

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates September 1, 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.

Pesticide Applicator Re-Certification for 2021 – Think Ahead

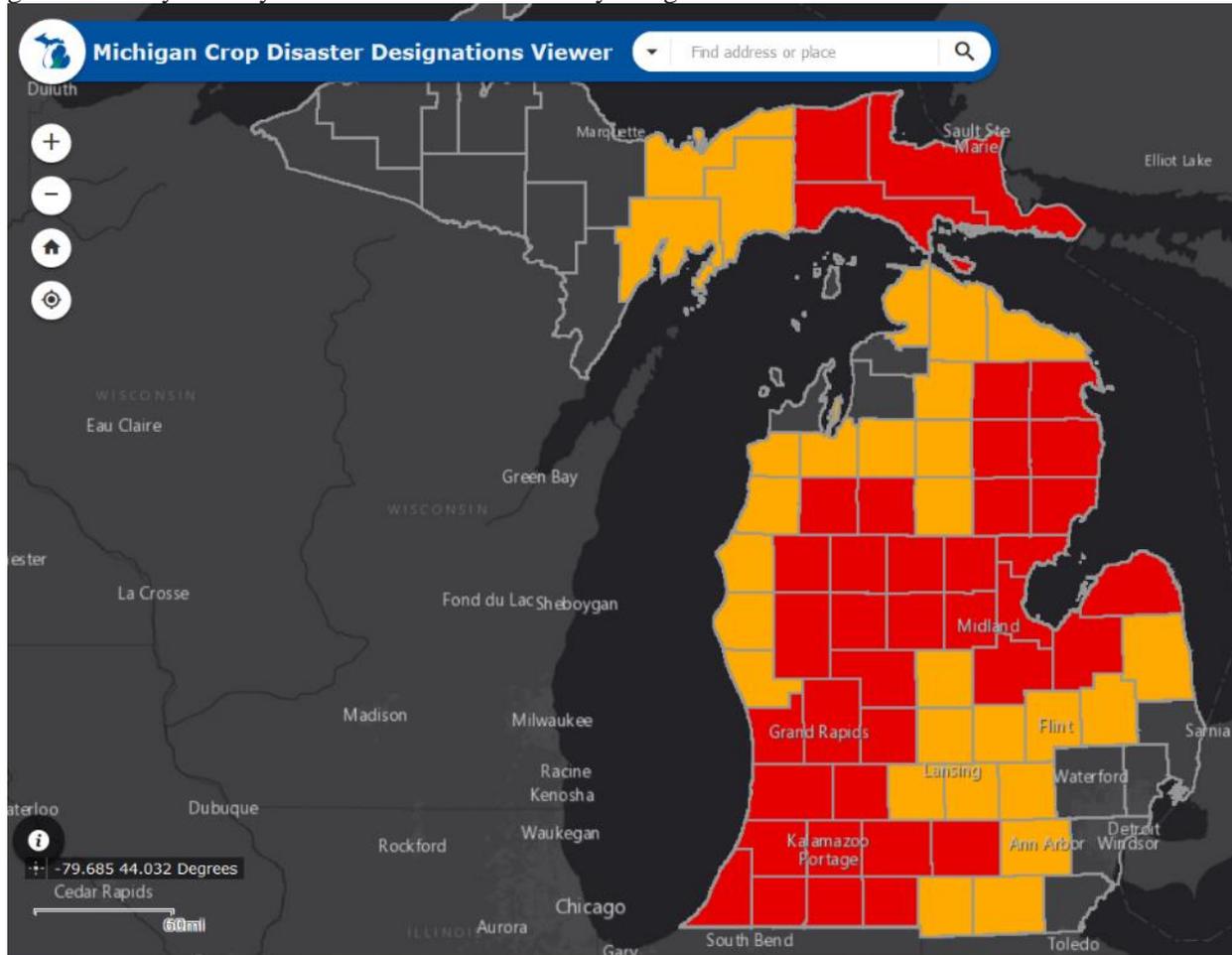
If your pesticide applicator license expires in December 2020, consider the advantage of recertifying by credit instead of by recertification exam, in case MDARD is still limiting in-person testing locations this winter. This was an issue at the start of the field season for people who expired at the end of 2019, because of the state shut down. To recertify by credit, private applicators need to accumulate 16 credits, while commercial applicators need 8 core credits and 8 credits per category (for most of us, its field crops). If you don't know your current credit count - I tend to forget mine - call the MDARD pesticide section at 1-800-292-3939 and a nice lady will look it up for you. From there, it's a matter of finding credits opportunities to finish out your total. For example, credits will be available from the upcoming MSU Virtual Field Days on for Cover crops on Sept 2 and Corn on Sept 9. The field days, offered on Zoom, are free [but you need to register for each](#). There are also a couple more [Field Crops Virtual Breakfasts](#) on Thursday mornings at 7AM, for 1 credit each. Also free! Visit the website to register.

Updated Tri-State Recs Released

We have heard over the course of the past couple of years that the Tri-State Recs, as they have come to be known as, are being updated based on current research findings using modern hybrids/varieties. Well, earlier this month the long-awaited update to the [Tri-State Fertilizer Recommendations for Corn, Soybeans, Wheat, and Alfalfa](#) bulletin was finally released. This has been a collaborative effort among soil fertility specialists from several land grant universities, including MSU. They have also produced a handy [Quick Reference Guide to Tri-State Fertilizer Recommendation Changes](#) in case you just want to know...well, what has changed. Be sure to take some time during the off season to familiarize yourself with the new recommendations that will likely result in slight changes to how you farm or consult for a long time to come.

MDARD Releases Crop Disaster GIS Viewer

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) recently released a tool to help growers easily identify which counties are currently designated a natural disaster area.



[Michigan Crop Disaster GIS Viewer](#). Primary disaster areas in red, adjacent/contiguous counties in orange.

Innovative Cropping Systems Videos Available

Earlier this summer, a team of MSU Extension and outreach staff hosted a virtual field day to highlight innovative approaches to enhance soil health. The program has been split into four videos with topics including:

- Relay Cropping
- Planting Cover Crop Mix
- Dry Beans
- Hasenick Brothers Farm

You can access individual videos (each about 12 minutes) from [this YouTube playlist](#).

Purdue Farm Management Podcasts

Have you ever gone searching for a YouTube video on a particular topic, only to find yourself a half hour later watching someone blow up a full can of paint using hair spray, talcum powder and a packet of Taco Bell hot sauce because you just had to watch “the next” video? Well, I found myself nosing around the Purdue Extension website and stumbled upon a [podcast series](#) that their farm management team produces. You should check it out—scroll through the past episodes and see if you find something useful for your operation. For example, I found one, “[Farm Succession: Feasibility of Adding a Family Employee](#)”, that looked interesting. You can access/subscribe to these in Google Play or the App Store.

One-Time PLC Yield Update Deadline

Farm owners have a one-time opportunity to update PLC yields of covered commodities on the farm, regardless of Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program election. The deadline to request a PLC yield update is **September 30, 2020**.

The updated yield will be equal to 90 percent of the average yield per planted acre in crop years 2013-2017 (excluding any year where the applicable covered commodity was not planted), subject to the ratio obtained by dividing the 2008-2012 average national yield by the 2013-2017 average national yield for the covered commodity. If the reported yield in any year is less than 75 percent of the 2013-2017 average county yield, then the yield will be substituted with 75 percent of the county average yield.

It is the owner’s choice whether to update or keep existing PLC yields. If a yield update is not made, then no action is required to maintain the existing PLC yield. An existing or updated PLC yield will be maintained and effective for crop years 2020 through 2023 (life of the 2018 Farm Bill). PLC yields may be updated on a covered commodity-by-covered commodity basis using FSA form [CCC-867](#).

For more information, reference resources and decision tools, visit farmers.gov/arc-plc. Contact your local Farm Service Agency Office for assistance - farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

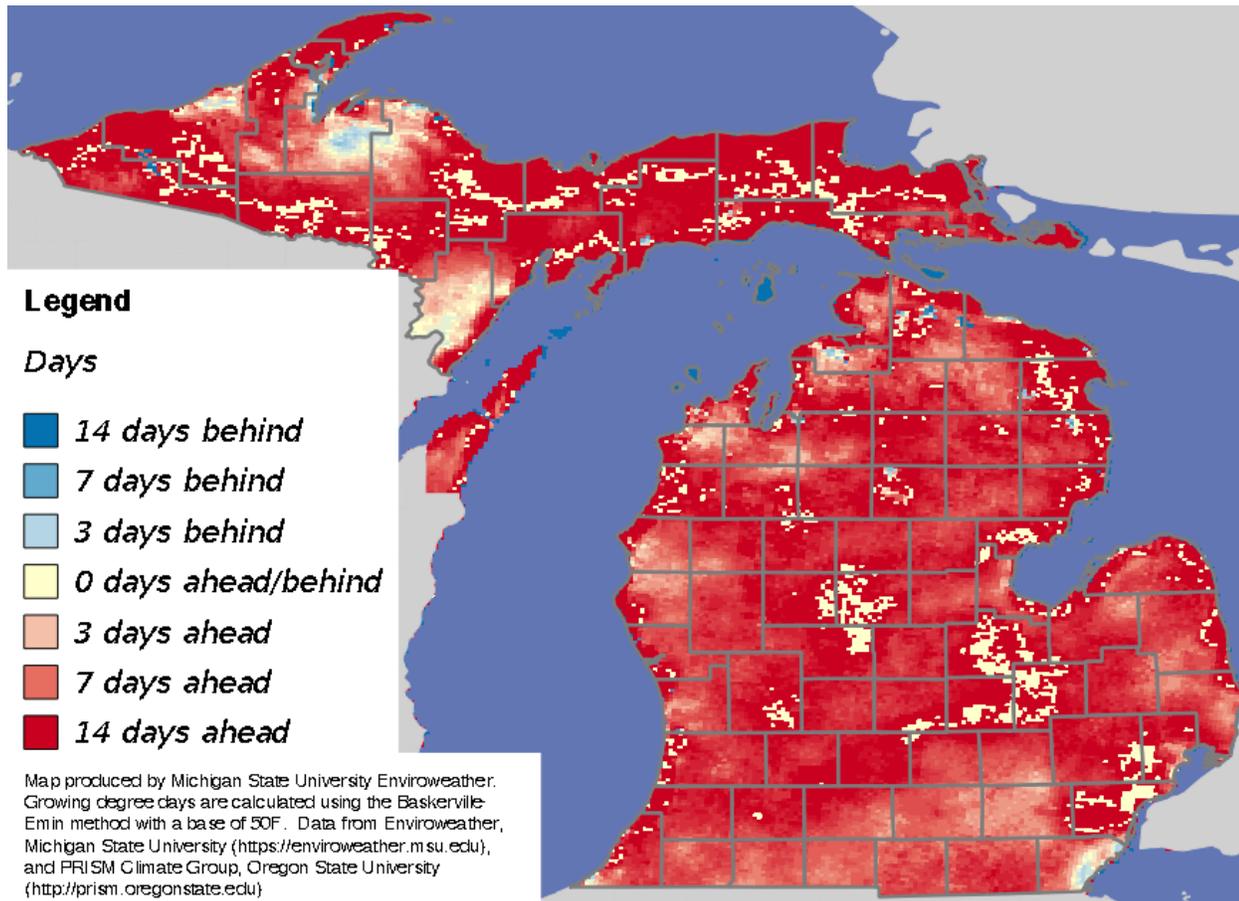
CFAP Deadline Approaching

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers that the deadline to apply for the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) is **Sept. 11, 2020**. This program provides direct relief to producers who faced price declines and additional marketing costs due to COVID-19. All eligible commodities, payment rates, and calculations can be found on farmers.gov/cfap.

FSA offers several options for farmers and ranchers to apply for CFAP, including a call center where employees can answer your questions and help you get started on your application. Customers seeking one-on-one support with the CFAP application process can call 877-508-8364 to speak directly with a USDA employee ready to offer general assistance. With less than two weeks before the deadline, now is the time to check out the resources on farmers.gov/cfap and contact the call center or your local office for your last-minute questions. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

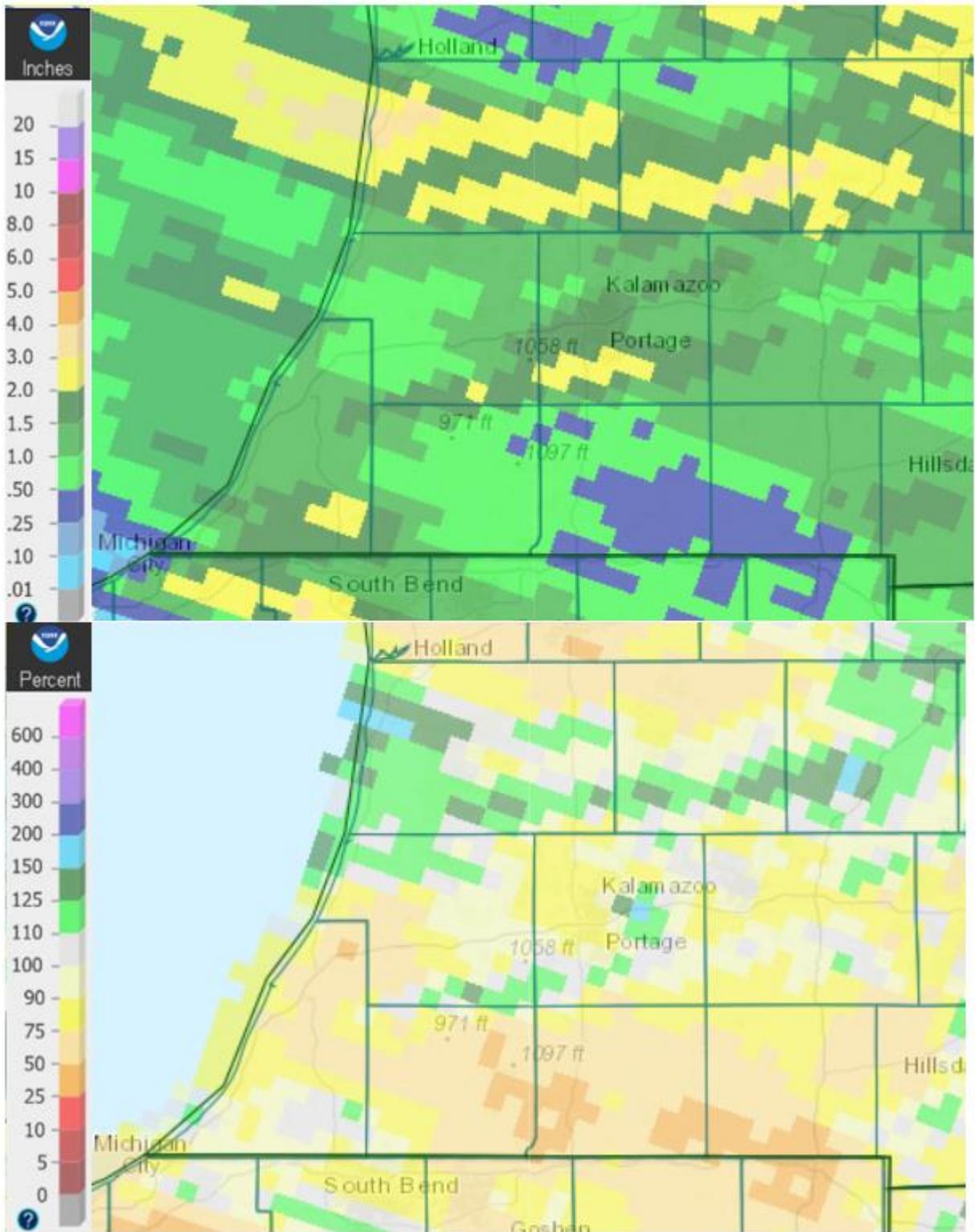
Weather

July was once again warmer than normal which follows the trend for most months thus far in 2020. We are currently 1-2 weeks “ahead of schedule” for crop development for those fields that are irrigated or have received adequate rainfall. Precipitation over the past week was relatively widespread and helped to alleviate the drought stress most parts of the region are experiencing. However, the month of July was dry overall, particularly for the southern tier of counties that received somewhere between 1-3 inches less rainfall than normal. The current version of the drought monitor was released prior to the rains last Friday, so we’ll see this coming Thursday whether that storm system affected the D0/D1 drought situation the entire region is under. The forecast does not call for more than an additional 0.5 inch of rain over the coming week except right along Lake Michigan. Both the 6-10 day and 8-14 day outlooks call for cooler and wetter than normal weather, although the outlook for September is for a return to warmer than normal conditions in the second half of the month.



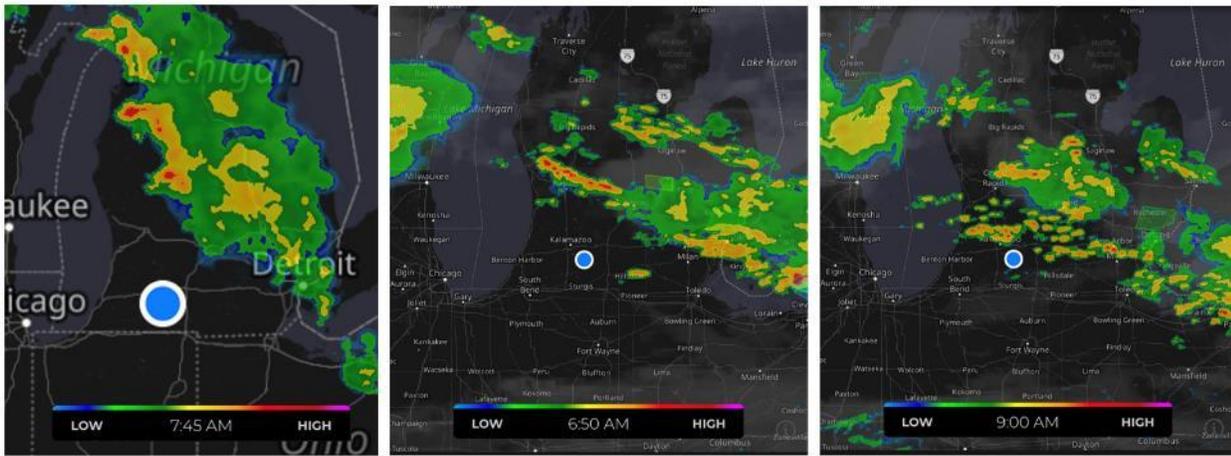
Growing degree day accumulation departure from normal for March 1 – August 30, 2020.

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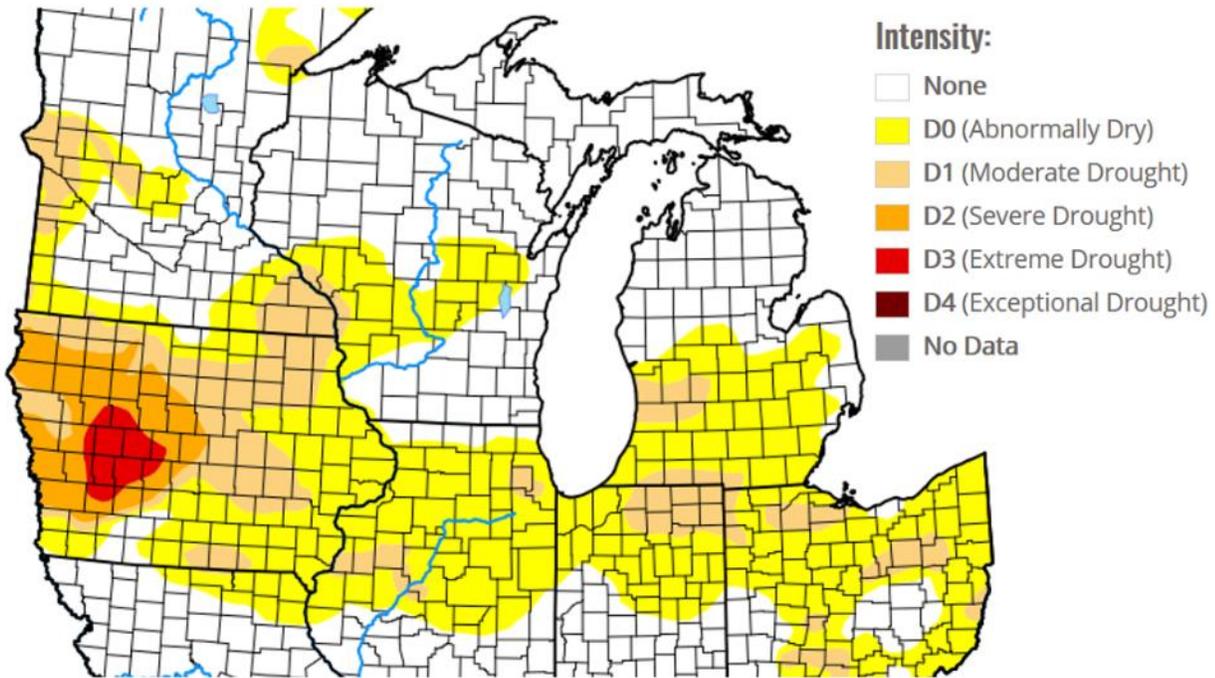


Precipitation totals for the last 14 days (top) and percent of normal for the month of August (bottom).

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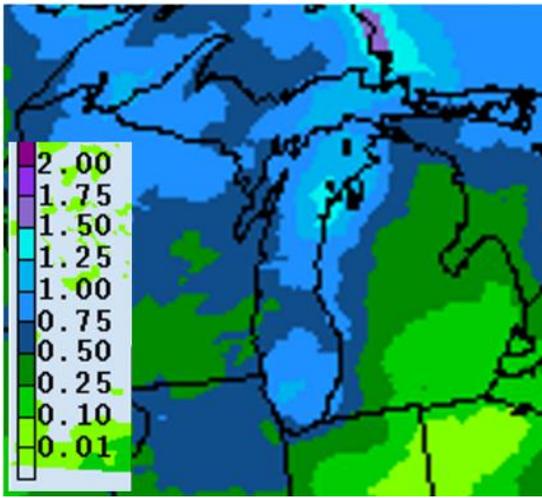


Radar from last Wednesday (left) and last Friday (center and right) showing stormfronts moving in a NW-to-SE trajectory. I was beginning to think there was something about southwest Michigan that made us undeserving of rain.

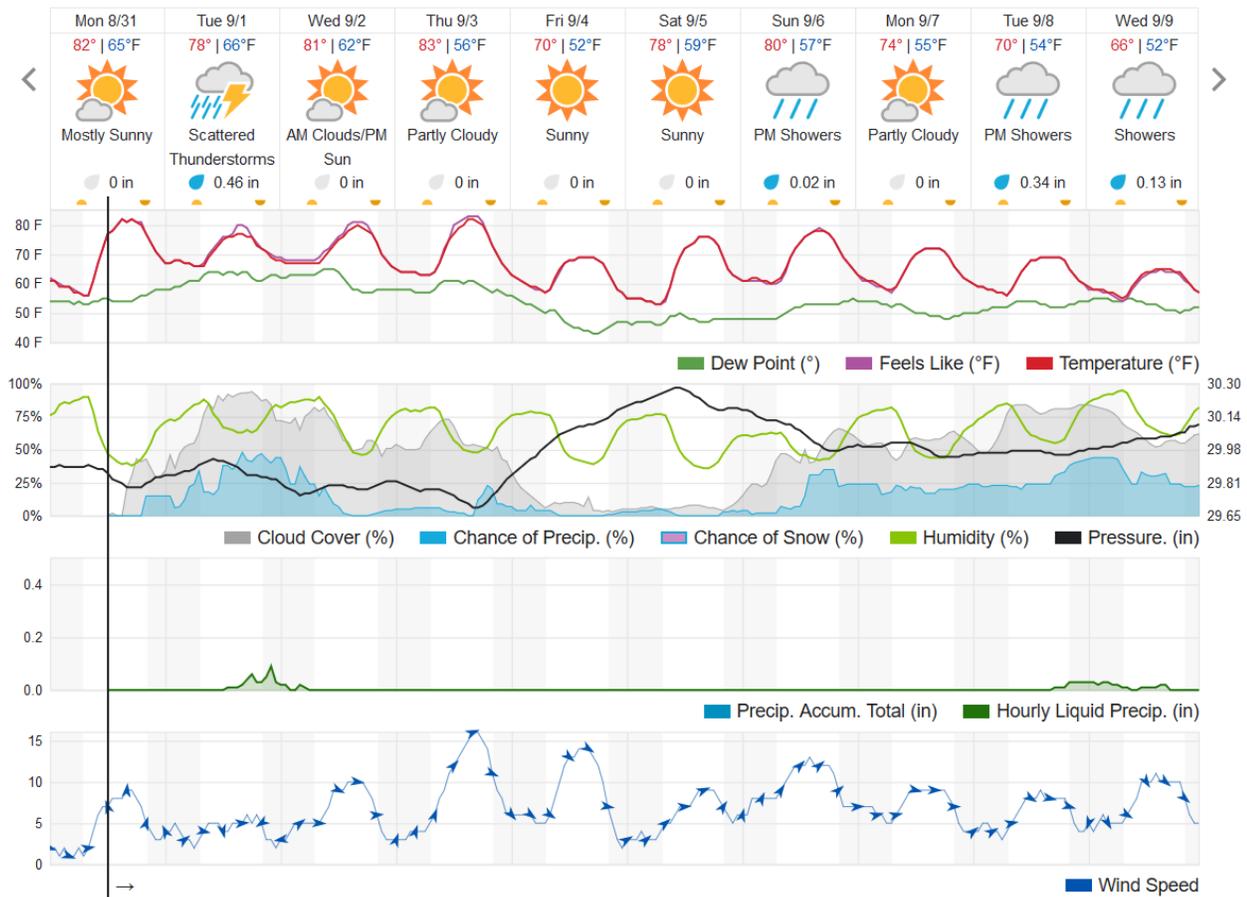


[Drought monitor](#) for the Midwest as of Aug. 25, released Aug. 27.

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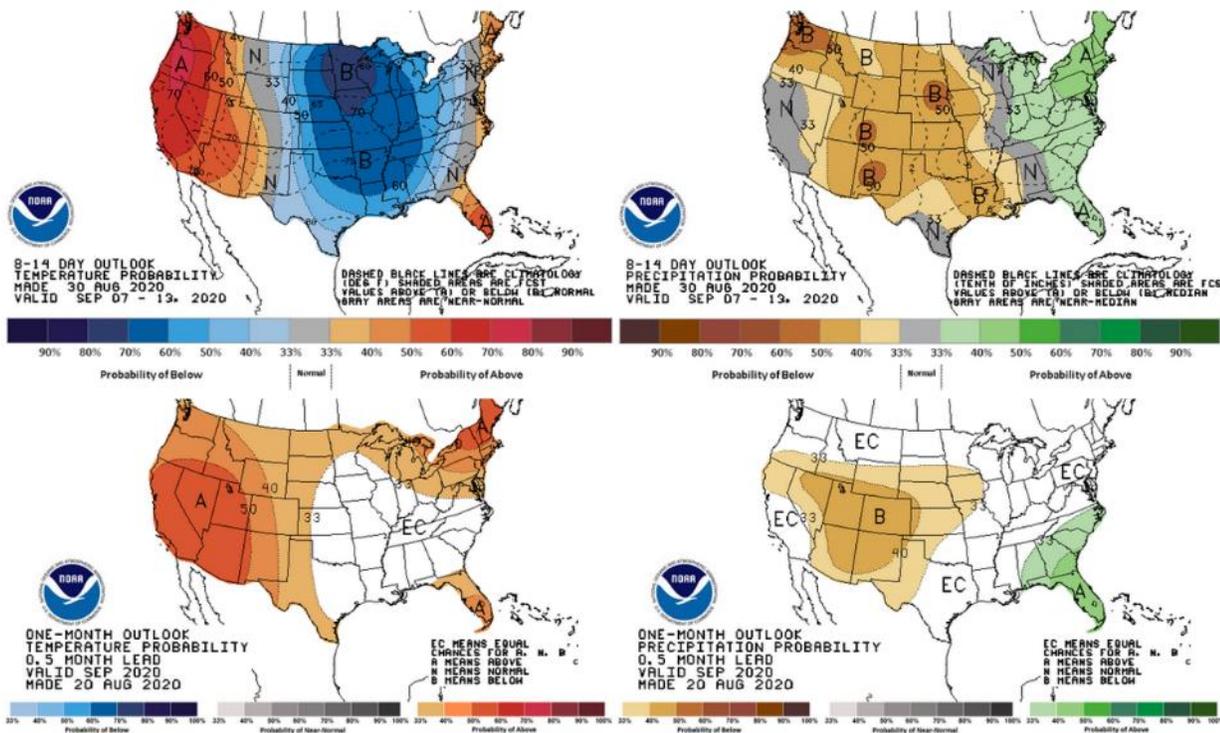


Precipitation forecast for Aug 31 – Sep 7.



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

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The 8-14 day (top) and 30 day outlook (bottom) for temperature (left) and precipitation (right).

Crop and Pest

Crops. According to the latest USDA Crop Report, 77% of corn had reached the dough stage as of Aug. 23 and 24% at dent. We’ve picked up an additional 210 heat units since then, but with cooler temps upcoming and only another 110 heat units forecasted for the coming week, black layer is still about a month away in earlier planted fields. Reports of tar spot in the upper canopy continue to come in from counties in the southwest, and with widespread rainfall late last week followed by cooler temps, we may see this disease ramp up in early September.

Soybeans are well into seed fill in most fields. Two fields sampled about a week ago were at mid-R5 (both fields planted 3rd to 4th week of May) and seeds filling pods at the lower nodes. Sudden death syndrome (SDS) was seen sporadically in both irrigated fields while white mold was found on roughly 1% of plants in one field. There is nothing to be done at this point with either disease, but monitoring whether fields have either disease will help you with variety selection and other future management decisions. If you have SDS in a given field that has not been sampled for soybean cyst nematode (SCN), consider sampling those fields this fall. Cost of testing is covered by Michigan’s soybean checkoff program and the [form can be found here](#).



White mold (left) and sudden death syndrome (SDS, right) in irrigated soybean on Aug. 21, 2020.

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In last week's MSU Extension Field Crops Virtual Breakfast session, wheat specialist Dennis Pennington talked about [wheat planting preparations for a successful 2021 season](#) - if you missed it, the recording is available at this link. Here are the key take-aways.

1. Select the **best varieties**. Dennis suggested consulting several sources, including company publications as well as results from variety trials such as [MSU's Wheat Performance Trials](#), and base variety selection on data from several years and locations. Yield should be the first factor in selection, but resistance to diseases such as fusarium head blight (FHB, a.k.a. head blight), Septoria, and rusts.
2. Plant **quality seed**, certified when possible, and when using bin run seed, be sure to clean, screen and treat seed and use the largest seed possible. Make sure the seed is free of disease. For example, Dennis said roughly 15,000 bu of wheat has been rejected this year in the thumb due to stinking smut which makes the wheat smell like dead fish.
3. **Planting early** was the biggest factor in high yields in data presented. The goal is to have 2-3 tillers before frost, and although Hessian fly is no longer considered a problem, planting after the Hessian fly-free date ensures planting too early, resulting in too many tillers. In our region, that is roughly Sept. 19-23.
4. When choosing a **seeding rate**, be sure to check the seed tag for number of seeds per pound, and increase the rate as planting is delayed into October (or later). Optimum seeding depth is 1"-shallower results in faster emergence, but moisture at the surface can be limited.
5. When considering **fall fertility**, make sure you are using recent soil test results and the new Tri-State recs based on Mehlich 3 testing.

Pests. MSU Extension field crops entomologist Chris DiFonzo sent the following update during the second half of August.

- * Potato leafhopper and spider mite populations have dropped in most locations, despite some dry locations in the state. The cooler weather is especially favorable for the insect-killing fungi that attack them.
- * Winged soybean aphids were detected in the Midwest suction trap network catches in the last week of July, probably coming off of fields in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Soybean fields in Michigan were colonized that week, but numbers are low and the plant stage isn't optimal for population growth. Think of these aphids as the chickens which will feed and build up natural enemies before the winter.
- * Western bean cutworm flights have tapered off. Larvae that emerged in late July will be 4th-5th instar, big enough for their feeding and frass to be obvious in ear tips. I have had a few reports of ear damage on both the tip and side of ear, which comes with bigger larvae. Consider walking corn fields now to check for infestation (and for tar spot as well, while you are at it). Remember that WBC moths prefer to lay eggs in pretassel and fresh tasseling fields; that means some fields could be infested while nearby fields are clean, depending on how plant stage lined up with peak flight and egg laying. Although it is too late to spray for WBC, fields which are heavily infested should be on your radar to harvest first to reduce the potential for DON. And Dr. Chilvers reminds us that the same goes for fields with significant levels of tar spot, since infection by that pathogen weakens stalks.

Calendar

Titles are clickable links to online content when highlighted and underlined

Sep 3+ [MSU Extension Field Crops Virtual Breakfast](#). 7:00-7:30 AM. [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.

The Virtual Breakfast has become one of our team's flagship outreach programs. Here is the tentative schedule. [RUP credits are now available for the live sessions](#) and **NEW**** we were able to get approved to offer 1 credit for each live session. If you can't participate in the live session on Thursdays at 7 a.m., you can view the recorded version at any time. Recordings are closed-captioned and available on the [MSU Extension Field Crops webpage](#) and social media platforms: [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).**

Sep. 3 – Corn silage mycotoxins with Manni Singh

Sep. 10 – Industrial hemp with Kurt Thelen

- Sep 2** **MSU Extension Cover Crop Virtual Field Day.** Sustainable agriculture educator Dean Baas delivers research information on cover crops for this virtual field day. Visit the [Virtual Field Day](#) website to register.
- Sep 9** **MSU Extension Corn Virtual Field Day, 9:00 – 11:00 AM.** MSU Extension specialists and educators will focus on tar spot and uneven corn development in this live, interactive program. Visit the [Virtual Field Day](#) website to register.
- Sep 30** **Final Date to Update 2020 PLC Yields.** Contact your local USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff members for assistance.

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

Suspect herbicide resistance? Submit weed seeds for screening

PUBLISHED ON AUGUST 28, 2020

Collect weed seeds September-October to submit for herbicide resistance screening.

Corn silage quality can vary with disease incidence

PUBLISHED ON AUGUST 27, 2020

Managing corn silage for quality will be the focus for Sept. 3, 2020, Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series.

Corn silage mycotoxins: Invitation to submit new samples and 2019 results

PUBLISHED ON AUGUST 27, 2020

Submit samples of corn silage for a free mycotoxin analysis as part of MSU research survey.

Consider harvesting soybeans earlier to manage risk and improve net income

PUBLISHED ON AUGUST 26, 2020

Harvesting soybeans at 14 to 16% moisture reduces potential for harvest losses and soil compaction and increases income compared to harvesting overly dry soybeans.

Cover Crop Virtual Field Day on Sept. 2 to feature early interseeding into corn

PUBLISHED ON AUGUST 26, 2020

MSU Extension and MSU AgBioResearch virtual event will highlight farms around the state and experts to answer your questions.

Enviroweather releases a test version of new website

PUBLISHED ON AUGUST 25, 2020

Get a head start on using the customizable dashboard and see improved mobile displays on the new Enviroweather website.

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