

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update July 17, 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.

Contents:

- Announcements
- Field Crops Update
- Irrigation and Water Use Update
- [Weather Update](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [MSU Extension Digest Briefs](#)

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 Mid-Michigan Agronomy

The 2025 Mid-Michigan Agronomy Field Day is scheduled for 8 a.m. Wednesday, July 30. It will be held at the Mid-Michigan Agronomy Potato and Row Crop Research Farm, 18561 G Drive N, Marshall MI 49068. Lunch is provided. To RSVP, email shannon.schafer@midmichiganagronomy.com or Rob Schafer at robert.schafer@midmichiganagronomy.com.

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 Aug 1

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](#).

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

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/SW25



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.canr.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.

Field Crops Update



Soybeans are in early reproductive stages. R3 starts when a pod at the fourth node down the main stem is 3/16" long, and some soybeans in southwest Michigan are moving into R4 (a pod at the fourth node is 3/4" long). Fungicides to prevent **white mold** should be applied between R1 and R3, with data showing higher efficacy when applied closer to R1. Risk models based on weather show a low white mold risk on unirrigated fields for the next several days. White mold thrives in moist environments, so irrigated fields will be at higher risk than unirrigated fields. Frog-eye leaf spot risk is moderate. The dry weather has favored **spider mites**, which may be found along roadsides or driveways where dust

is frequently settling. Watch for yellow mottling of leaves and webbing. Scouting for mites when dew is on the plants helps highlight the webbing, as the dew lands on the webs but doesn't touch the leaf surface directly.



Corn is tasseling in earnest, and detasseling in seed corn is also in earnest. Some corn has started to put out silks, which is the R1 stage. **Tar spot** was confirmed in Cass and Eaton Counties last week and has since been confirmed in counties in central Michigan and moving toward the thumb. As tar spot is found closer and closer to home, remember that the best timing for a single fungicide application is still between VT and R3-4. Risk models show low tar spot risk for the next week for unirrigated fields, but again, moisture increases tar spot survival, so irrigated fields are at higher risk. **Western bean cutworm** (WBC) moths will be searching for plants close to tasseling or freshly tasseled. Scout for egg masses in the upper two thirds of the canopy by walking with the sun backlighting the plants. Egg masses will appear as dark shadows on the leaves.

Bucket traps in Branch (near Union City) County have caught the following WBC moths:

Date	Branch 1	Branch 2	Centreville 1	Centreville 2	Paw Paw	Sturgis
7/14	33	53	--	--	--	--



Much of the **winter wheat** has been harvested. What remaining in the field is harvest-ready. Materials like the article [Considering double-crop soybeans after a winter cereal this year?](#), the Midwest Cover Crops Council's [cover crop recipe for planting after wheat going into corn or soybean](#) and the fact sheet [Cover crop tolerance to winter wheat herbicides](#) can help guide decisions on what to plant after wheat.

Potatoes continue to be at risk of vine rot with the hot weather and lush canopies. **Late blight** risks have been low to medium in southwest Michigan so far, and that is forecast to continue. Applications to control colonizing **aphids** went out in the past week. Check for aphids on the undersides of leaves in a recommended 20-25 plants in 10 areas per field. Refer to the fact sheet [Managing Colonizing Aphids in Ware Potatoes](#) for pictures of colonizing aphids that affect potatoes, a list of chemical options for managing aphids and tips for chemical control.

Alfalfa and **forages** are at variable stages of development, with some cutting occurring this past week, while other fields are approaching cutting and others are solidly in stages of regrowth.



Irrigation and Crop Water Use

Corn water demand peaks during the early reproductive stages, especially during tasseling, silking, and pollination—critical periods when the crop is highly sensitive to water stress. Water shortages at these stages can significantly reduce yield potential. By tassel emergence, corn typically reaches its full effective rooting depth of 3 to 4 feet. This root zone can hold approximately 3 inches of available water in sandy soils and up to 6 inches in loam soils. Since crop water use often exceeds rainfall during this period, supplemental irrigation may be necessary to meet crop demand.

Soybeans in the early reproductive stages (R3–R6) are currently using about 1.32 - 1.42 inches of water per week. These stages are the most sensitive to water stress, and insufficient moisture can reduce the number of seeds per pod, decrease seed size, and lower overall yield potential. To increase irrigation efficiency, aim to apply enough water to meet five to six days of crop water use, typically 1 to 1.25 inches per irrigation event. Irrigation should match crop demand, subtracting recent rainfall and allowing room in the soil profile for future precipitation.

Crops are now entering their peak water use period. For more information, please refer to the [full article. Irrigation Scheduling Tools](#) can help estimate crop water needs and decide timing and application.

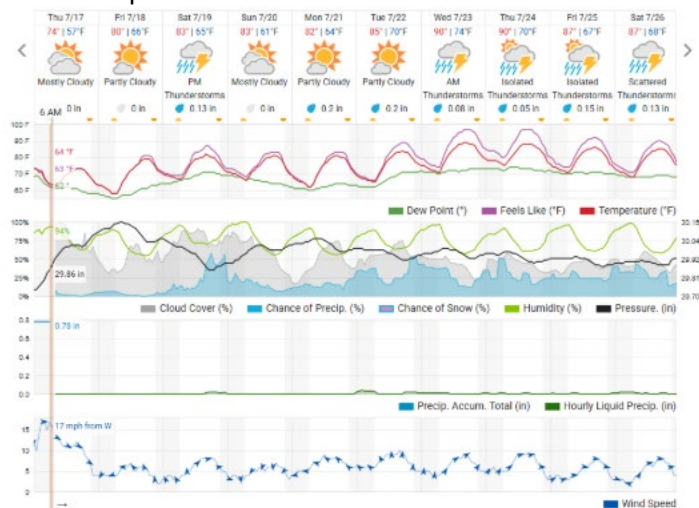
Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update – July 17, 2025 - 7

Estimated weekly crop water use for field crops in Michigan (in/week)				
Week of July 14 - 20				
Crop	Growth stage	Constantine	Entrican	Hart
	Reference ET	1.20	1.25	1.29
Corn	V10	0.91	0.95	0.98
	V12	1.20	1.25	1.29
	V16, VT, Silk, Blister, Dough, Begin			
	Dent	1.32	1.38	1.42
Soybeans	R1 Beginning Bloom	1.20	1.25	1.29
	R2 Full Bloom	1.32	1.38	1.42
	R3 Begin Pod / R4 Full pod	1.32	1.38	1.42

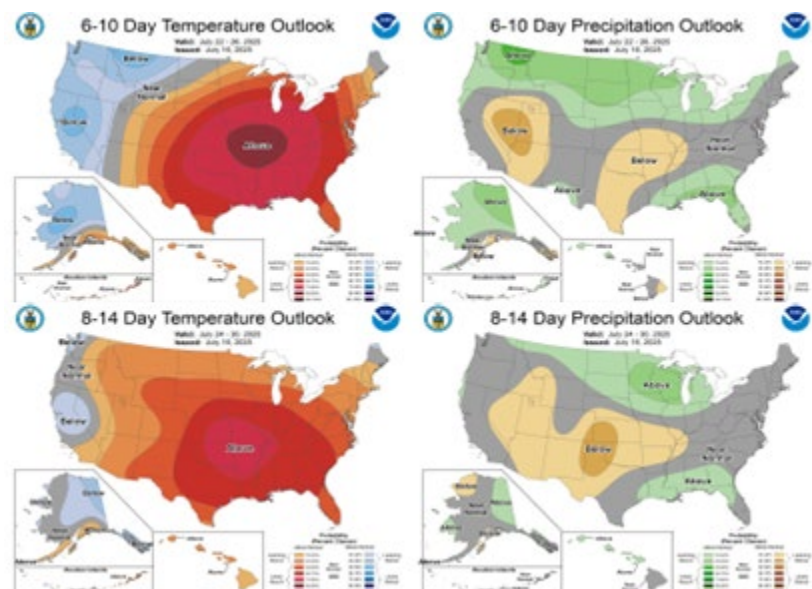
The table above presents estimated crop water use for various field crops across three locations in Michigan. This data helps irrigation management decisions by showcasing potential crop evapotranspiration, calculated based on reference evapotranspiration and crop coefficients for each crop growth stage. 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. 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

The past week was warm and humid with scattered rainfall. Some areas have received sufficient moisture, but others have received very little moisture since around mid-May. Opportunities for moisture in the coming week will continue to be scattered with isolated showers early to the middle of next week, but precipitation is forecast to be higher than it has been. Temperatures will continue to be hot and humid.



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



The 6-10 day (July 22-26, top) and 8-10 day (July 24-30, bottom) outlooks for temperature (left) and precipitation (right).

Calendar

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

- July 24** **Virtual Breakfast: Cover Crops After Wheat.** 7 am. This free, weekly series provides timely and relevant information on rapidly changing field crop and environmental conditions, pests and diseases. **RUP/CCA**
- July 31** **Virtual Breakfast: Insect Diagnostic 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**
- 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**

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update – July 17, 2025 - 9

- 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**
- 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**

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

Why Do Subsurface Drainage Systems Underperform?

Published on July 15, 2025

Subsurface (tile) drainage removes excess water from the soil to create good fieldwork and crop growth conditions on poorly drained soils. In this bulletin, three common causes for the under-performance of subsurface drainage systems are described.

Drain Sedimentation Tool

Published on July 15, 2025

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

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.

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update – July 17, 2025 - 10

[Agricultural Drainage](#)

Published on July 15, 2025

This bulletin briefly describes the history, need, types and extent of Michigan drainage as well as the pros and cons, and environmental impact related to drainage.

[Mole Drains](#)

Published on July 15, 2025

Mole drains are unlined tunnels (mole channels) in the clay subsoil formed by a mole plow.

[Iron Ochre](#)

Published on July 15, 2025

This bulletin describes the iron ochre issue and its mitigation methods.

[Choosing Between 8-Row and 4-Row Regular-Perforated Pipes](#)

Published on July 15, 2025

This bulletin compares the properties of two 4-inch diameter pipes: 8-row and 4-row regular-perforated pipes.

[Choosing Between Sock-Wrapped and Sand-Slot Pipes](#)

Published on July 15, 2025

This bulletin describes the condition where sock-wrapped and sand-slot pipes are needed.

[Treat yourself to in-person seed treatment education](#)

Published on July 15, 2025

This in-person workshop held in Van Buren County on August 18 will provide education on a variety of seed treatment related topics. Four RUP credits (core and category 4) and CCA credits have been requested.

[Strategies for Purchasing Farm Inputs Bulletin is now available](#)

Published on July 11, 2025

New resource from MSU Extension's DEMaND Series.

[Seed selection goes beyond yield and disease resistance](#)

Published on July 11, 2025

New resources from MSU Extension can help you choose the right seed for your farm.

[Seed Selection: Beyond Yield and Disease Resistance \(Wheat Edition\)](#)

Published on July 10, 2025

Selecting the right wheat seed for your farm starts and stops with profitability. This factsheet helps you consider what the right seed options are for your farm by looking at profitability factors beyond yield and disease resistance.

[Seed Selection Beyond Yield and Disease Resistance \(Soybean Edition\)](#)

Published on July 10, 2025

Selecting the right soybean seed for your farm starts and stops with profitability. This factsheet helps you consider what the right seed options are for your farm by looking at profitability factors beyond yield and disease resistance.

[Seed Selection: Beyond Yield and Disease Resistance \(Corn Edition\)](#)

Published on July 10, 2025

Selecting the right corn seed for your farm starts and stops with profitability. This factsheet helps you consider what the right seed options are for your farm by looking at profitability factors beyond yield and disease resistance.

[Wheat Watchers Week of July 9, 2025](#)

Published on July 10, 2025

See how the wheat crop is progressing across the state this week.

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update – July 17, 2025 - 11

Soybean sidekicks: Microbes to the rescue (sometimes)

Published on July 10, 2025

Interest level in agricultural biological products is at an all-time high, but have research results shown their profitability?

Southwest Michigan field crops update – July 10, 2025

Published on July 10, 2025

Tar spot was confirmed in Cass County. With corn starting to tassel, scout for tar spot and western bean cutworm.

Wheat reached physiological maturity, and harvest began.

Thinking about using foliar fertilizers in soybeans?

Published on July 10, 2025

Many foliar fertilizer products are marketed to soybean producers that claim to increase yield, but which ones actually do?

Do you feel the need...the need for seed (treatment)?

Published on July 10, 2025

Join MSU Extension for field crops seed treatment webinars every Tuesday in August. One RUP credit per webinar is available in 1A, 4 or private core.

MSU Extension and Newaygo County Conservation District partner to host Farm Field Day

Published on July 8, 2025

Attend the Newaygo County Farm Field Day on Aug. 19 to learn about pest management and scouting, irrigation, grazing management, and updates on NRCS funding opportunities and programs. RUP and CCA credits are available.

Farm Bill Programs offer limited support for 2024 production year

Published on July 7, 2025

New data emerges on support provided by current Farm Bill programs.



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