

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update August 2025

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 an email or call the St. Joseph County Extension office.

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- Field Crops Update
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How well do you know SW MI crops?



You know Michigan crops, but do you know them from afar? Do you know them from a car? This sounds like a Dr. Seuss rhyme, but it's not—it's the Drive-by Crop ID challenge.

Take the quiz by clicking on this link or by using the QR code on the left, and then challenge your friends and family to beat your score.

Need to review first? Read the article [Drive-by Crop Identification in Southwest Michigan](#).

SW MI Seed Treatment In-person Workshop - 4 RUP Credits Available



The Southwest Michigan Seed Treatment Workshop will be held on August 18, 2025, from 8:30 am to 12:45 pm at the Van Buren County MSU Extension office ([57418 Co Rd 681 Suite A, Hartford, MI 49057](#)). The cost is \$25 per person. Four RUP credits (core and category 4) and CCA credits have been requested. **View the agenda and register [online here](#) by August 11**, as this event may be canceled if pre-registration numbers are not high enough.

"But Nicolle," you say, "I am interested in seed treatment but cannot attend on August 18." Or: "Oh no, I need more than four credits." Never fear! There is also a webinar series on seed treatment that you can attend every Tuesday in August from 12 pm to 1 pm. [Read all about it and find the link to register here.](#)

POTATOES: Free Montcalm County Field Day August 7



The 2025 Potato Field Day will be held at the Montcalm Research Center on Thursday, August 7th located at 4629 W. McBride Road, in Lakeview, MI. This year is all about IPM! Lunch will be provided.

Please pre-register by Aug 5: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/2025-montcalm-potato-field-day>

IRRIGATORS: Summer Irrigation Workshop TOMORROW

MSU Extension will be hosting a [Summer Irrigation Workshop](#) on August 1 at the Kellogg Biological Station (10461 N 40th St., Hickory Corners, MI 49060). The focus of the workshop is to get hands-on experience on irrigation topics, such as practical irrigation scheduling, soil texture testing, variable rate irrigation, uniformity testing and sprinkler selection. The program is designed to benefit new and experienced irrigators across field crops and vegetable production systems. A mini trade show will highlight irrigation technologies, and participants will be invited to join a collaborative roundtable discussion on the future of irrigation in Michigan. The cost to attend is \$15, and registration is required. [Register online](#) or contact Angie Gradiz at gradizme@msu.edu. For more information about irrigation and upcoming events, visit the [Michigan State University Extension Irrigation webpage](#), or follow the Michigan State University Irrigation Lab on [LinkedIn](#).

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Project
GREEN

2025 SUMMER IRRIGATION WORKSHOP

Join us for an action-packed irrigation workshop! Get hands-on with practical tools to improve irrigation efficiency, explore the mini trade show, and be part of a collaborative roundtable on the future of irrigation in Michigan!

What you'll learn:

- Know your soil: Hands-on texture testing (**Bring your soil sample!**)
- Precision in action: Experience variable rate irrigation
- Don't guess, Test! Evaluating system uniformity
- Sprinkler selection: What to know before you choose
- Plan, apply, repeat: Practical irrigation scheduling
- Future of Michigan irrigation: A roundtable on challenges and opportunities
- **We'll also have a mini trade show!**

2.5 CCA CEU credits SW, 2 RUP credits, MAEAP Phase 1 Education credit

Register:

bit.ly/SIW25



Cost is \$15 and lunch is provided

August 1st

9:00 am - 2:30 pm

Location

KELLOGG
BIOLOGICAL STATION
10461 N 40th, Hickory
Corners, MI 49060

Contact us: gradizme@msu.edu 517-279-4311/6418 www.carr.msu.edu/irrigation/

Please Take This Survey!

https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0cQtPm4vPD6V2TQ



IDENTIFYING COMMON BARRIERS TO LAND ACCESS

HAVE YOU FACED CHALLENGES FINDING OR TRANSFERRING FARMLAND?

MiFarmLink and Michigan State University want to hear from you! Whether you're trying to lease, purchase, or pass on farmland, your experiences can help identify the real challenges Michigan farmers face when it comes to land access. By sharing your story, you'll help build better tools and support systems for future farmers across the state.

If you've experienced land access obstacles—big or small—we invite you to take our quick online survey.

This project is funded by a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grant. We're surveying farmers to understand:

- Where people get stuck in the land access journey
- What support would make a real difference
- How to improve landowner-farmer negotiations

The goal? To create better strategies and resources that make farmland access and transition more achievable for all.

Take the Survey Now



https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0cQtPm4vPD6V2TQ

Farmland transfer and succession in SW Michigan: a free workshop on Friday, August 1, 2025, from 9-11am at the County Health Department Building in Benton Harbor, MI (2149 E. Napier Ave).

This workshop is focused on farm transfer and succession and farmland access and affordability. Join attorney Jerry Cosgrove and land protection project manager Brian Bourdages from American Farmland Trust to learn more about these topics and ask questions about your farm situation. The event will support both beginning and retiring farmers and will help farm advisors and local agencies understand these important topics. Register by July 25 [here](#). The event is hosted by Michigan Agriculture Advancement, American Farmland Trust, County of Berrien, Berrien County Conservation District, Berrien County Farm Bureau, and Chikaming Open Lands.

***Farming Forward*: a free in-person workshop on August 15, 2025, 8:30 – 11:30am**

Focused on farmland succession planning, land linking, and permanent land protection tools. The event will be held at the Saginaw Valley Research and Extension Center in Frankenmuth, the event features expert presentations from MSU Extension, Varnum LLP, MiFarmLink, and more. It's designed to support both beginning and retiring farmers with practical tools to protect farmland and plan for the future. Register soon [here](#). The event is hosted by the Land Transfer Navigator Program with support from MiFarmLink, Michigan Agriculture Advancement, MSU Extension, and Star of the West Milling Co.

Free: KBS LTAR Field Day September 4

KBS LTAR FIELD DAY:

↳ Kellogg Biological Station Long-Term Agroecosystem Research

Sustainable Agriculture in Action

SEPTEMBER 4, 9:30-1:30 PM

WHERE? 9693 N 40TH ST. HICKORY CORNERS MI

Agronomic, profit, & soil health outcomes

How does farming with a 5-crop rotation, no-till, cover crops and precision management compare to the prevailing corn/soy system?



Photo credit: Gavin Hutchings

Farming Innovations

- Cover crops
- Nitrification inhibitors
- Short corn
- Slug management
- Precision inputs & drone demo

Facilitating adoption of stacked conservation practices

Free Lunch & Networking

**REGISTER BY
AUGUST 22!**

Registration free,
but required

<https://events.anr.msu.edu/ltarfieldday2025/>



Photo credit: YJ Su



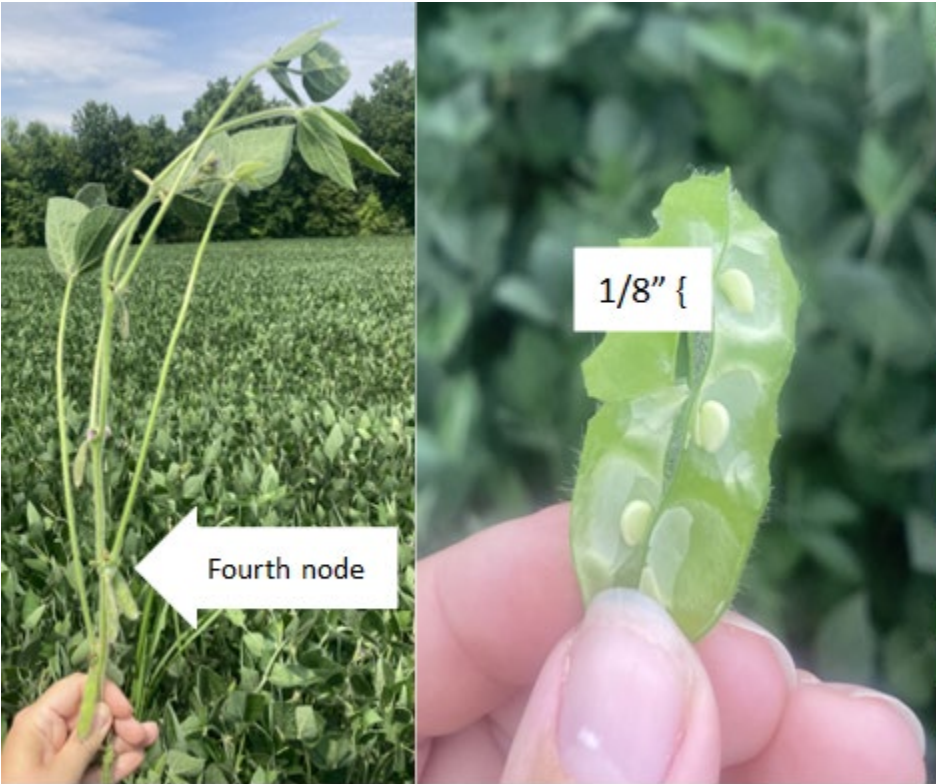
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Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all.

Credits requested:
1 RUP, 2.5 CCA, Phase 1 MAEAP

Contact Tayler Ulbrich with questions - email: chicoin@msu.edu

Field Crops Update



Soybeans are finishing up flowering and entering pod production. At R4, a pod at the fourth node is 3/4” long. Once soybeans hit R4, fungicides have very little if any efficacy on white mold prevention. Some fields have entered R5, which is when the seed of a pod on the fourth node down on the main stem is 1/8” long. Risk models based on weather show high white mold risk on irrigated fields and low white mold risk on unirrigated fields for the next several days. Frog-eye leaf spot risk is moderate.

Most corn fields have hit tasseling and have entered corn ear stages. At R1, silks have emerged on corn ears, and at R2, the kernels are full of clear liquid, or blister-like. Seed corn detasseling has made great progress and is starting to wrap up. Tar spot was confirmed in several Michigan counties this past week, including Branch, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties.

Scout for it in wet areas of the field or field edges along treelines that would have increased leaf wetness in the morning. If you see black spots on a leaf, apply liquid and try to wipe them off to make sure the spots are really from tar spot lesions rather than insect droppings.



If fields are infected at low levels, tar spot pressure will likely increase during the upcoming period of cool weather. Risk models show low tar spot risk for the next week for unirrigated fields, but moisture increases tar spot infection, so irrigated fields are at higher risk. The best timing for a single fungicide application is still between VT and R3-4. Western bean cutworm (WBC) moth flights have been low, with peak flight most likely occurring last week. Corn that is freshly tasseled or close to tasseling is most attractive to WBC moths.

Bucket traps in Berrien (near Niles) Branch (near Union City), St. Joseph (Centreville and Sturgis), and Van Buren (Paw Paw) Counties have caught the following WBC moths:

Date	Branch 1	Branch 2	Centreville	Niles	Paw Paw	Sturgis
7/28	13	27	4	61	34	16

Winter wheat harvest wrapped up, and many fields have been planted with cover crops or double-crop soybeans by now.



Fresh crop chip **potato** harvest started the week before last, and vine kill continued on early-harvest tablestock potatoes. The persistent precipitation over the past week increased forecast **late blight** risk to medium with pockets of high risk. As temperatures cool down this weekend, late blight risk will continue to increase. Prioritize scouting for late blight around wet spots and along field edges, especially for treelines where fungicide canopy coverage may be poor.

Alfalfa and **forages** continued at variable stages of growth. Due to persistent precipitation in most areas, cutting and baling were mostly on hold over the past week.

Irrigation and Crop Water Use

Crop water use declined this week compared to last week, and much of Southwest Michigan benefited from timely rainfall. However, both corn and soybeans are currently in critical growth stages, so it’s essential to scout for signs of stress or disease pressure before deciding whether to irrigate or not. For corn the most critical period occurs between VT (tasseling) and R3 (milk stage and early grain fill). Soybeans are most sensitive to water stress during the R3 to R6 stages (pod development through seed fill). Irrigation Scheduling Tools can help estimate crop water needs and decide timing and application. If irrigation is truly needed, it’s best to apply larger amounts less frequently, rather than small amounts more often to avoid disease progression.

Estimated weekly crop water use for field crops in Michigan (in/week)				
Week of July 28 - August 3				
Crop	Growth stage	Constantine	Entrican	Hart
	Reference ET	1.18	1.30	1.27
Corn	V12	1.18	1.30	1.27
	V14 and V16	1.30	1.43	1.40
	VT, <u>Silk</u> , <u>Blister</u> , <u>Dough</u> , Begin Dent	1.30	1.43	1.40
Soybeans	R1 Beginning Bloom	1.18	1.30	1.27
	R2 Full Bloom	1.30	1.43	1.40
	R3 Begin Pod / R4 Full pod	1.30	1.43	1.40

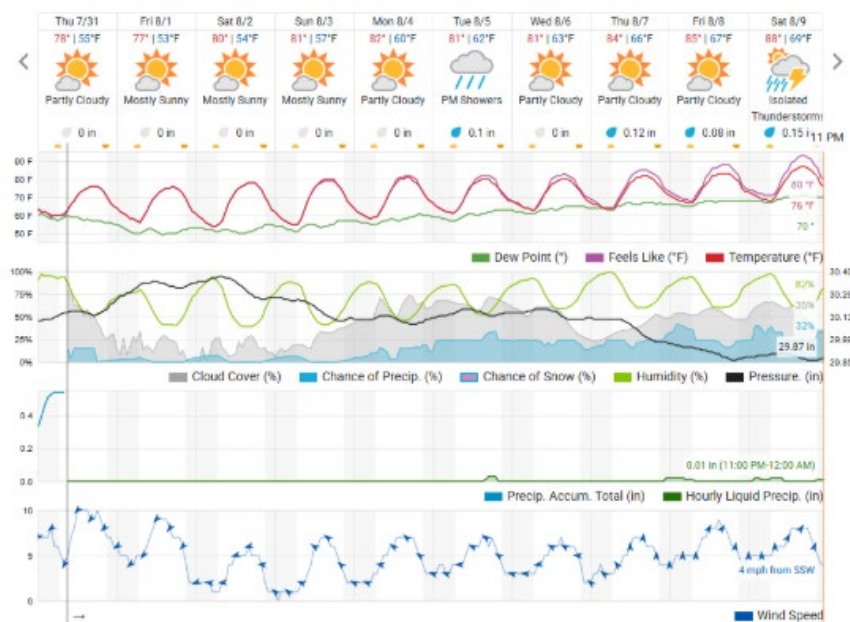
The table above presents estimated crop water use for various field crops across three locations in Michigan. This data helps irrigation management decisions by showcasing potential crop evapotranspiration, calculated based on reference evapotranspiration and crop coefficients for each crop growth stage. It is crucial to note that crop water use values vary across regions due to differences in weather conditions, growth stages, agronomic practices, and soil properties.

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update – August 1, 2025 - 8

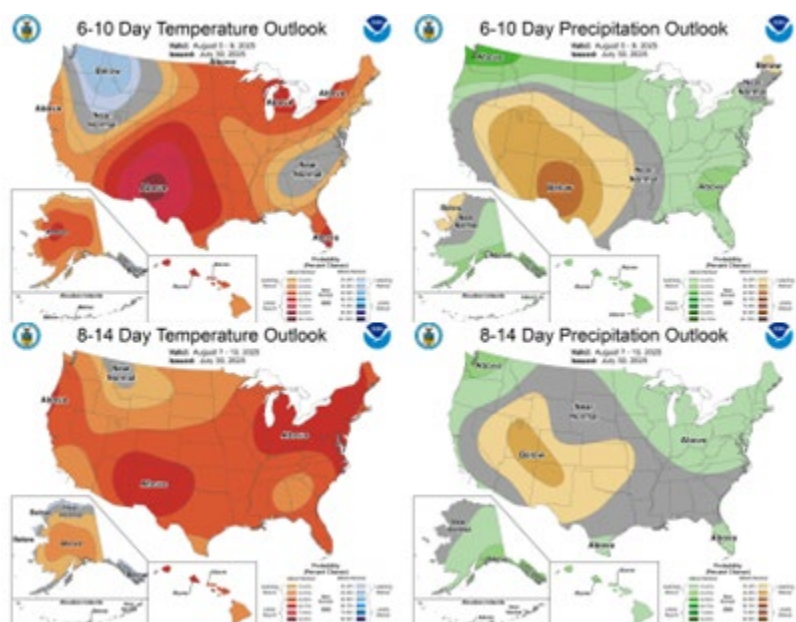
When using these values for irrigation scheduling, be mindful that they assume all applied irrigation water will be utilized by the plants without any loss. Additionally, these values do not account for any precipitation that may occur during the week of calculation. Reference evapotranspiration data was obtained from Enviroweather, which also offers a model for determining potential crop evapotranspiration. To access this tool, visit [Enviroweather](#), click on "Crops," select your crop and use the potential evapotranspiration tool by choosing your nearest weather station, the latest date of interest, and other crop information.

Weather Update

Scattered rainfall fell over southwest Michigan again this week, with some areas receiving over two inches and others receiving less than half an inch. The high temperatures and high humidity continued. However, temperatures—especially at night— will drop today, July 31, 2025, and over the weekend before returning to the mid-80s in the middle of next week. No significant precipitation is forecast for the next week, but humidity is expected to remain high.



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



The 6-10 day (Aug 5-9, top) and 8-10 day (Aug 7-13, bottom) outlooks for temperature (left) and precipitation (right).

Calendar

[Note: Titles are clickable links to online content when highlighted and underlined.]

- Aug 1** **Summer Irrigation Workshop.** 9 am-2:30 pm. Kellogg Biological Station. This summer workshop offers a hands-on opportunity to explore practical strategies and tools to boost irrigation efficiency. \$15. Includes lunch. **CCA**
- Aug 1** **Farmland Transfer and Succession in SW Michigan.** 9 -11am. Benton Harbor County Health Department. This workshop is focused on farm transfer and succession and farmland access and affordability. Free.
- Aug 5** **Seed Treatment Webinar: Nematode Management.** 12-1pm. Zoom. The August 5 session will cover soybean cyst nematode treatment options and efficacy with Dr. Marisol Quintanilla, MSU Extension nematologist. \$20 for access to all webinars. **RUP/CCA**
- Aug 7** **Virtual Breakfast: Drones.** 7 am. This free, weekly series provides timely and relevant information on rapidly changing field crop and environmental conditions, pests and diseases. **RUP/CCA**
- Aug 7** **Montcalm Potato Field Day.** 8 am-1 pm. Montcalm Research Center. Michigan State University Extension and the Michigan Potato Industry Commission would like to invite all producers, agribusinesses, and community members to join us for a field day at the Montcalm Research Farm! Free. **RUP**
- Aug 12** **Seed Treatment Webinar: Insect and Disease Management.** 12-1pm. Zoom. This session on August 12 will feature Dr. Chris DiFonzo, MSU Extension field crops entomologist, and Dr. Marty Chilvers, MSU Extension field crops pathologist, who will cover seed treatment fungicides and insecticides in the context of IPM. \$20 for access to all webinars. **RUP/CCA**
- Aug 15** **Farming Forward Workshop.** 8:30-11:30am. This workshop is focused on farmland succession planning, land linking, and permanent land protection tools. It's designed to support both beginning and retiring farmers with practical tools to protect farmland and plan for the future. Free.
- Aug 18** **In-Person SW MI Seed Treatment Workshop.** 8:30 am- 12:45 pm. Van Buren County MSU Extension office. This event offers education and networking opportunities related to seed treatment. \$25. Please pre-register by August 11. **4 RUP**
- Aug 19** **Farming Forward: Newaygo County Farm Field Day.** 8am-2pm. Kropscott Farm and Environmental Center. The Farm Field Day is an event you don't want to miss, with multiple sessions covering a myriad of agriculture and natural resource topics. **RUP/CCA**
- Aug 19** **Seed Treatment Webinar: Soybean Biological Treatment.** 12-1pm. Zoom The August 19 session will feature results from a recent study on soybean biological treatments with Dr. Manni Singh, MSU Extension cropping systems agronomist. \$20 for access to all webinars. **RUP/CCA**
- Aug 21** **Virtual Breakfast: Potassium! Why it matters to alfalfa persistence.** 7 am. This free, weekly series provides timely and relevant information on rapidly changing field crop and environmental conditions, pests and diseases. **CCA only**

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update – August 1, 2025 - 10

- Aug 26** **Seed Treatment Webinar: Use Rate Calculations.** 12-1pm. Zoom. For the August 26 session, MSU Extension field crops educators Jenna Falor and Nicolle Ritchie will cover use rate calculations for batch treatment with practical examples. \$20 for access to all webinars. **RUP/CCA**
- Aug 28** **Virtual Breakfast: Hot Topics!**. 7 am. This free, weekly series provides timely and relevant information on rapidly changing field crop and environmental conditions, pests and diseases. **RUP/CCA**
- Sept 4** **KBS LTAR Third Annual Field Day.** 7 am. Kellogg Biological Station. This free event will showcase new research on regenerative agriculture, and provide the opportunity to connect with local agricultural and conservation professionals, as well as MSU researchers.
- Sept 4** **Virtual Breakfast: Using Yield Data.** 7 am. This free, weekly series provides timely and relevant information on rapidly changing field crop and environmental conditions, pests and diseases. **RUP/CCA**
- Aug 28** **Virtual Breakfast: Grain Marketing.** 7 am. This free, weekly series provides timely and relevant information on rapidly changing field crop and environmental conditions, pests and diseases. **RUP/CCA**

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

Mark your calendars to see sustainable cropping systems in action

Published on July 30, 2025

Attend the annual Long-Term Agroecosystem Research field day on Sept. 4, 2025, to learn about sustainable cropping systems in action.

Have you experienced barriers or challenges to accessing farmland? We want to know!

Published on July 30, 2025

Take part in a survey from a joint MIFarmLink-MSU Extension research project funded through a SARE grant.

Vertical tillage for corn residue management

Published on July 28, 2025

Low-disturbance tillage can be a valuable tool for field crop farmers.

Recognizing water stress and critical growth stages in corn and soybeans

Published on July 28, 2025

When water stops, your crops speak up. From leaf rolling and flipping to flower drop, recognizing stress signs early can help you make timely decisions.

MSU researchers launch three-year on-farm study to monitor soil moisture, improve water management and nutrient cycling

Published on July 25, 2025

Want to know how water is moving through your soil? Apply by Aug. 11 to participate in this study from Michigan State University.

Applying water at the right time and in the right amount

Published on July 24, 2025

Strategic irrigation scheduling ensures water application matches the crop water needs while maximizing crop water productivity.

Southwest Michigan field crops update – July 24, 2025

Published on July 24, 2025

Hot and dry conditions hit crops hard in areas of southwest Michigan. Potato harvest began, and wheat harvest is wrapping up.

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update – August 1, 2025 - 11

Long-season labels and late blight updates impacting Michigan potato production

Published on July 23, 2025

Three special local needs labels for Bravo and Echo products cancelled and withdrawn following an EPA Interim Decision for active ingredient chlorothalonil.

Rain gauges are one of the best low-cost tools for saving water

Published on July 22, 2025

An accurate rain gauge can help producers take full advantage of rainfall and reduce unnecessary irrigation water use.

Fertigation: A midseason option for fertilizer application to irrigated fields

Published on July 22, 2025

Applying fertilizer through irrigation, also known as fertigation, allows irrigators to apply the last increment of nitrogen to their growing crops.

No payoff from high soil test phosphorus: Save fertilizer and protect water quality

Published on July 22, 2025

Applying phosphorus when the soil test phosphorus is high doesn't boost profit. Stick to the tri-state guidelines to protect your bottom line and water quality.

Reducing heat stress in the field

Published on July 21, 2025

Heat stress can be an issue for you and your employees, even in a northern state like Michigan.

MSU Extension hosts Bean and Beet Field Day to tackle weed, insect and disease challenges

Published on July 17, 2025

Join MSU Extension Aug. 19 in Frankenmuth for a Bean and Beet Field Day covering herbicide-resistant weeds, sugarbeet agronomy, pathology and genetics, dry bean production and varieties, plus an insect BT resistance update.

Drive-by crop identification in southwest Michigan

Published on July 17, 2025

Michigan has a diverse agricultural landscape. Learn to identify five of southwest Michigan's field crops from the comfort of your vehicle.

Will an improved PLC program pay more often?

Published on July 17, 2025

Testing PLC updates against historical prices and looking forward to future support.

Southwest Michigan field crops update – July 17, 2025

Published on July 17, 2025

Corn is in early reproductive stages, and detasseling in seed corn is in earnest. High temperatures and little precipitation have resulted in spider mite infestations in soybeans.

Blind Inlet

Published on July 15, 2025

A blind inlet is an in-field conservation practice that replaces a surface inlet or drains water from depressional areas on a field.

Shallow Drains

Published on July 15, 2025

Shallow drains refer to subsurface (tile) drain pipes installed at a depth of 2.5- to 3-ft.

Drain Sedimentation Tool

Published on July 15, 2025

The Drain Sedimentation Tool identifies soil at risk of drain clogging.



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