

## Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update August 20, 2026

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.

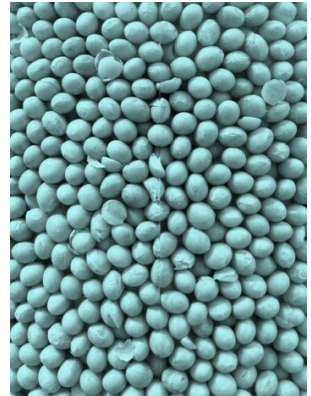
### Contents:

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

## Last Chance to Register for Seed Treatment Webinars

Two separate sessions will be offered. **Two RUP (1A, 4 and Core)** and CCA credits have been requested for each webinar. The cost is \$10 per webinar, or \$20 for both sessions. Register [here](#).

1. Tuesday, August 25, from 12 to 2 p.m. This webinar will address seed treatment equipment maintenance and best practices with Rick Smith from KSI International, and reducing and responding to pesticide exposure with MSU Extension field crops educators.
2. Tuesday, September 1, from 6 to 8 p.m, featuring fungicide seed treatment product efficacy and decision-making by MSU Extension field crops pathologist Marty Chilvers, and product use rate calculations, colorants, and carriers by MSU Extension field crops educators.



## THREE Free Educational Opportunities in SW MI on August 26

1. **[Water Quality Management Forum and Showcase](#)**. 9am-2pm. Kellogg Biological Station (10461 N 40th St., Hickory Corners, MI 49060). Learn what impacts water quality and how to improve water quality at this field day. Free, lunch included. Mileage reimbursement available for farmers.
2. **[Strip Tillage Event at Golden View Farms](#)**. 4-6pm. Golden View Farms (27511 Simpson Rd, Mendon). Luke and Paul Gentz will be discussing their recent adoption of strip tillage: pros and cons of the system, their learning curve, use of cover crops, fertilizer placement, and implement guidance. Their JD2510S and 8320R will be on site for viewing and discussion. Free, please register. Between the Rows to follow immediately after.
3. **[SW MI Between the Rows](#)**. 6-8pm. Golden View Farms (27511 Simpson Rd, Mendon). The Corn Marketing Program of Michigan will provide a catered dinner, an input market update and a grain marketing update with local experts. Free, registration required. **1 RUP**

## Submit by Sept 1: Feedback on Restricted Use Pesticides and Applicators to MDARD

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) is updating Michigan's Regulation 633 (Restricted Use Pesticides) & 636 (Pesticide Applicators) to comply with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Certification & Training (C&T) revisions. While most of these updates are required to meet federal requirements, some involve proposed state-level implementation choices.

As part of this effort, MDARD will revise Michigan's pesticide applicator certification and training plan over the coming year. MDARD is seeking stakeholder feedback early in the rulemaking process to help inform these updates. This is not a formal state-mandated comment period, but rather an opportunity to collaborate and gather input from stakeholders most affected by the proposed changes.

Feedback on the proposed changes can be provided to MDARD by:

- [Online survey](#) (preferred method)
- Email: [MDARD-Pesticide@Michigan.gov](mailto:MDARD-Pesticide@Michigan.gov)
- Mail: ATTN PPPM - Pesticide Section  
PO Box 30017 Lansing, MI 48909

Note: Comments mailed or emailed to MDARD must include the proposal number, proposal name/subject, your stance on the proposal, and any additional comments. MDARD will not consider any mailed or emailed comments that lack these elements.

Visit MDARD's proposed pesticide policies, interpretations, and regulations website for additional details. Before submitting feedback, please review the following documents:

- [Pesticide Certification & Training Fact Sheet](#)
- [Regulation 633 & 636 Scoping Document](#)

The comment period will begin on August 3, 2026, remain open for 30 days. The comment period will close on September 1, 2026.

## Register now for the KBS LTAR Field Day September 3

Join [Michigan State University Extension](#) at the [W. K. Kellogg Biological Station](#) LTAR research site as they co-host the Sept. 3 Field Day, located at 9693 N 40th St, Hickory Corners, MI 49060. All agricultural and conservation professionals are welcome to attend. Morning refreshments, snacks, and lunch provided. Pending credits include **1 RUP credit; 2.5 CCA credits, and a Phase 1 MAEAP training credit**. Registration for this free event is required and closes Aug 21 (tomorrow). [Register here](#).



## Don't Miss the Midwest Mechanical Field Day Sept 16!

Join for a full day tradeshow, weeding tool discussions and in-field demonstrations for managing weeds in row crops, vegetables and tree fruit with steep registration discounts for organic and organic-curious growers from Michigan, Illinois and Indiana.

**When:** Wednesday, September 16, 2026

**Where:** Michigan State University's Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center, 1791 Hillandale Rd, Benton Harbor, MI 49022

**Cost:** \$85 (includes lunch)

**Registration:** [Register online](#) by Sept. 8. Walk-ins are welcome but you will need to bring your own lunch.

For more information on the event or to register by phone, contact Crystal at [crystal@thelandconnection.org](mailto:crystal@thelandconnection.org) or 217-840-2128.



Each year, the Midwest Mechanical Weed Control Field Day moves to a different state in the Midwest. This year, the field day's 9th year, they are partnering with [Michigan State University \(MSU\) Extension](#) and holding the field day at the [MSU Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center](#) in Benton Harbor, Michigan, on Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2026. This field day is the place to see weeding tools of all scales demonstrated in the field, where farmers can learn from company reps and farmers from around the region. [Read more here.](#)

## Check out these new bulletins for field crops producers

[Optimizing Corn Hybrid Maturity Selection for Maximum Yield and Profit in Michigan and Northern Regions](#) - *One of the most important ways growers can take advantage of positive weather changes is by matching hybrid maturity to their location and planting dates. Carefully aligning hybrid maturity with the length of growing season can help maximize yield and kernel dry down, improve profitability, and optimize the timing of fall management practices.*

[E-3516 Used Farm Equipment Markets: Navigating the Options](#) - *Venturing into the used farm equipment market can be challenging. There are a number of equipment options that may or may not meet the needs of your farm, as well as several outlets that you can use to find or purchase farm machinery. Once you've identified a potential purchase, you want to ensure what you're buying is worth the investment. Then you want to secure the purchase as quickly and securely as possible, especially if you hope to use it right away. This publication provides insight on how to navigate buying used farm equipment; from researching potential options to steps involved in equipment inspection, price negotiation, and securing a successful purchase.*

This is a companion bulletin to [E-3515 Used Farm Equipment Markets: Planning the Purchase](#), which explores the process of planning your farm's next equipment purchase, starting with determining what farm equipment is the right fit for your farm needs.

## Save the Date: Michigan Agritourism Convention November 3-4

**The Michigan Agritourism Convention** will be held in Frankenmuth on Nov. 3-4, 2026. We have a fun, inspiring and educational event planned for you at the Bavarian inn Lodge in downtown Frankenmuth. This event is appropriate for any farm that welcomes the public onto their property. The convention includes tours, educational sessions, and a keynote.

Details: <https://michiganfarmfun.com/convention26/>

Register: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/25th-anniversary-conference>

For more information, contact Janice at the Michigan Agritourism Association: 616-952-1151  
or [info@michiganfarmfun.com](mailto:info@michiganfarmfun.com)

## VAN BUREN COUNTY FARMERS: Pesticide Container Recycling

After you treat crops with "-icides", remember to recycle your containers with the Van Buren Conservation District! Containers, jugs, and barrels must be empty, clean, and triple rinsed. This program is free and by appointment-only in Paw Paw. Reach out to schedule your drop-off: Materials Management Project Manager Kalli Marshall:

[ResourceRecovery@VanBurenCD.org](mailto:ResourceRecovery@VanBurenCD.org); 269-633-9314.

## Crop and Pest Update

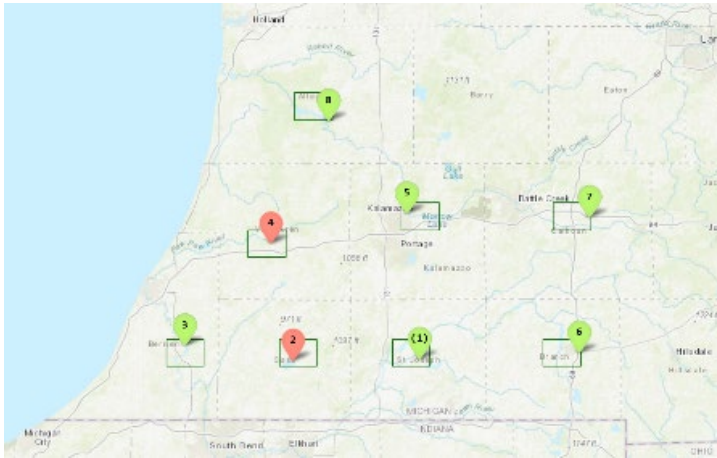
Full-season soybeans continued in R5 (seed fill). Symptoms of white mold, sudden death syndrome (SDS) and brown stem rot have started to show, although the window for managing them has closed. Watch out for red crown rot, which is a disease not yet confirmed in Michigan that looks similar to SDS and brown stem rot. If you suspect red crown rot, submit a sample to the Michigan State University Plant and Pest Diagnostics Lab. Michigan Soybean Committee and the United Soybean Board will cover the diagnostic fees. Soybean sampling kits can be requested here.

Corn continued in kernel development stages. At R3 (milk), the fluid within the kernel becomes milky as starches accumulate. R4 (dough) has a pasty consistency, and at R5 (dent), the outside edge of the kernel has an indent. Seed corn harvest approaches as fields senesce or receive defoliant applications.



## Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update – August 20, 2026 - 5

Continue to scout for tar spot and evaluate crop risk as kernels develop. Tar spot fungicide applications are most profitable when applied between R1 (silking) and R3 (milky kernel) in corn. According to the Crop Risk Tool, the risk of tar spot development and/or progression was low to moderate over the past week.



Late blight was found in St. Joseph County potatoes last week. This highly infectious and destructive disease is a major concern for potato growers. Appropriate chemical responses went out immediately, and the population has been managed to prevent spread.

While the ideal situation is to have no late blight outbreaks in Michigan, this also means that many agronomists, crop consultants and potato producers have little to no experience identifying it in person. As such, the farm with the late blight detection generously hosted an in-person identification and management meeting, organized by crop consulting company Mid-Michigan Agronomy, who detected and genotyped the late blight last week. Agronomists from all St. Joseph County commercial potato growers were present, as well as crop scouts and producers from other counties, an industry representative and MSU Extension.



While late blight's sporulation pattern can be diagnostic, the sporulation is only visible under certain environmental conditions. Other diagnostic clues for late blight identification include black (not brown or gray) lesions that can spread across veins and curling or twisting inward of the lesion. For more photos and information on the late blight risk over the past week, check out the article "Current status of potato late blight in Michigan—August 18, 2026". To reduce late blight spread, use bleach to decontaminate footwear and clothing between fields.

## Irrigation and Water Use

- Corn and soybeans remain at peak water use, requiring approximately 1.3 inches of water per week (0.19 inches per day approximately). Maintaining adequate soil moisture during these critical growth stages is important to minimize water stress and protect yield potential.
- Potato water use at pre-senescence and maturity is low. Pre-senescence requires 0.35 inches per week and maturity approximately 0.12 inches of water per week.
- Rainfall this week is expected to be variable, with little to moderate precipitation across the region. Account for effective rainfall when scheduling irrigation to avoid over-irrigation, and continue monitoring irrigated soybean fields for increased white mold risk, particularly when wet and humid conditions persist.
- To improve irrigation management, consider using irrigation scheduling tools such as the free and updated MSU Irrigation Scheduling Mobile App, available for Apple and Android devices. The app provides field-specific irrigation recommendations based on crop growth, weather, and soil type.

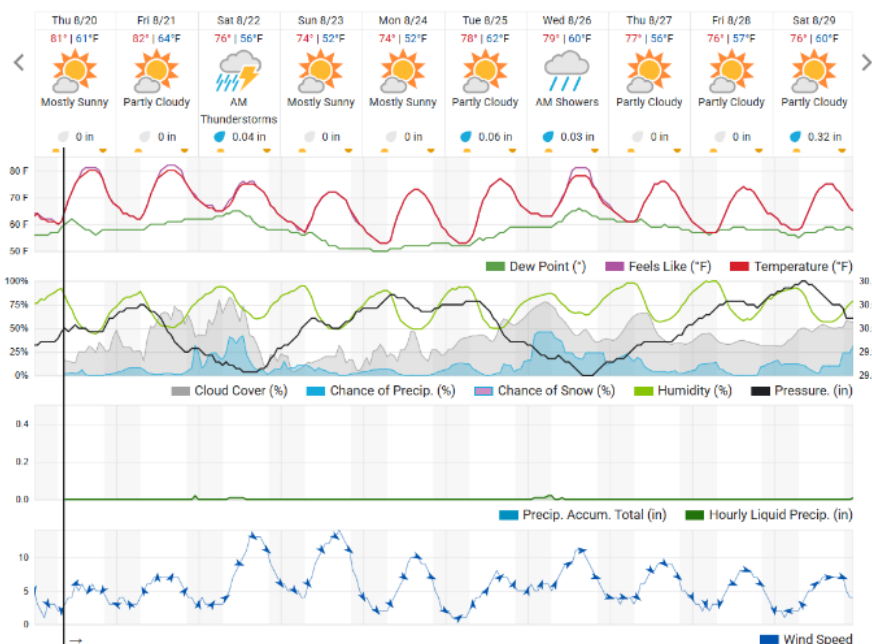
This year, weekly crop water use updates will continue to be shared through the SW MI Crop Updates, and for added convenience, updates will also be sent through direct email and text messages. If you would like to see an additional location included in the report, please contact Angie Gradiz at [gradizme@msu.edu](mailto:gradizme@msu.edu) or 531-249-4956.

The table below summarizes estimated crop water use (inches per week) for major irrigated field crops across Michigan's primary irrigated regions.

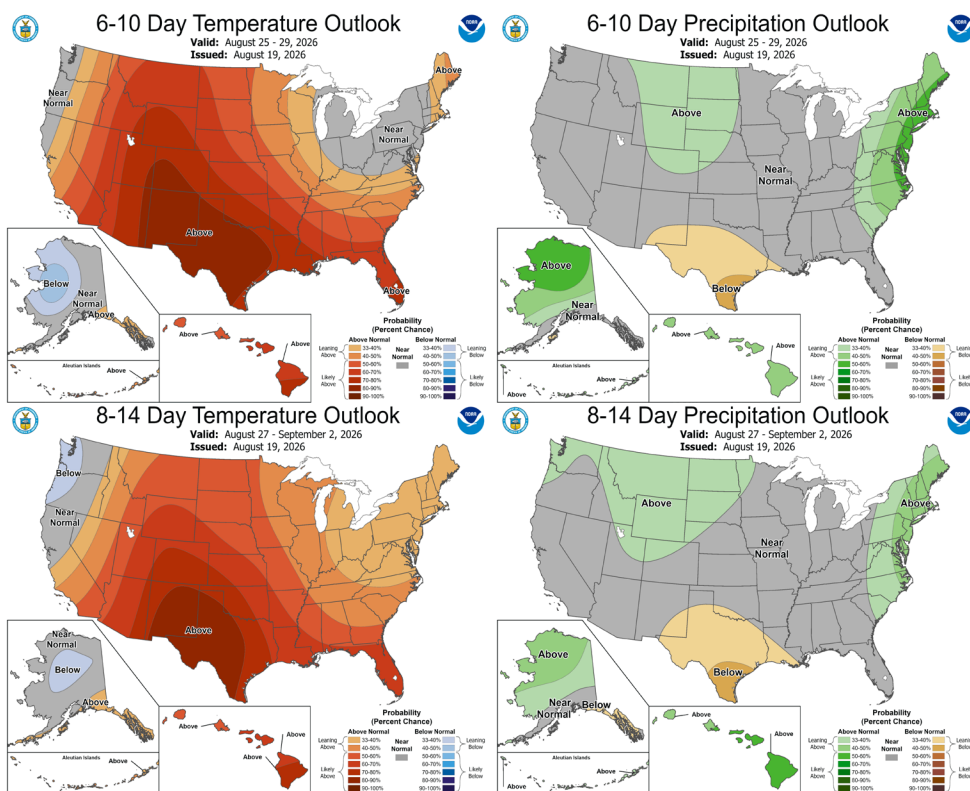
| Estimated weekly crop water use for field crops in Michigan (in/week) |                                      |             |                 |          |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------|------|
| Week of August 17 - August 23                                         |                                      |             |                 |          |      |
| Crop                                                                  | Growth stage                         | Constantine | Berrien Springs | Entrican | Hart |
|                                                                       | Reference ET                         | 1.18        | 1.21            | 1.17     | 1.20 |
| Corn                                                                  | V14                                  | 1.30        | 1.33            | 1.29     | 1.32 |
|                                                                       | VT, Silk, Blister, Dough, Begin Dent | 1.30        | 1.33            | 1.29     | 1.32 |
|                                                                       | Full Dent                            | 1.18        | 1.21            | 1.17     | 1.20 |
| Soybeans                                                              | R2 (Full bloom)                      | 1.30        | 1.33            | 1.29     | 1.32 |
|                                                                       | R3 (Begin pod) - R4 (Full pod)       | 1.30        | 1.33            | 1.29     | 1.32 |
|                                                                       | R5 (Begin seed) - R6 (Full seed)     | 1.30        | 1.33            | 1.29     | 1.32 |
| Potatoes                                                              | Bulk                                 | 0.71        | 0.73            | 0.70     | 0.72 |
|                                                                       | Pre-Senescence                       | 0.35        | 0.36            | 0.35     | 0.36 |
|                                                                       | Maturity                             | 0.12        | 0.12            | 0.12     | 0.12 |

# Weather Update

A rainy weekend and drizzly early week brought moisture and high humidity to southwest Michigan, causing weeds and diseases to progress within the canopy. Temperatures have been mostly moderate and will cool somewhat heading into the weekend. Scattered showers on Saturday (August 22) and the middle of next week are expected to provide only negligible precipitation.



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



The 6-10 day (August 25-29, top) and 8-14 day (Aug 27-Sep 2, bottom) outlooks for temperature (left) and precipitation (right).

## Calendar

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

- Aug 25**     **Seed Treatment Webinar.** 12-2pm. Online through Zoom. This session will cover seed treatment equipment maintenance and best practices and PPE, pesticide exposure, and first aid. **2 RUP**
- Aug 26**     **Water Quality Management Forum and Showcase.** 9am-2pm. 10461 N 40th St., Hickory Corners, MI 49060. Learn what impacts water quality and how to improve water quality at this field day. Mileage reimbursement available for farmers.
- Aug 26**     **Strip Tillage Event at Golden View Farms.** 4-6pm. 27511 Simpson Rd, Mendon. Luke and Paul Gentz will be discussing their recent adoption of strip tillage: pros and cons of the system, their learning curve, use of cover crops, fertilizer placement, and implement guidance. Their JD2510S and 8320R will be on site for viewing and discussion. Between the Rows to follow immediately after.
- Aug 26**     **SW MI Between the Rows.** 6-8pm. 27511 Simpson Rd, Mendon. The Corn Marketing Program of Michigan will provide a catered dinner, an input market update and a grain marketing update with local experts. **1 RUP**
- Aug 27**     **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Irrigation Investment Economics.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season.
- Sept 1**     **Seed Treatment Webinar.** 6-8pm. Online through Zoom. This session will cover fungicide seed treatment product efficacy and best practices and seed treatment application rate, carriers, and colorants. **2 RUP**
- Sept 3**     **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Farmland Valuations.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season.
- Sept 3**     **KBS LTAR Field Day.** 9:30am-1:30pm. Kellogg Biological Station. Learn about the agronomic and ecological effects of our long-term regenerative agriculture experiment, now in its 5th year, benefits and considerations of perennial forages, prairie strips, and no-till, and profitability of the experiment and revisions being made for the next five years, based on stakeholder input.
- Sep 10**     **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Precision Agriculture.** 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season.
- Sep 15**     **Soybean Harvest Equipment Field Day.** 10am-3pm. Charlotte. This half-day event will allow attendees to learn how to get their combines and monitor equipment ready for harvest season, how to maintain them, and how to minimize header losses through educational sessions and combine harvest demonstrations.
- Sep 16**     **Midwest Mechanical Weed Control Field Day.** 8am-4pm. Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center. This event is perfect for farmers and ag advisors who want to see a particular weeding tool before buying it, learn how to adjust cultivators, see what is new in cultivation, and learn from other farmers.

Sep 17

**Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Late Season Weed Control**. 7-8 am. Online through Zoom. The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly webinar for farmers, agribusiness professionals and anyone interested in agriculture to prepare for potential issues and navigate any concerns during the growing season.

## MSU Extension Digest Briefs

### **Providing Timely & Relevant Information to Field Crop Producers & Agronomists**

**Published on August 19, 2026**

This report highlights key educational programs conducted by the MSU Extension field crops educators in 2024.

### **The Michigan Forever Green Field Crops farmer group is growing**

**Published on August 19, 2026**

Farmers interested in or currently growing wheat or canola can find resources and support through a new grower network.

### **Current status of potato late blight in Michigan – August 18, 2026**

**Published on August 19, 2026**

Elevated risk in Michigan this week supports continued vigilant scouting efforts after last week's late blight detection in St. Joseph County on Aug. 12, 2026.

### **Register for the Pesticide Core Review Training at GLEXPO 2026**

**Published on August 19, 2026**

Registration is open for the Pesticide Core Review Training and MDARD RUP test, offered in English and Spanish, at the Great Lakes Expo on December 10. Participants can also earn RUP credits. Don't miss this opportunity!

### **Agrivoltaics as a rural economic engine in Michigan**

**Published on August 19, 2026**

Agrivoltaics offers a practical framework for producing food and electricity on the same land while supporting farmer choice, rural economic development and long-term agricultural viability.

### **The Midwest Mechanical Weed Control Field Day returns to Michigan**

**Published on August 18, 2026**

A full day tradeshow, weeding tool discussions and in-field demonstrations for managing weeds in row crops, vegetables and tree fruit with steep registration discounts for organic and organic-curious growers from Michigan, Illinois and Indiana.

### **Providing timely and relevant information to field crop growers through the Virtual Breakfast Series**

**Published on August 17, 2026**

The Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series is a weekly morning webinar that provides timely crop and pest management updates and shares information to farmers, agribusiness professionals and others throughout the growing season.

### **Michigan's Emerging Farmers statewide partnership supporting 20 farmers to attend 2026 Northern Michigan Small Farm Conference in October**

**Published on August 17, 2026**

Farmers and producers interested in this opportunity are encouraged to submit their applications by Thursday, August 20 for consideration.

### **Bulletins Live! Two Tracker Report available now**

**Published on August 13, 2026**

To raise awareness of pesticides currently impacted by the new EPA Bulletins Live! Two pesticide label directive, Michigan State University Extension will be generating a Bulletins Live! Two Tracker Report twice a month.

## Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update – August 20, 2026 - 10

### **Southwest Michigan field crops update – August 13, 2026**

**Published on August 13, 2026**

Seed and kernel fill are progressing in corn and soybeans. Late blight discovered in St. Joseph County.

### **Insect friend or foe? Soft black beetle with rounded red and black hood**

**Published on August 12, 2026**

Fireflies are easily recognizable at night, but they may be less familiar on crops. Are they agricultural friends, foes or something in-between?

### **Attend the Michigan Water Quality Management Forum and Field Showcase at the Kellogg Biological Station**

**Published on August 11, 2026**

This free, half-day event on August 26 features presentations on topics related to water quality and conservation as well as hands-on field demonstrations and tours.

### **Optimizing Corn Hybrid Maturity Selection for Maximum Yield and Profit in Michigan and Northern Regions**

**Published on August 10, 2026**

The goal of this bulletin is to provide resources on how to optimize hybrid relative maturity selection based on planting date to maximize yield, profits, kernel dry down, and fall cover crops establishment.

### **Elevate your market prices with Grain Gains**

**Published on August 7, 2026**

Grain Gains: An Introduction to Grain Marketing is a new online course from MSU Extension.

### **Soybean Harvest Equipment Field Day to be held in Eaton County on September 15**

**Published on August 6, 2026**

Soybean farmers looking to learn about getting their equipment ready for harvest and how to avoid header losses are invited to attend this annual event.

### **Southwest Michigan field crops update – August 6, 2026**

**Published on August 6, 2026**

Most soybeans and corn are moving into seed fill stages.



*Nicolle Ritchie*  
*Michigan State University Extension*  
*Field Crops Educator - St. Joseph County*  
*612 E. Main St., Centreville, MI 49032*  
*(269) 858-8739 (Cell)*  
*(269) 467-5510 (Extension Office)*  
*[ritchi67@msu.edu](mailto:ritchi67@msu.edu)*  
*Facebook : [MSUEFieldCropsSWMI](#)*



*Angie Gradiz*  
*Michigan State University Extension*  
*Agriculture Water Use Efficiency Educator*  
*570 Marshall Road #C, Coldwater, MI*  
*49036*  
*Office: (517) 279 - 4311*  
*Cell: (531) 249 - 4956*  
*[gradizme@msu.edu](mailto:gradizme@msu.edu)*

---

Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Quentin Tyler, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned. The 4-H Name and Emblem have special protections from Congress, protected by code 18 USC 707.