

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update August 6, 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
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- [Weather Update](#)
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Applications Open Until Aug 24 for the Southwest Michigan MSU Extension District Director

As part of the MSU Extension Administrative Team, this leadership position is for the District 13 Director who will support the counties of Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren. The role of the district director is to develop, maintain, and coordinate relationships between MSU Extension and local community partners, provide oversight and mentoring to staff housed in the district, and to employ entrepreneurial efforts to secure resources with other partners. [Learn more here.](#)

FREE Webinar on New Forage Revenue Protection Program Aug 11

For the first time, alfalfa farmers have access to a Forage Production Revenue Protection insurance program providing protection against yield and price losses. To help you better understand the new insurance option before the September 30th closing date, a free educational webinar will be held Tuesday, August 11, at 1:00 p.m. CDT (2 pm EDT). Register at bit.ly/AlfalfaRevenueProtectionWebinar to receive your link for the Forage Production Revenue Protection program webinar.

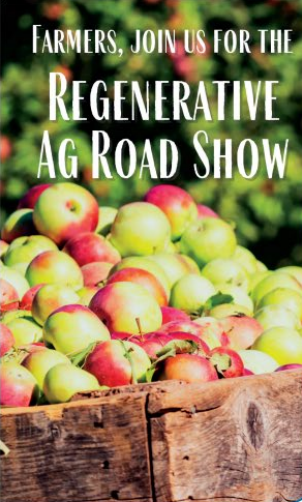


VAN BUREN COUNTY: Regenerative Ag Roadshow Aug 19

The Van Buren Conservation District is hosting their first ever multi-stop bus tour featuring regenerative farm practices. The Regenerative Ag Road Show will highlight four unique farms with different conservation practices. The VBCD invites farmers and agricultural professionals to come, listen, and learn as Van Buren County farmers share successes and challenges of their journey towards regenerative ag.

Featured practices include rotational pastures, grazing cover crops, no-till, pollinator strips, sustainable apples, and multispecies cover crops in vegetables. Every farmer will learn something to help in the transition to a more regenerative system. Attendance is free and lunch is included. RSVP is required for day-of details.

Sign up online (www.VanBurenCD.org/field-day-2026) or contact Conservation Specialist Colleen Forestieri with any questions at agconservation@vanburencd.org or 269-657-4030 x5.



FARMERS, JOIN US FOR THE
**REGENERATIVE
AG ROAD SHOW**





AUGUST 19, 2026 8:45 AM - 3:00 PM
VAN BUREN CONFERENCE CENTER
490 S PAW PAW ST., LAWRENCE, MI

FREE EVENT - LUNCH INCLUDED

**BUS TOUR OF FOUR FARMS
IN VAN BUREN COUNTY**

- Hear directly from farmers about successes and challenges of their journey towards regenerative ag.
- See practices like cover crops, no-till, rotational grazing, pollinator strips, and more!
- Space is limited; advance registration is required.



Scan to register

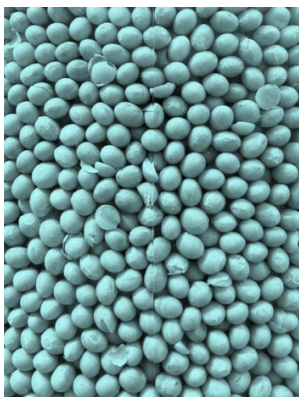
LEARN MORE AND
REGISTER:
269-657-4030 x5
VanBurenCD.org/field-day-2026



PRINCIPLES OF REGENERATIVE AG

- KEEP SOIL COVERED
- MINIMIZE SOIL DISTURBANCE
- INCREASE PLANT DIVERSITY
- MAINTAIN LIVING ROOTS
- INTEGRATE LIVESTOCK

Seed Treatment Webinars Aug 25 and Sept 1 RUP/CCA



Two separate webinars will be offered, with the first on 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 Jenna Falor and Nicolle Ritchie. The second webinar will be held on September 1, from 6 to 8 p.m. It will feature 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 Falor and Ritchie. 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](#).

Farmers and their bookkeepers wanted for a short interview

Are you or your bookkeeper frustrated with your farm accounting software? Are you searching for the right fit for your farm? We want to hear from you both! Michigan State University Extension is seeking farmers and their bookkeepers who are willing to participate in a brief phone interview or online survey about their experiences with farm accounting software. Your insights can help us develop educational resources that better serve farm businesses. This will take less than 15 minutes of your time. If you're willing to share your experiences, we'd love to connect with you!

Interested? Take this [quick survey \(LINK\)](#) or provide your contact information so that we can call you when it's most convenient for you.

ATTN Covers Crops Interseeders (Custom or on-farm)

The purpose of this survey is to improve recommendations for interseeding cover crops. Take this short survey (est. 20 minutes) by July 30 and get entered to win a \$75 gas card.

https://msu.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1zXmrQSqyRl4dpA

- You may take the survey for each unique type of equipment that you use to spread cover crop seed.
- To opt-in to the gift card drawing: upon survey completion, you will be automatically redirected to a second short survey collecting contact info. Two randomly selected card recipients will be contacted after the close of the survey.
- Reach out to Madelyn Celovsky (celovsk2@msu.edu) with any questions.

DO YOU OFFER COVER CROP INTERSEEDING SERVICES IN MICHIGAN?



We want to hear from you!

Fill out this survey to contribute to MSU research developing stronger recommendations for cover crop interseeding



<https://tinyurl.com/interseed>

Take the survey and
get entered to win a
\$75 gift card

MDARD Seeking Stakeholder Feedback on Restricted Use Pesticides and Applicators

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
- 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.

Crop management and fuel use survey

[The AI4Ag climate resiliency research project](#) is looking for Michigan farmers to complete survey about their typical management and fuel use in a given year. Corn, soybean, wheat, or potato producers are welcome to participate. Each survey participant will receive \$50 for their time taking this survey. Access the survey at this link:

<https://lees.geo.msu.edu/ai4agsys-survey.html>

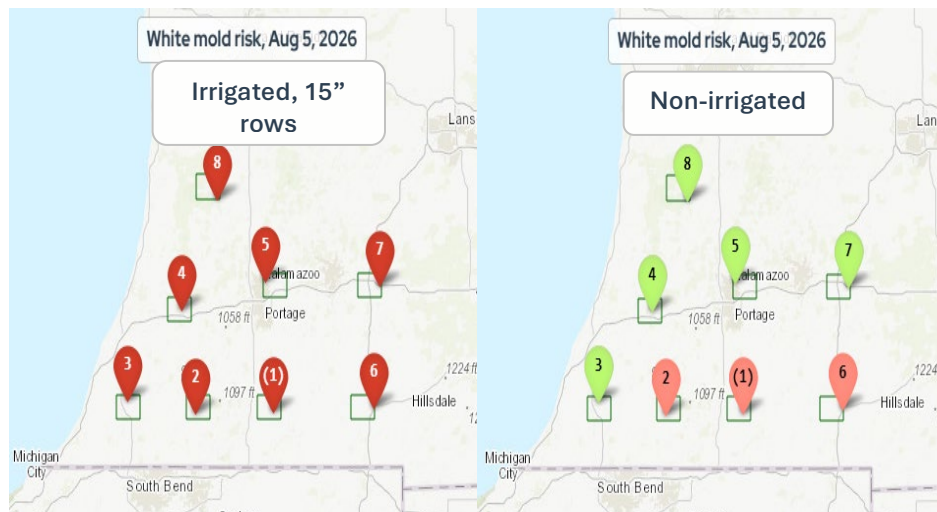
VAN BUREN COUNTY FARMERS: Pesticide Container Recycling

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; 269-633-9314.

Crop and Pest Update

Most full-season soybeans have moved into R5 (seed 1/8" long within pod) or will soon. For fields that are still in flowering and early pod formation, R3 is the last effective stage to apply a white mold preventative fungicide. The Crop Protection Network's Crop Risk Tool showed high risk of white mold development on irrigated soybeans and low on non-irrigated soybeans in southwest Michigan for the past week.

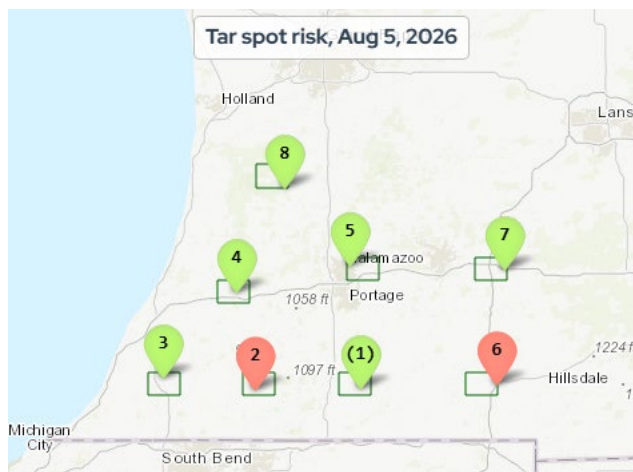


Corn has mostly started into kernel development stages. At R2 (blister), the kernels are filled with clear fluid. At R3 (milk), the fluid becomes milky as starches accumulate. R4 (dough) has a pasty consistency. Male row destruction in seed corn picked up over the past week.



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Continue to scout for tar spot by looking for small dark lesions on leaves. Make sure to add water and try to rub the lesion off. If it can be rubbed off, it is not tar spot, but insect droppings. Tar spot fungicides are most profitable when applied between R1 (silking) and R3 (milky kernel) in corn. Tar spot has been confirmed in Calhoun and Jackson Counties this season, according to the Tar Spot Map. The Crop Risk Tool showed low to moderate risk for tar spot development over the past week. Cooler temperatures and irrigation increase tar spot risk.



Most fields are out of the highest risk window for western bean cutworm (WBC). Fields that are close to tasseling or freshly tasseled should continue to be scouted by putting the sun behind the leaves to watch for egg masses, which will appear as dark shadows on the backlit leaves of the upper canopy.

WBC adult moth counts dropped last week and will probably remain low for the rest of the season. Bucket traps in Berrien (Eau Claire), Branch (Union City), St. Joseph (Centreville and Sturgis) and Van Buren (Lawrence) Counties have caught the following:

Date	Branch 1	Branch 2	Centreville	Eau Claire	Lawrence	Sturgis
7/20	109	9	14	41	93	21
7/27	13	1	5	46	38	30
8/3	2	5	0	3	7	5

Potatoes are in tuber bulking stages or awaiting harvest. Vine kill began a couple weeks ago on early crop Russets to allow them to set skins before harvest. In full-season and storage potatoes, continue to scout for aphids and late blight. Late blight risk over the past week was mainly moderate with some areas of low risk, according to the Vegetable Disease and Insect Forecasting Network.



Irrigation and Water Use

Corn and soybeans remain at peak water use, requiring approximately 1.35 inches of water per week (0.19 inches per day). Maintaining adequate soil moisture during these critical growth stages is essential to minimize water stress and protect yield potential.

Potatoes in the bulking stage are beginning to decrease water use, now requiring approximately 0.70 inches per week (0.10 inches per day). Water demand will continue to decline as the crop matures.

Rainfall is expected across most regions this week. Account for effective rainfall when scheduling irrigation to avoid over-irrigation, and monitor irrigated soybeans for increased white mold risk.

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.

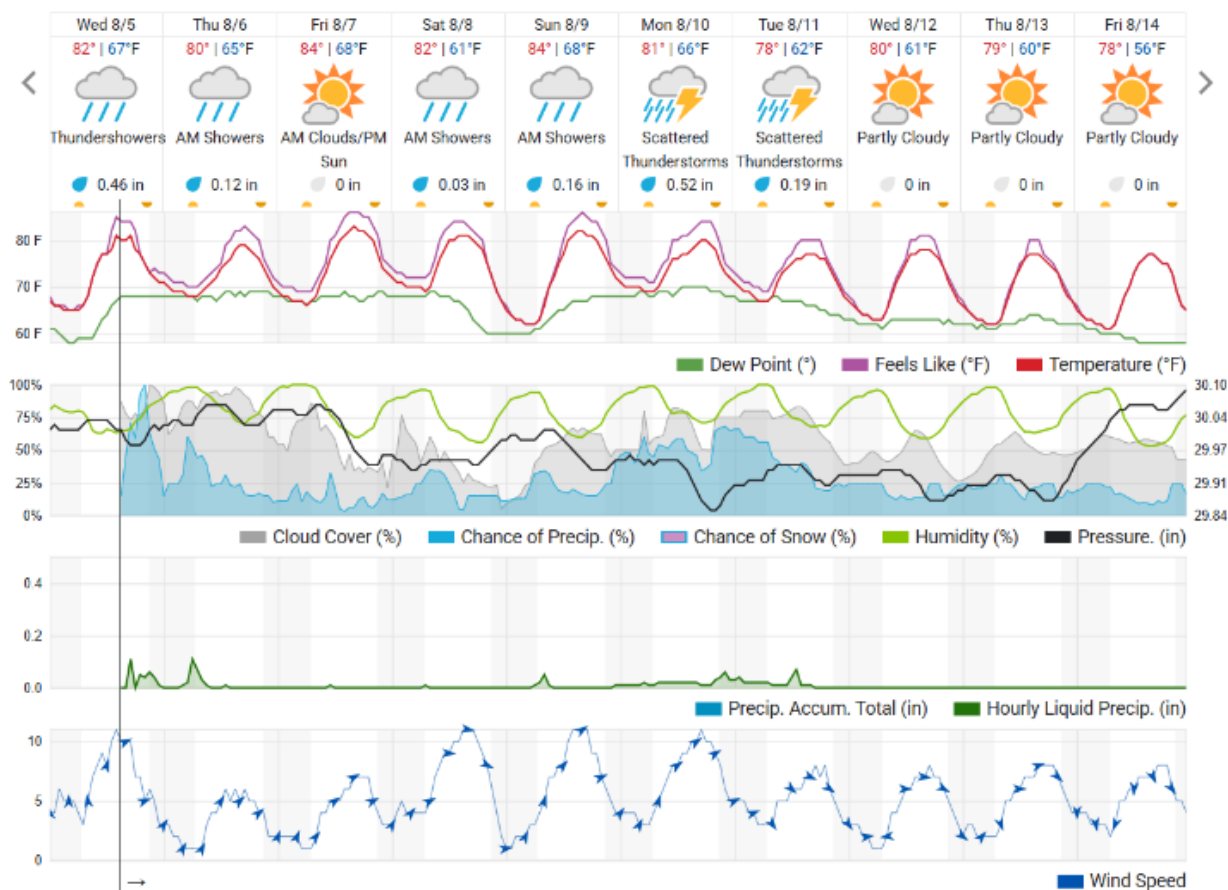
This year, weekly crop water use updates will continue to be shared through the SW MI Crop Updates, and for added convenience, updates will also be sent through direct email and text messages. If you would like to see an additional location included in the report, please contact Angie Gradiz at gradizme@msu.edu 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 3 - August 9					
Crop	Growth stage	Constantine	Berrien Springs	Entrican	Hart
	Reference ET	1.23	1.28	1.07	1.24
Corn	V12	1.23	1.28	1.07	1.24
	VT, Silk, Blister, Dough, Begin Dent	1.35	1.41	1.18	1.36
	Full Dent	1.23	1.28	1.07	1.24
Soybeans	R2 (Full bloom)	1.35	1.41	1.18	1.36
	R3 (Begin pod) - R4 (Full pod)	1.35	1.41	1.18	1.36
	R5 (Begin seed)	1.35	1.41	1.18	1.36
Potato	Tuber bulk	1.05	1.09	0.91	1.05
	Bulk	0.74	0.77	0.64	0.74
	Pre-Senescence	0.37	0.38	0.32	0.37

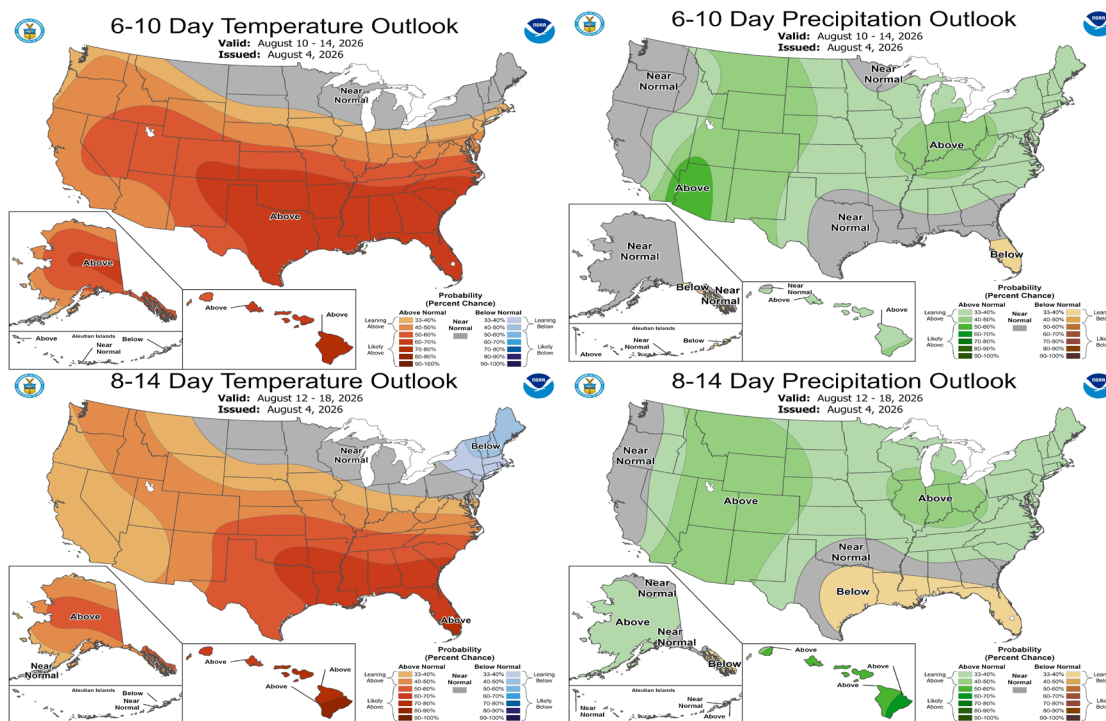
Weather Update

Rain over the past weekend ranged throughout the region from negligible to over half an inch. Otherwise, the past week was mostly sunny, warm and clear. Temperatures are expected to remain about the same moving into the next week, but there is a much higher chance of precipitation forecast from today (August 6) until Tuesday (August 11). Currently, the forecast calls for nearly an inch of precipitation, which would be a welcome addition to the dry soil conditions.



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

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The 6-10 day (August 10-14, top) and 8-14 day (August 12-18 bottom) outlooks for temperature (left) and precipitation (right).

Calendar

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

- Aug 11** [Michigan Agricultural Irrigation Water Use Efficiency Program](#). 10:00-1:00 pm. MSU Dairy Cattle Teaching Center. Join the Michigan Agricultural Irrigation Water Use Efficiency Program for an in-field demonstration on August 11, 2026.
- Aug 11** [New Forage Revenue Protection Program Webinar](#). 2:00 pm EDT (1 pm CDT). Online via Zoom. Learn about the new Forage Production Revenue Protection insurance program providing protection against yield and price losses.
- Aug 13** [Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Nematode Management](#). 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. **1 RUP**
- Aug 19** [Michigan Manure Spill Response Field Day](#). 8-11:30 am. Hillsdale County. Learn how to respond effectively to manure spills through live demonstrations, including spill containment, response procedures, utilizing manure spill kits, and safe use of 4-gas monitors.
- Aug 20** [Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series – Establishing New Hayfields](#). 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.
- 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**

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- 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

Time well-spent for seed treatment education

Published on August 5, 2026

Register today for in-person or virtual seed treatment education opportunities coming up in August and September. RUP and CCA credits requested.

Optimal Corn Relative Maturity Map

Published on August 4, 2026

This map shows the corn hybrid relative maturity to maximize yield, given the typical planting time in each Michigan county.

Tips for roller crimping cereal rye

Published on August 3, 2026

Want to roller crimp next spring? Start planning now.

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Southwest Michigan field crops update – July 30, 2026

Published on July 30, 2026

Soybeans are in pod or seed formation stages.

New MSU Extension farm stress training toolkit expands resources for Michigan and beyond

Published on July 29, 2026

MSU Extension has launched two updated presentations for agricultural professionals focused on farm stress management and effective communication with farmers.

Can irrigation or rain clear wildfire smoke?

Published on July 27, 2026

Understanding water as a tool for clearing the air.

Southwest Michigan field crops update – July 23, 2026

Published on July 23, 2026

Most soybeans are in pod formation, and many corn acres have tassels and silks out.

Michigan AgrAbility 2025 updates

Published on July 22, 2026

For farmers, injuries, chronic health conditions, disabilities and the effects of aging can make everyday tasks more difficult and increase the risk of further injury.

Mole Drains

Published on July 21, 2026

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

'It changed my life': Urban farmer finds stability through counseling support

Published on July 21, 2026

Chris Huntoon operates a microgreens farm in downtown Grand Rapids where constant demands and financial strain eventually took a toll.

Michigan Farmland Lease Template and How-to recording now available

Published on July 21, 2026

Download the template and watch our recording for tips on adjusting it.

Agricultural Water Use Needs Assessment Report

Published on July 21, 2026

Michigan is the second most diverse agricultural state in the country with over 300 recognized commodities. Michigan has access to nearly 20% of the world's fresh water supply and is a critical resource for the state.

Local basis strength could yield maximum profits on stored grain

Published on July 21, 2026

Have you checked local basis and pricing opportunities for your stored grain?

Michigan Farmland Lease Template

Published on July 20, 2026

The Michigan Farmland Lease Template can be used for annual crops, orchards and other perennial plantings, and pastureland rental agreements.

Improve your irrigation system efficiency with the Mobile Irrigation Lab

Published on July 20, 2026

Improve water application uniformity, reduce energy costs, and optimize irrigation performance with a free on-farm system evaluation.

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2025 Farm Bill Program payment estimates available

Published on July 17, 2026

Does PLC or ARC-CO offer more support in your county?

Precision agriculture: Long-term yield data show regenerative management practices improve yield stability and farm resilience

Published on July 17, 2026

Regenerative management, like no-tillage and cover crops, can help farms withstand droughts, floods and extreme heat. Research shows regenerative management improves yield stability and resilience to yield variability.

Southwest Michigan field crops update – July 16, 2026

Published on July 16, 2026

Soybeans are flowering and entering early pod formation. Tasseling started in corn, and seed corn detasseling began in earnest.

MSU Enviroweather tools available to help Michigan potato growers assess late blight risk and volunteer survival

Published on July 16, 2026

Late blight tools previously hosted by the MSU potato pathology program have been upgraded and adapted, and are now available through MSU Enviroweather.



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