

## Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update April 2024

Here are updates from the MSU Extension Field Crops team in Southwest Michigan. If you have any items you would like us 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.

### True Armyworm and Black Cutworm Insect Traps

I will be putting out traps to monitor true armyworm (TAW) and black cutworm (BCW) populations Apr-May. The trap counts will be entered into the [Great Lakes and Maritimes Pest Monitoring Network](#). I am looking for winter wheat or grass pasture and fields with a dense mat of broadleaf plants as locations for the traps. If you have a field that fits the bill and wouldn't mind me placing a trap there, please let me know (269-858-8739 or [ritchi67@msu.edu](mailto:ritchi67@msu.edu)).

### Another (Easy) Soybean Research Opportunity!

Using data-driven knowledge for profitable soybean management systems and mapping soybean protein and oil quality in farmer fields

#### What we are doing

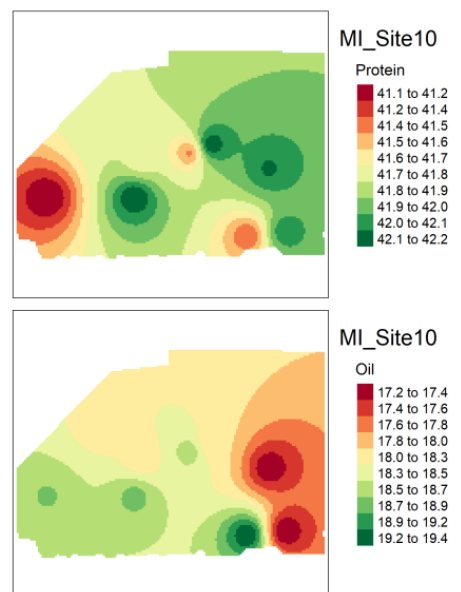
1. Bi-Weekly Scouting: We will come to your field every other week to scout for diseases, insects, weeds, and other crop stressors.
2. Plant Sampling for Protein/Oil: We will collect plant samples from two soybean rows before harvest at 6-9 spots throughout the field. We only need 1-2 pounds of seed from each sample, so will harvest only a few plants per sample.

#### What we need from you

- April-May. Select a field where you are growing soybeans in 2024 and plan to collect yield monitor data. Send us GPS coordinate or cross street via text message or email.
- May-June. Contact us and let us know you have finished planting. We will start scouting soon after soybean emergence.
- Sept.-Oct. Contact us before you harvest and let us know you are planning on harvesting (about a week's notice if possible). We will collect plant samples from the field as explained above.
- Nov.-Dec. After harvest, fill out a survey on field management and yield monitor data (upload online or send us files). We will contact you for any missing information and can help as need be.

We will share data and reports with you once available. We will be repeating this study in future years and would like to continue cooperating with you.

**If you would like to cooperate on this project, please contact Nicolle Ritchie (269-858-8739 or [ritchi67@msu.edu](mailto:ritchi67@msu.edu)).**



## Options for Managing Wildlife Populations and Crop Damage

Now is the time to prepare for wildlife management. There are programs and permits available, but some of them require evidence of crop damage and economic loss. Make sure to take good pictures and maintain documentation of this year's crop and nonlethal efforts in order to apply for permits later this year. Nonlethal efforts include harassment (noisemakers, pyrotechnics, dogs, etc.), exclusionary deterrents such as fencing, and chemical deterrents such as repellants. Nonlethal efforts must continue even after a depredation permit is obtained.

**Geese.** No permit is required to harass or scare geese. It is possible for growers to obtain a permit to lethally control Canada Geese. Because they are considered non-migratory birds, the permit must come from the [Michigan Department of Natural Resources \(MDNR\)](#). You can request a crop damage permit from the local MDNR wildlife biologist. However, be aware that it is not easy to receive one of these permits. You must be able to prove that the crop damage is due to geese and not from other wildlife, such as deer. The permit would allow you to take a certain number of geese, and the carcasses must be disposed of as specified by the permit. For further information, contact the DNR.

**Sandhill Cranes.** No permit is required to harass or scare Sandhill Cranes. For lethal control, growers may obtain a depredation permit to take Sandhill Cranes through the [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services Migratory Bird Depredation Permit process](#). The [application](#) can be mailed in or filled out online. The application fee is \$100 per year. While photos and/or damage receipts are not required, a WS Form 37 is required and must be requested from a USDA biologist by calling Wildlife Services. Once the depredation application is submitted, it takes about a week to receive the permit.

**Deer.** Growers have a couple options for managing deer populations, including the use of permits to take deer as well as regular hunting during the legally established season. Permits reinforce but do not replace non-lethal methods. Deer damage shooting permits and Deer Management Assistance Permits (DMAP) are available to growers. For both permits, hunters are required to be Michigan licensed, only antlerless deer can be taken, and the harvested deer must be used. The [Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger](#) program allows venison to be donated to feed those in need. Visit [SportsmenAgainstHunger.org](#) or call the hotline at 586-552-6517 to find a participating processor near you. Make sure to check with processors before donating venison.



1. **Deer damage permits** (commonly called depredation permits) are used outside of the regular deer season and are issued by the local deer wildlife specialist from DNR in response to deer damage significant enough to cause economic loss. Currently there is no cost to the producer for the permits. Fifteen shooters can be listed, and they must follow all hours and rules as outlined in the permit. Cooperating landowners or their renters are encouraged to take does to help reduce the population while curbing the immediate crop damage. In high deer populations areas, it may be necessary to remove 50 to 100 females/ sq. mile each season for three to four years before damage is reduced to acceptable levels. To request a deer damage permit, contact your [local wildlife office](#). Be aware that the local Wildlife Division staff may visit your site to assess damage before issuing permits.
2. The **DMAP** permits allow a landowner to purchase an approved number of permits in the landowner's name at a discounted price (currently \$10 per permit). These can be issued to individual hunters but remain in the name of the landowner. Unused permits can be transferred to another hunter. You will first need to prove damage to your local DNR officer, and they will then forward the application to you. Once approved, the actual licenses can be bought at any DNR license establishment by providing the landowner's name and documentation of the DMAP program. With the DMAP, deer must be taken during the regular hunting season with the corresponding legally approved weapon (for example, approved archery equipment during archery season).

More information can be found in Lyndon Kelley's article [Hunting female deer a better population management strategy](#) and through the DNR's website on [Wildlife Damage and Nuisance Control Permits](#). The [Michigan State University](#)

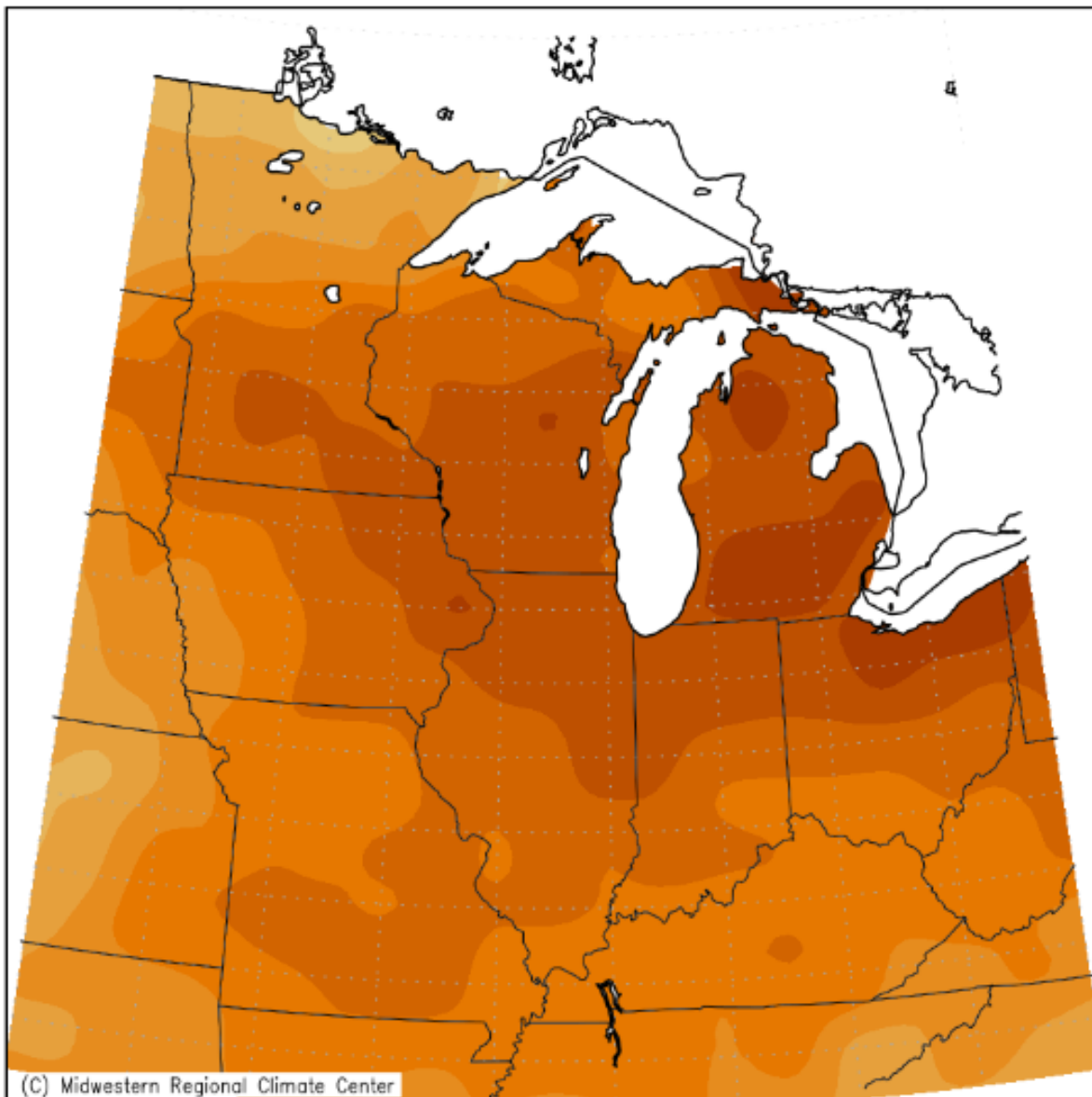
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[\(MSU\) Extension Wildlife Management](#) website also has further resources. Please reach out to the DNR with any questions or concerns regarding deer permits and wildlife damage.

# Weather Update

The precipitation forecast from March 28 to Apr 4 predicts about 0.75 - 1 inches for southwest Michigan. The 6-10 and 8-14 day outlooks both call for temperatures and precipitation pretty close to normal.

For a weekly weather outlook from MSU's Jeff Andresen, join the free [Virtual Breakfast](#) meeting every Thursday through Sept 19. The weather update starts around 7:30 am (after the weekly topic).

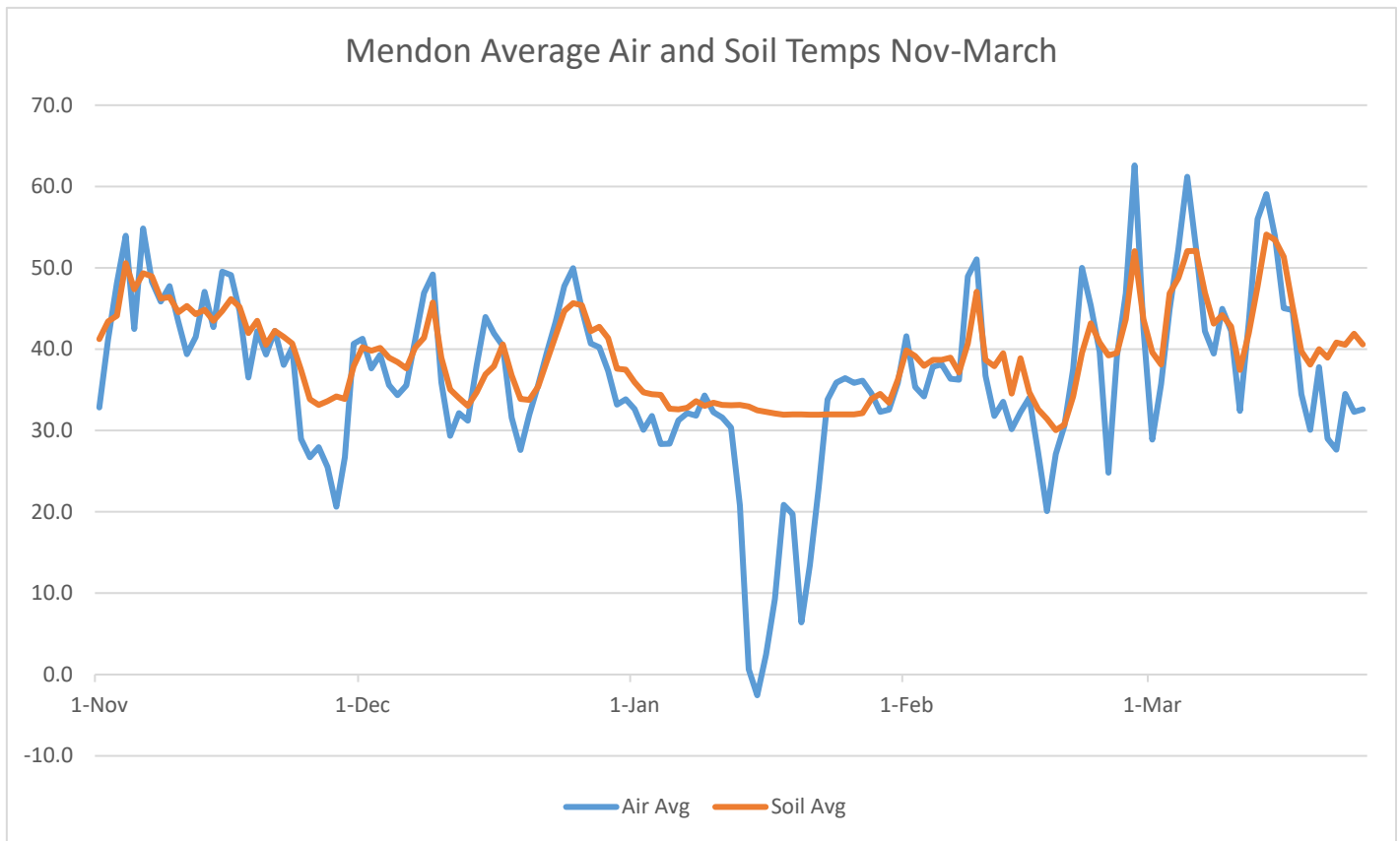


Mean period is 1991–2020.

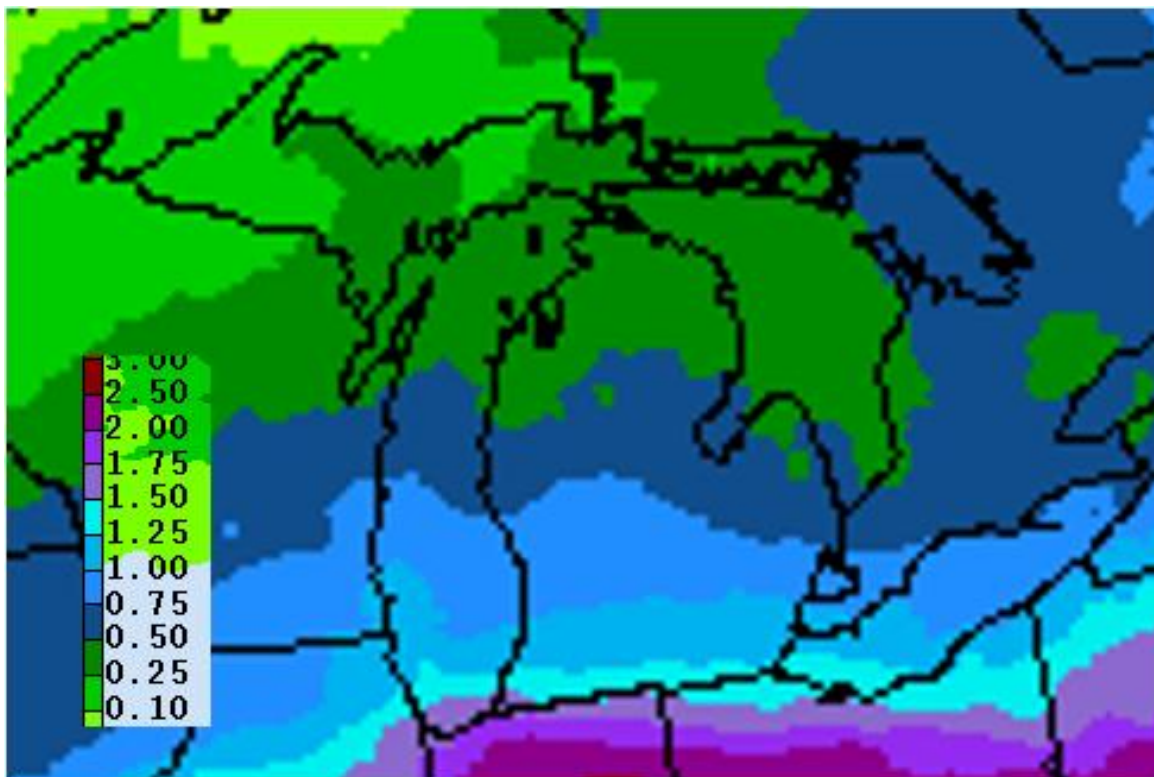


Average temperature departures from normal for the Upper Midwest Feb 26- March 26, 2024.

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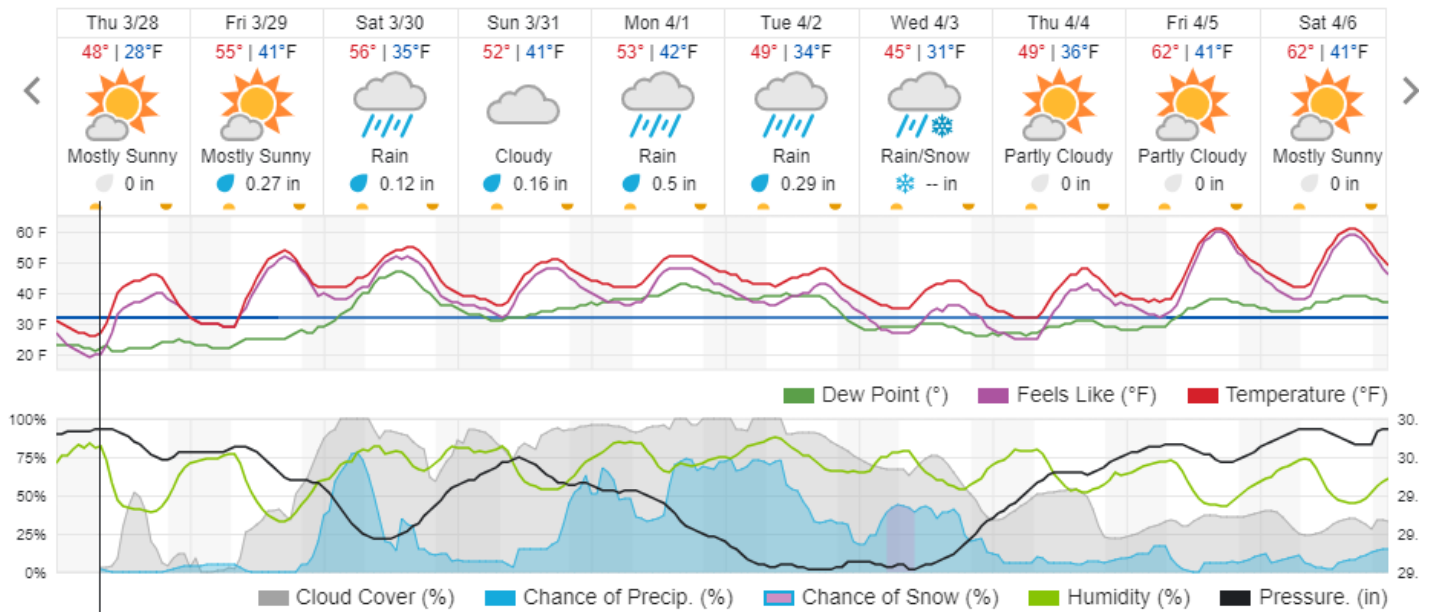
Average air and soil temperatures at 2-inch depth since November 2023 as measured at the Mendon Enviroweather site.



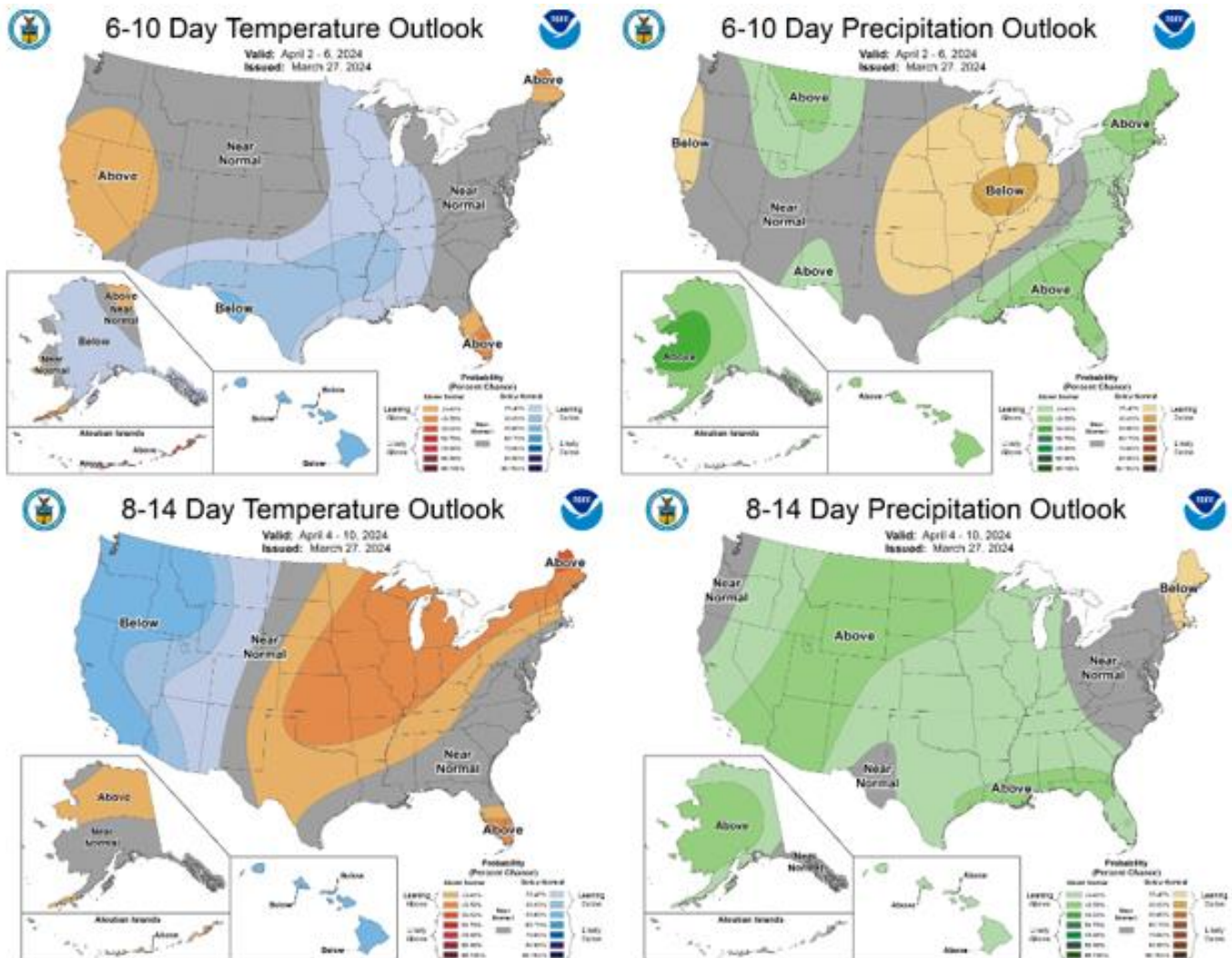
Precipitation forecast for March 28- Apr 4.



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



The 6-10 day (Apr 2-6 top) and 8-14 day (Apr 4-10, bottom) outlooks for temperature (left) and precipitation (right).

## Calendar

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

- Apr 1- 26** [St. Joseph County Conservation District Spring Tree Sale](#). Place tree orders online or by calling 269-467-6336 Ext. 5. Order deadline is Apr 26. Order pick-up is May 3-4 at the St. Joseph County Fairgrounds Barn #28.
- Apr 4** [Virtual Breakfast: Wheat Conditions](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- Apr 10** [In-Person Core Pesticide Review and Core Testing](#). 8:00am. GreenMark Equipment, Three Rivers, MI. Cost is \$15 for morning training payable to MSU, cost for testing dependent on license type. Morning training session is required before afternoon testing, only core and standards exams (no commercial categories) offered. Other locations and dates available. Register online.
- Apr 10** [Michigan Spray Drone Spring Fly-In](#). 8:00am. MSU Clarksville Research Center, Clarksville, MI. All-day workshop for current or future spray drone pilots. Seating is limited. Pre-registration is required.
- Apr 11** [Virtual Breakfast: Soil Fertility](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- Apr 18** [Virtual Breakfast: Optimizing Planting Decisions](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- Apr 24** [2024 Cover Crop Termination Field Day](#). 10:00 am. MSU Agronomy Farm, Lansing, MI. This event is an opportunity for farmers and ag professionals to get caught up on the latest recommendations for successful termination across cover crop species. Free event; lunch included. Pre-register by April 19.
- Apr 25** [Virtual Breakfast: Conservation Practices](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- May 1, June 5, Jul 31** [Scouting School Day 1](#). 8:30 am. Saginaw Valley Research and Extension Center, Frankenmuth, MI. \$150/person. Scouting School is spread across 3 dates (May 1, June 5, and Jul 31). May 1 will start with scouting basics which includes weed ID, scouting patterns, and more. June 5 will consist of hands-on disease scouting in the field with Dr. Marty Chilvers. July 31 will include hands-on insect scouting in the field with Chris DiFonzo. Enrollment is limited to 30 participants to ensure hands-on participation. Register online by April 26. (Register once for all three days.)
- May 2** [Virtual Breakfast: Staging Crop Growth Stages](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- May 2** [St. Joseph County Household Hazardous Waste Collection](#). 2:00 pm. Households (no businesses) can dispose of electronics, hazardous waste, paint/stain, paper, and tires to the St. Joseph County Fairgrounds. Be aware that some items require fees. No explosives, grills, glass, plastics, Styrofoam, waste oil, refrigerators, freezers, dehumidifiers, or air conditioners will be accepted. Contact [finance@stjosephcountymi.org](mailto:finance@stjosephcountymi.org) for more information.

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- May 9** [Virtual Breakfast: Managing Corn and N After Waterlogging](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- May 16** [Virtual Breakfast: Post Weed Control Management](#). 7:00am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- May 23** [Virtual Breakfast: Dry Bean Planting Options](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- May 30** [Virtual Breakfast: Wheat Fungicide Recommendations](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- June 6** [Virtual Breakfast: Sprayer Setup](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.

## MSU Extension Digest Briefs

[SUPPORT FROM PROJECT GREEN HELPS ENVIROWEATHER DELIVER NEEDED INFORMATION TO MICHIGAN GROWERS](#) - For more than two decades, Enviroweather has provided real-time weather information to help make farming decisions - dealing with pests, plant development and natural resources management.  
PUBLISHED ON MARCH 27, 2024

[PLANT IDENTIFICATION? THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT—ACTUALLY SEVERAL!](#) - 2024 update, Amaranth species plus trees/shrubs added! Plant identification apps for smart phones have seen significant improvements over the past several years, offering the opportunity to take a photo and get an instant identification in many cases.  
PUBLISHED ON MARCH 26, 2024

[EDUCATIONAL SESSION RECORDINGS FOR BEGINNING FARMERS NOW AVAILABLE FROM MI AG IDEAS TO GROW WITH](#) - Did you miss the live session? Recordings are now available to view!  
PUBLISHED ON MARCH 26, 2024

[NEW THIS YEAR, MSU EXTENSION HOLDS A FIELD CROPS SCOUTING SCHOOL](#) - This scouting school is designed for interns and entry level scouts to learn the basics of identification, walking patterns and scouting tools.  
PUBLISHED ON MARCH 26, 2024

[WATER MANAGEMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR REDUCING PHOSPHORUS LOSS](#) - Soil health alone will not achieve our water quality goal. Nutrient management is a good start, but it needs to be stacked with water management to achieve our water quality goal.  
PUBLISHED ON MARCH 26, 2024

[COVER CROP TERMINATION FIELD DAY TO BE HOSTED AT THE MSU AGRONOMY FARM](#) - Join Christy Sprague and Karen Renner April 24 for the latest recommendations on effective cover crop termination.  
PUBLISHED ON MARCH 21, 2024

[PESTICIDE APPLICATOR CERTIFICATION IN-PERSON REVIEW AND TESTING IN THREE RIVERS ON APRIL 10](#) - A mandatory core review will precede the pesticide applicator certification testing. Private and commercial core and the fumigation and aerial standard tests will be available.  
PUBLISHED ON MARCH 21, 2024

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NEW REMOTE ID REQUIREMENT FOR DRONE OPERATORS - Several steps are required for those operating an unmanned aerial vehicle, or drone, including the new Remote ID requirement beginning March 16, 2024.

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 14, 2024**

GROWING WHEAT IN A WILD SPRING - The weather so far this spring has not been exactly normal. Find out what this means for wheat spring management.

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 14, 2024**

FIELD DAYS, WORKSHOPS AND WEBINARS FOR FARMERS TRANSITIONING TO ORGANIC - Sign up now to visit an organic farm or learn from organic farmers.

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 14, 2024**

COVER CROP USE IN MICHIGAN, REFLECTING ON THE 2022 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE - The 2022 Census of Agriculture results reveal latest trends in cover crop use in Michigan.

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 13, 2024**

TESTING FOR CONTAMINANTS IN SOIL, WATER AND PLANTS - Sometimes, what you don't know can hurt you.

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 08, 2024**

IMPROVE YOUR DRONE SPRAYING SKILLS AT THE MICHIGAN SPRAY DRONE FLY-IN WORKSHOP - This April event will be for any drone pilots interested in improving their spraying prowess.

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 06, 2024**

ARE IN-FURROW/POP-UP STARTER FERTILIZER PROGRAMS PROFITABLE IN SOYBEANS? - Learn if your specific soybean in-furrow/pop-up fertilizer program is profitable by conducting a trial with the Michigan Soybean On-Farm Research Program in 2024.

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 05, 2024**

POTATO INDUSTRY REPORT EXPLORES FINANCIAL IMPACT OF POTATOES ON MICHIGAN ECONOMY - Michigan potatoes bring billions to the economy: Thanks in no small part to the ongoing commitment of PSM and research faculty, staff and students.

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 03, 2024**

DON'T FORGET ABOUT SCO IN YOUR PLC VS. ARC-CO FARM BILL DECISION - Base acres and planting intentions can make a difference on which program best fits your farm.

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 01, 2024**

SCO INSURANCE PROGRAM AND ITS USE IN MICHIGAN - What is the Supplemental Coverage Option insurance plan?

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 01, 2024**

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