph	9	0	
St. Joseph	2	19	1
White	5	1	4
Whitley		7	
Whitley		13	



Armyworm	Wk 1 4/2/20- 4/8/2020	Wk 2 4/9/20- 4/15/2020	Wk 3 4/16/20- 4/22/2020
SIPAC	724	84	4
SEPAC	60	75	11
SWPAC	1162	308	56
PPAC	115	65	0
FPAC	974	347	57
DPAC	117	207	16
TPAC	225	wind dmg.	6
NEPAC	-	9	

Weather Update (in graphic form)

Growing degree day (GDD) accumulation is behind by about a week in the southwest region (Figure 1). According to Enviroweather stations in the region, on average we have accumulated 173 GDDs (base 41) since March 1 and 77 GDD (base 50) since April 1. We can expect to add another 55 GDDs (base 41) or 25 GDDs (base 50) from April 23rd to the 29th. As predicted, this past week brought colder than normal temperatures which not only impacted soil temps (Figure 2) but also the ability to dry out soils as quickly as many would have liked. The risk for soybean and any corn that got planted in mid-April centers around delayed emergence and imbibitional chilling—the damage of internal cell membrane structure in the seed due to imbibing (taking up) cold water as the seed germinates. Purdue’s Bob Nielsen [wrote recently in the Pest and Crop Newsletter](#) reminding us about the impact of cold soil temps on corn emergence and development. Soybean response is similar.

Rainfall accumulations this past week (Figure 3) ranged from 0.3” to 0.7” with a regional average of 0.5”. With high winds, soils did manage to dry out enough to get a lot of field prep work done and a small amount of planting. Thursday and Friday this week will provide the best weather conditions for herbicide applications with temperatures approaching 60 °F and low wind speeds (Figure 4). The next frontal system will approach early morning Saturday which will bring our next chance of rain along with more high winds over the weekend. Depending on weekend rainfall totals, Monday may provide another opportunity for field work before another dose of high winds with chances of precipitation during the middle of next week. The precipitation forecast through the end of the month predicts 1.5-2.0 inches of rain to begin Saturday morning and continue on and off through next Wednesday (Figure 5).

Temperatures are expected to remain cooler than normal for the end of April and first week of May (Figure 6). Long-lead outlooks continue to show no input from La Niña or El Niño, and forecast guidance is lacking for May temperature and precipitation.

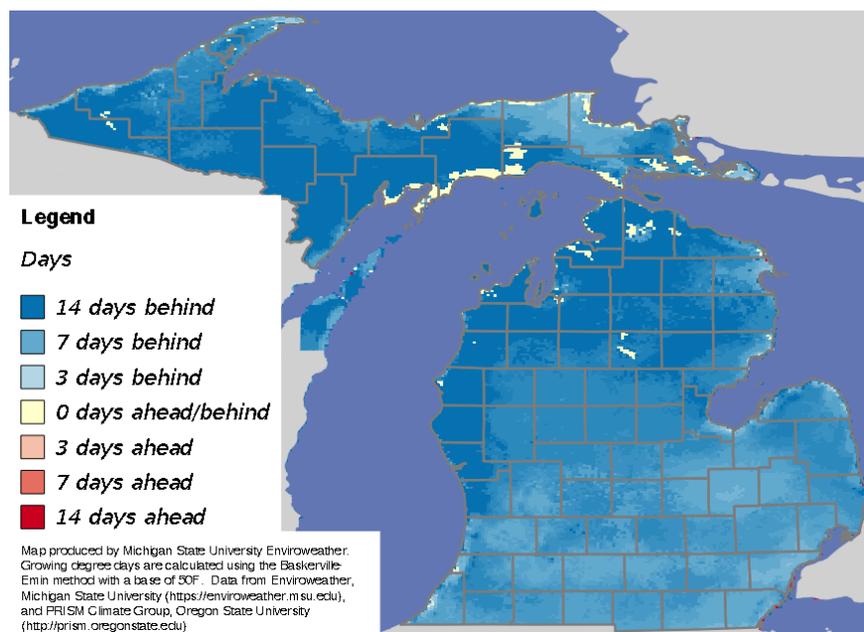


Figure 1. Growing degree days compared with normal from March 1 through April 23. With the cold weather this past week, we are now about a week behind normal.

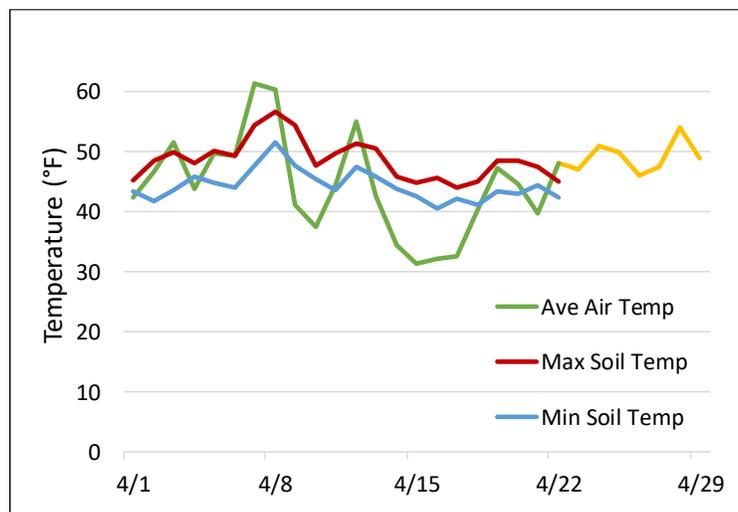


Figure 2. High and low soil temperatures (2 in depth) and average air temperature (yellow is projected) according to the Enviroweather station at Mendon. As predicted, average soil temps dropped down below 45 °F over the past week.

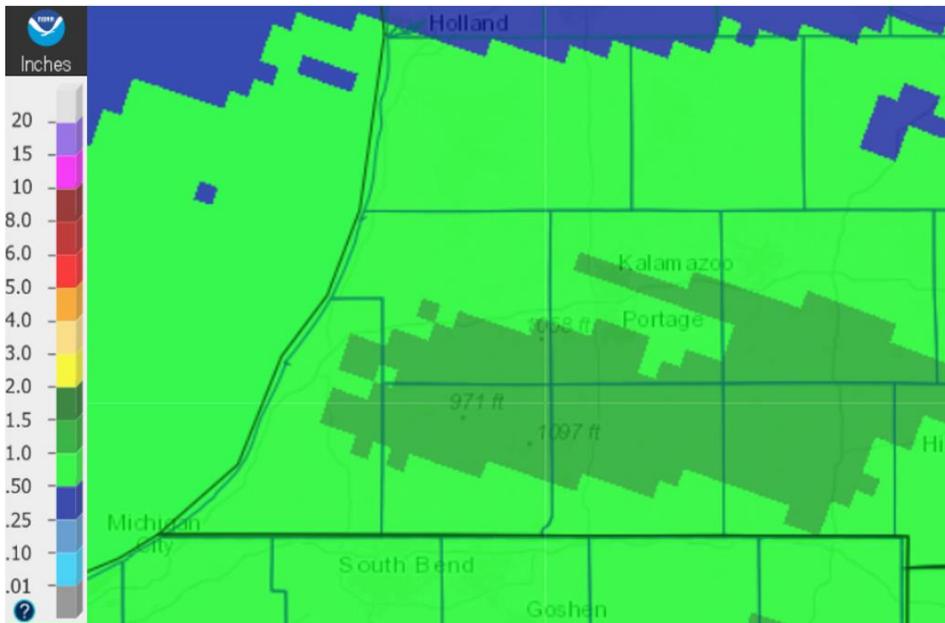


Figure 3. Precipitation totals over the past 7 days, reported on April 23rd. This is near normal for this time of year.

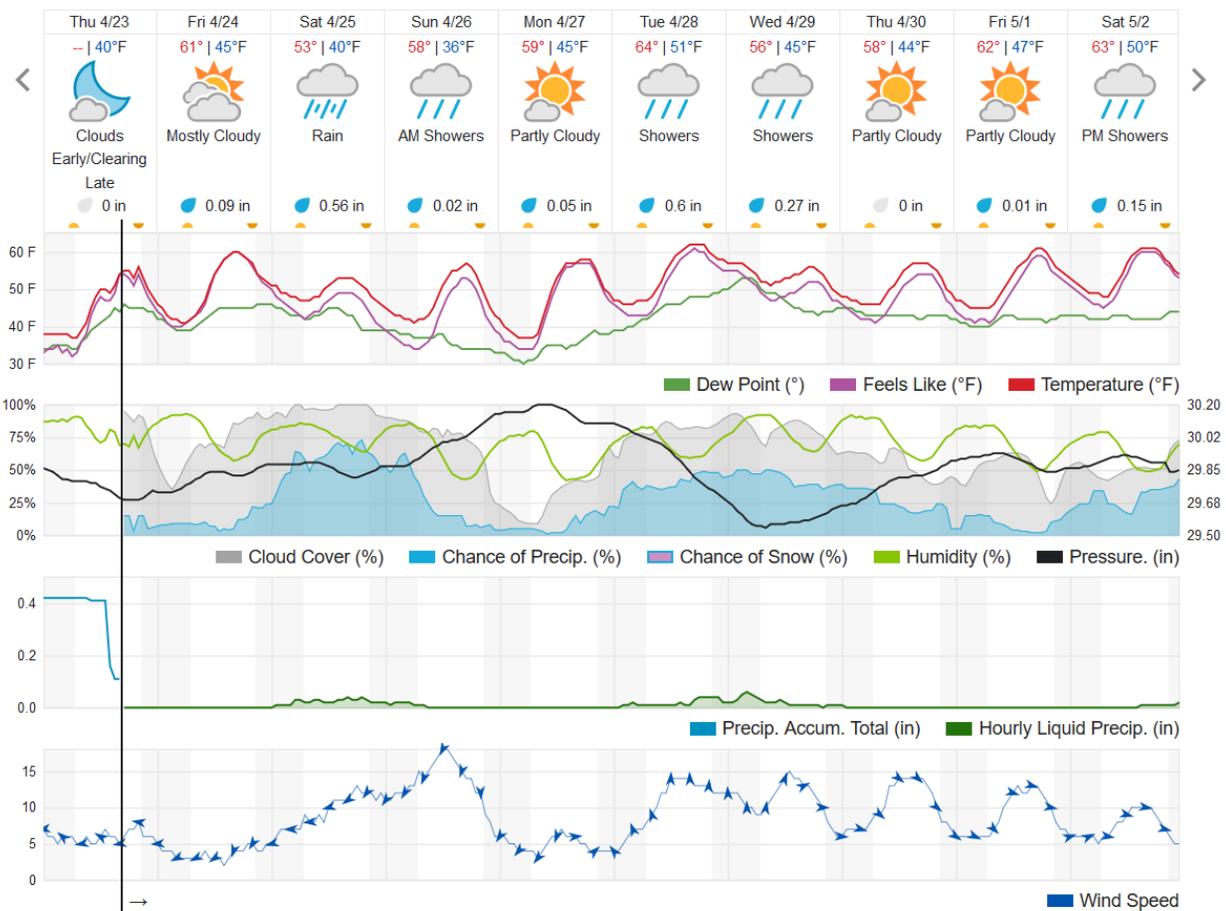


Figure 4. The 10-day forecast for Centreville as of April 23rd.

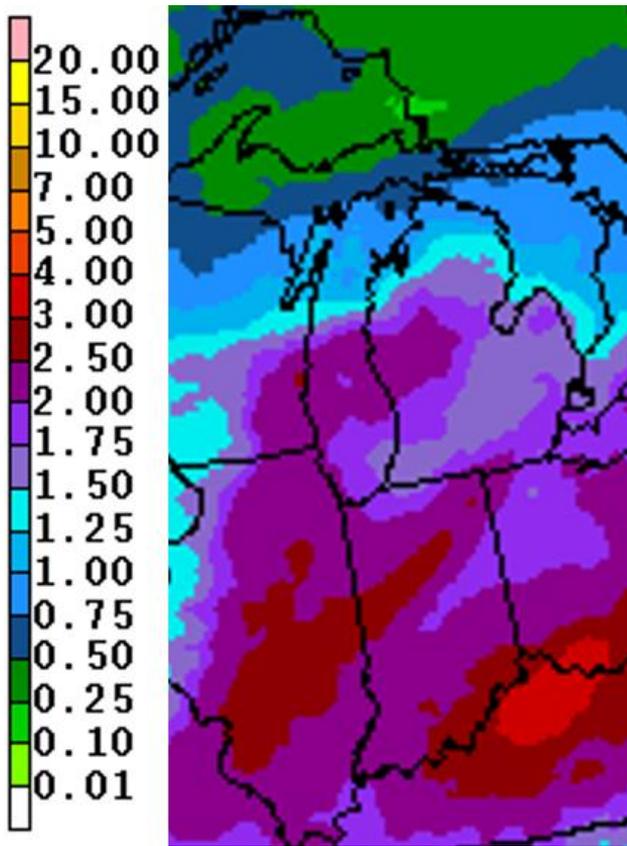


Figure 5. Precipitation forecast for April 23-30.

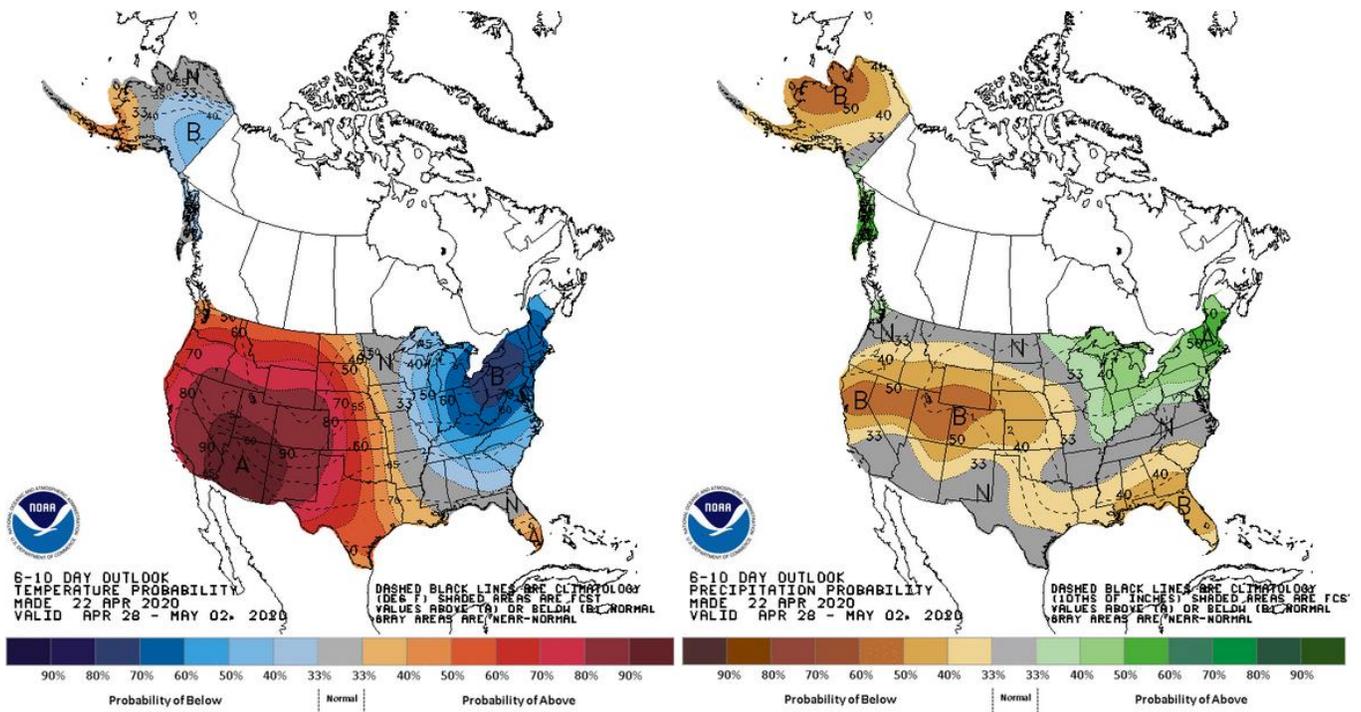


Figure 6. The 6-10 day outlook from Apr. 28 – May 2 for temperature (left) and precipitation (right). The 8-14 day outlook is essentially the same for temperature and turning to equal chances for precipitation. The monthly forecast for May shows no guidance currently for temp or precip.

Calendar

Titles are clickable links to online content when highlighted and underlined

- Apr 27/29** [Webinar on EIDL Program](#) 4:00 PM both dates. See the opening article above for details about the webinar and Farm Commons. [Register in advance for the Monday, April 27th date at this link.](#)
[Register in advance for the Wednesday, April 29th date at this link.](#)
- Apr 30** [MSU Extension Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Begins.](#) 7:00-7:30 AM. “Corn and soybean planting considerations” with Manni Singh. [Participants must sign up](#) to receive an email notification with instructions for joining the Virtual Breakfast. You only need to do this once and you will receive the Zoom link and call-in phone number, as well as weekly reminders every Wednesday.
- May 7** [MSU Extension Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Begins.](#) 7:00-7:30 AM. “Soil Fertility Issues” with Kurt Steinke. [Participants must sign up](#) to receive an email notification with instructions for joining the Virtual Breakfast. You only need to do this once and you will receive the Zoom link and call-in phone number, as well as weekly reminders every Wednesday.
- May 14** [MSU Extension Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Begins.](#) 7:00-7:30 AM. “Postemergence Weed Control” with Erin Burns. [Participants must sign up](#) to receive an email notification with instructions for joining the Virtual Breakfast. You only need to do this once and you will receive the Zoom link and call-in phone number, as well as weekly reminders every Wednesday.
- May 21** [MSU Extension Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Begins.](#) 7:00-7:30 AM. “Wheat Issues for 2020” with Dennis Pennington. [Participants must sign up](#) to receive an email notification with instructions for joining the Virtual Breakfast. You only need to do this once and you will receive the Zoom link and call-in phone number, as well as weekly reminders every Wednesday.
- May 28** [MSU Extension Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Begins.](#) 7:00-7:30 AM. “Dry Bean Planting” with Scott Bales. [Participants must sign up](#) to receive an email notification with instructions for joining the Virtual Breakfast. You only need to do this once and you will receive the Zoom link and call-in phone number, as well as weekly reminders every Wednesday.

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

Early-season weed control is important

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 23, 2020

Not starting with a clean field can reduce yields.

Novel coronavirus information for animal owners

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 23, 2020

There are many questions regarding animal and human health during the COVID-19 pandemic, however, there are animal health experts we can turn to for answers.

Interested in the latest MSU recommendations for planting corn and soybeans? Tune in to the Field Crops Virtual Breakfast!

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 22, 2020

Join the Field Crops Virtual Breakfast on April 30 as MSU’s Manni Singh discusses his latest recommendations for planting corn and soybeans.

Michigan pesticide applicators receive temporary emergency license extension

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 21, 2020

Governor Whitmer's Executive Order 2020-52, released April 17, 2020, grants certain pesticide applicators a temporary extension of their expired applicator's certificate during the current declared states of emergency and disaster.

Can cover crops control horseweed?

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 21, 2020

A new video highlights research at MSU looking at whether cover crops can control the growth of the weed horseweed (marestail).

Perennial grass that can feed your animals and provide flour for bread

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 20, 2020

New videos discuss intermediate wheatgrass, once only considered for pasture, as a potential multi-use cover crop.

2020 Status of herbicide-resistant weeds in Michigan

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 18, 2020

Screening submissions of Michigan's most notoriously herbicide-resistant weeds decline, yet new species continue to be submitted for screening as well as those from vegetable systems.

Southwest Michigan field crops update – April 17, 2020

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 18, 2020

As field activities begin to heat up, temperatures are expected to cool down. Here are some things to consider for the agriculture community.

Online review now available for private pesticide applicators

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 17, 2020

Private pesticide applicators looking to take the verbal test with MDARD now have access to an online review with Michigan State University Extension.

Pork from ractopamine-fed pigs is safe for consumption

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 17, 2020

Despite recent decisions by some US packers to process only ractopamine-free pigs, it is important to understand that meat products are safe for consumers when ractopamine is used according to label directions.

Weed control in winter wheat: What do I need to consider?

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 16, 2020

Timely herbicide applications are important for weed control in winter wheat.

Recording of webinar on managing corn and soybeans in on-farm storage is now available

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 16, 2020

Challenging harvest conditions last fall led to on-farm grain storage with higher than normal moisture content. A recorded webinar is now available providing information for maximizing grain quality and minimizing health and safety risks.

Getting "In the Weeds" on cover crops

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 16, 2020

Michigan Field Crops "In the Weeds" podcast fourth series will highlight farmer's stories about cover crop usage.

MSU Extension Farm Stress Program partners to connect farmers with mental health services

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 14, 2020

Farmers can now access counseling with licensed therapists via teletherapy.

What does a herd health plan look like?

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 13, 2020

A herd health plan is a wonderful tool to help you manage your livestock all year long.

Be on the lookout for a new pigweed species, purple amaranth

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 9, 2020

Purple amaranth was identified for the first time in Michigan in 2019.

Michigan has muscle when it comes to agriculture

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 9, 2020

Michigan farmers produce 300 different crops, providing Michigan residents with a safe, secure and abundant food supply.

Using the sorghum family as both cover crop and forage

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 8, 2020

A new cover crop video explores how dual-purpose use for sorghum cover crops can benefit both soil health and livestock.

Michigan hay supplies and prices for the spring season

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 8, 2020

Prices are holding higher than a year ago and supplies are tight for high quality hay, but lower quality hay can be found.

Getting “In the Weeds” on hemp production in Michigan

PUBLISHED ON APRIL 8, 2020

Michigan Field Crops “In the Weeds” podcast third series explores hemp production.

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