

## Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates April 2021

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 me an email or call the office.

### Remote Pesticide Applicator Testing Now Available

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) announced on March 25<sup>th</sup> that pesticide applicators can now take their certification exams through **remotely proctored**, online testing. This new testing capability is provided by [Metro Institute](#), which offers computer-based pesticide certification exams in multiple states.

“MDARD encourages applicators with 2019 and 2020 credentials to schedule their exams as soon as possible. With the certification extensions implemented in 2020, an unusually high number of applicators will need to take exams over the next few months,” says Brian Verhougstraete, MDARD’s Pesticide Section Manager. “Between online and in-person exams at Metro Institute’s testing centers, there is currently a lot of availability. However, as the **June 30 deadline approaches**, we expect exam availability to tighten up. We are strongly encouraging applicators to schedule their exams now.”

To take an online exam, applicants will need a computer with a microphone and video camera, and a reliable high-speed internet connection. After an applicator passes an exam, they immediately get their results and are certified. The fee for online exams is \$65 per test.

### USDA Reopens Pandemic Assistance Program Sign-Up

In late March, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that USDA is establishing new programs and efforts to bring financial assistance to farmers, ranchers and producers who felt the impact of COVID-19 market disruptions. The new initiative—[USDA Pandemic Assistance for Producers](#)—will reach a broader set of producers than in previous COVID-19 aid programs. USDA is dedicating at least \$6 billion toward the new programs. The Department will also develop rules for new programs that will put a greater emphasis on outreach to small and socially disadvantaged producers, specialty crop and organic producers, timber harvesters, as well as provide support for the food supply chain and producers of renewable fuel, among others. Existing programs like the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) will fall within the new initiative and, where statutory authority allows, will be refined to better address the needs of producers.

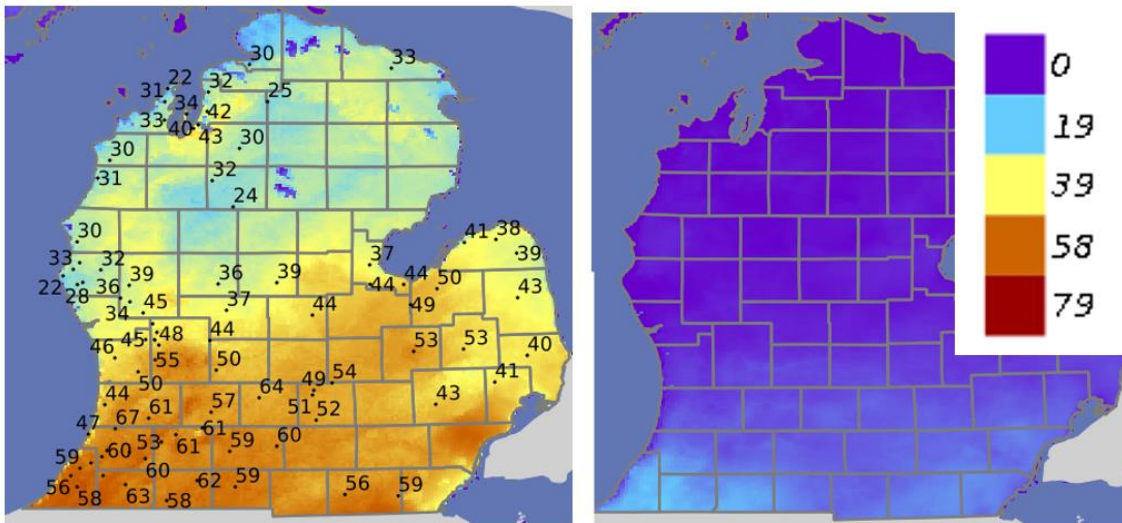
### New Seed Treatment Product for Pythium Available for 2022

MSU field crops pathologist Marty Chilvers had this to say about the new product: “Commercial launch will be next season (2022). [Syngenta’s Vayantis](#) adds to a now small number of products which in addition to mefenoxam/metalaxyl provide protection against Pythium and/or Phytophthora species. Intego from Valent is another example. We don’t have good risk prediction tools, but if folks have been struggling with stand establishment/evenness and Pythium species have been implicated then this might be a product to try.”

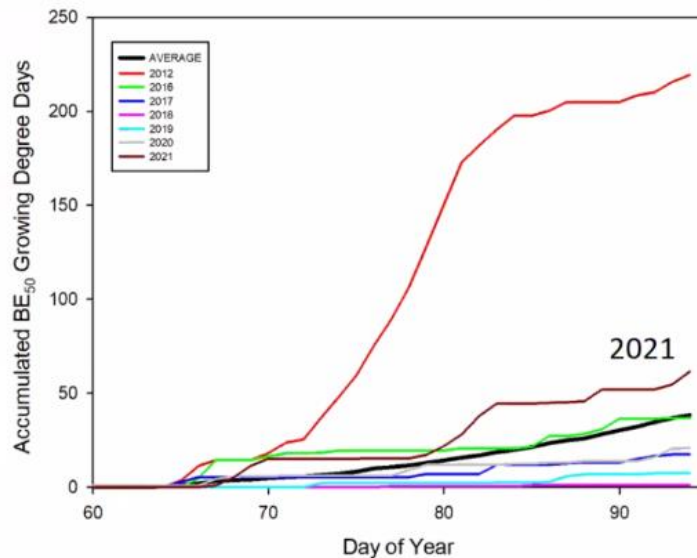
## Insect Pests May Be Early This Year

With the warmer temperatures we’ve had over the past month, MSU field crops entomologist Chris DiFonzo warns that insect development, which progresses according to accumulated heat units, will be sped up this spring. Also, with storm fronts that typically bring “migrating” insects to Michigan—like true armyworm and black cutworm—fairly common during this time of year (like over the next 4 days), we will likely see earlier egg laying in grass (armyworm) and broadleaf (cutworm) cover crops and weeds. I will begin trapping this week for these two pests—look for peak flight info in future newsletters.

## Weather and Crop/Pest Update In graphic form

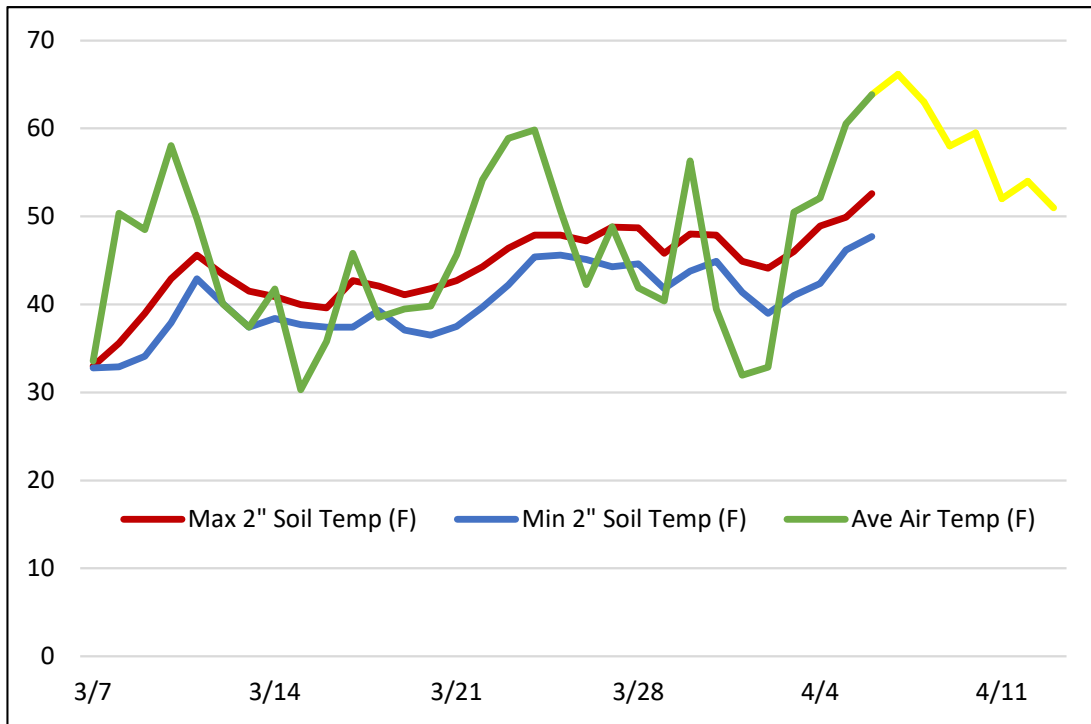


Cumulative (left) and 30-year normal (right) growing degree days (base 50F) from March 1-24. The warmer-than-normal spring means our winter wheat and forage crops are 1-2 weeks or so ahead at this point. Currently 69% of the wheat crop is rated good to excellent with an additional 25% as fair.

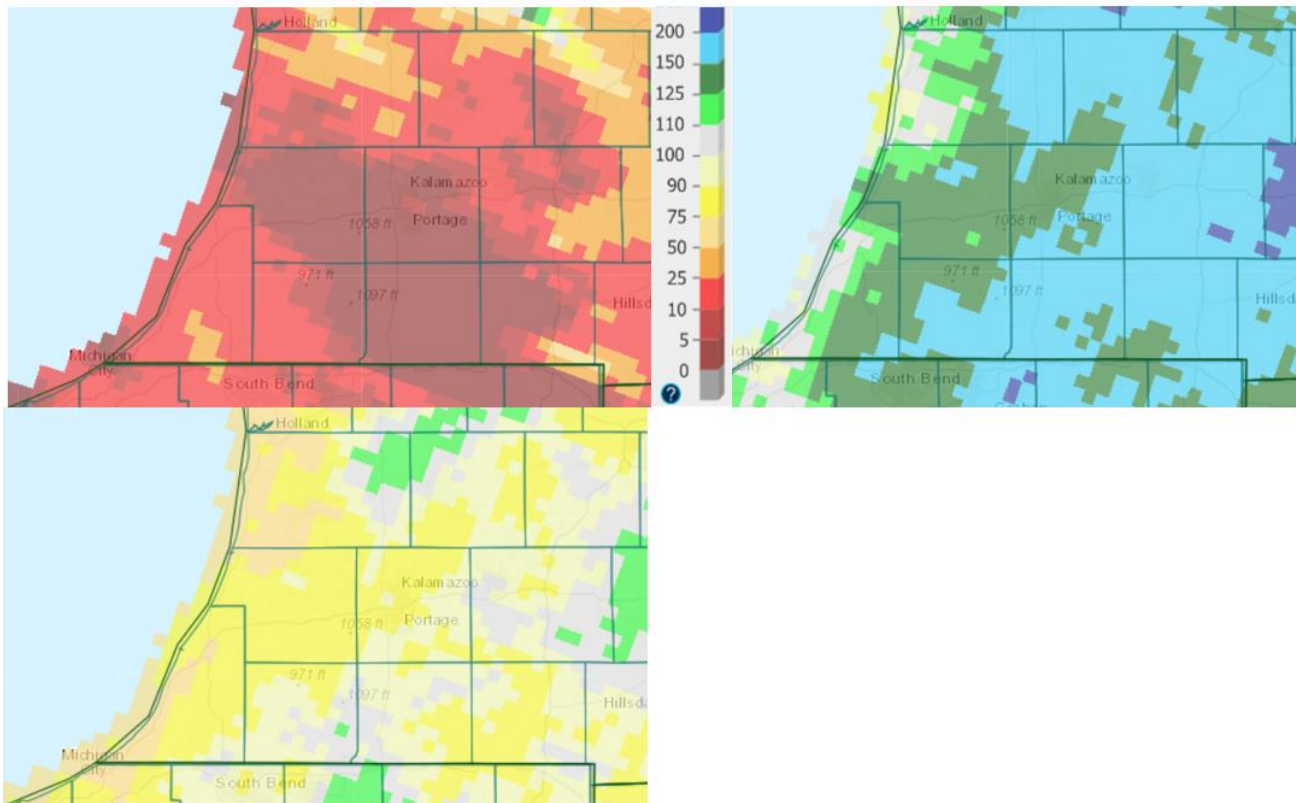


For those wondering how GDD’s this year compare with 2012 (red line)...not even close. According to MSU Extension ag climatologist Jeff Andresen, who provided this graph, that year was off the charts statistically, and we don’t expect to see another year like that in our lifetime.

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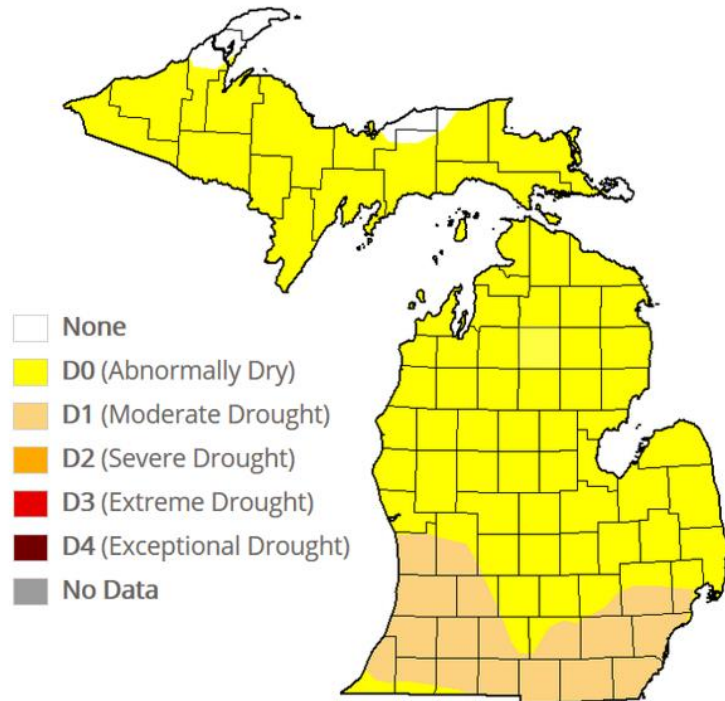


Air temperatures and soil temperatures at 2 in depth in bare soil over the past month. The yellow line is forecasted average air temperature through Apr. 13<sup>th</sup>. Soil temps are 3-8 °F warmer than they have been over the past 10 years at this time of year, aside from 2010 and 2012, both of which saw a very warm March. With the cooler weather coming up, we can expect soil temps to dip back down into the 40's again for a while.

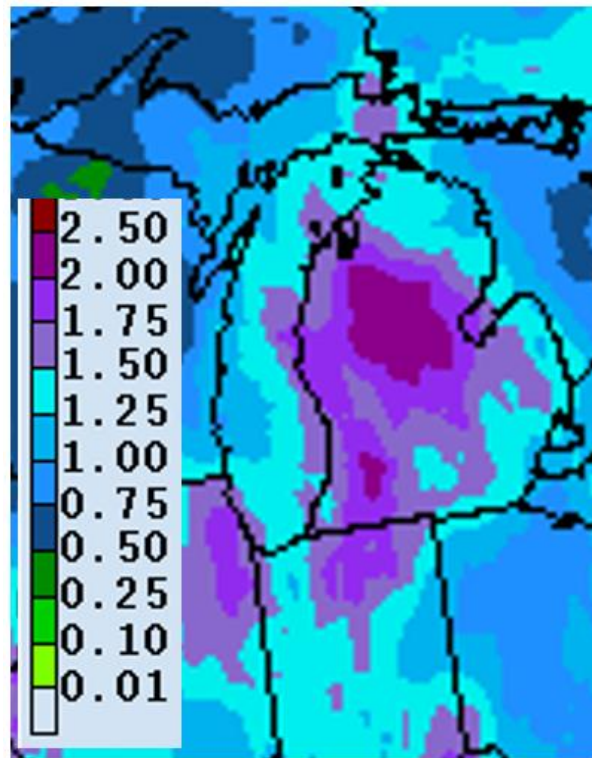


Precipitation percentage of normal for the last 7 (upper left), 14 (upper right) and 30 days (lower) as of Wednesday. March was drier than normal, and aside from the heavy rainfall that came during the last week of March, things have been looking very dry so far this spring.

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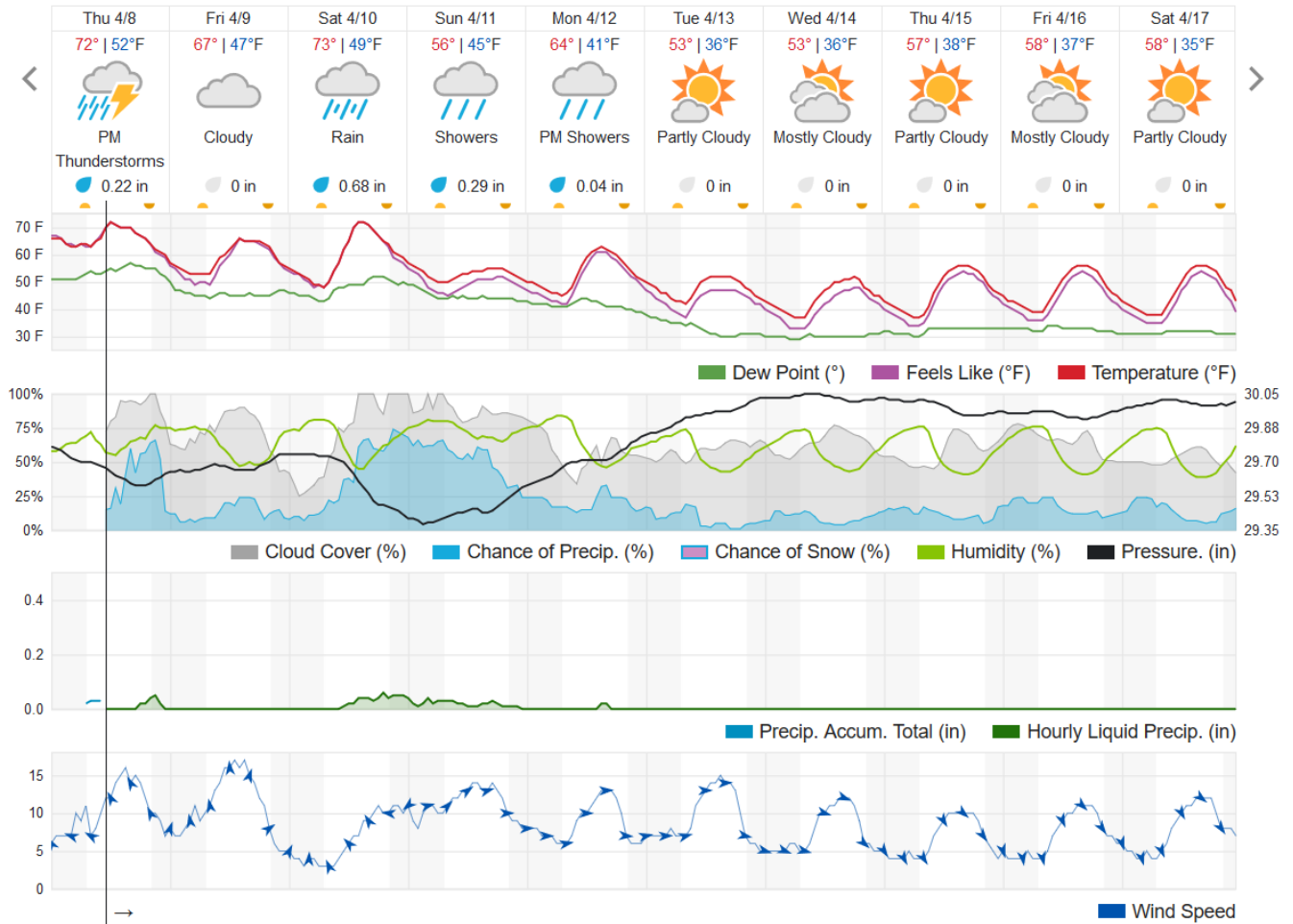


The US Drought Monitor as of April 1. Essentially the entire state is suffering from dry conditions with most of our region being under a moderate drought. Hopefully this will improve over the coming week....

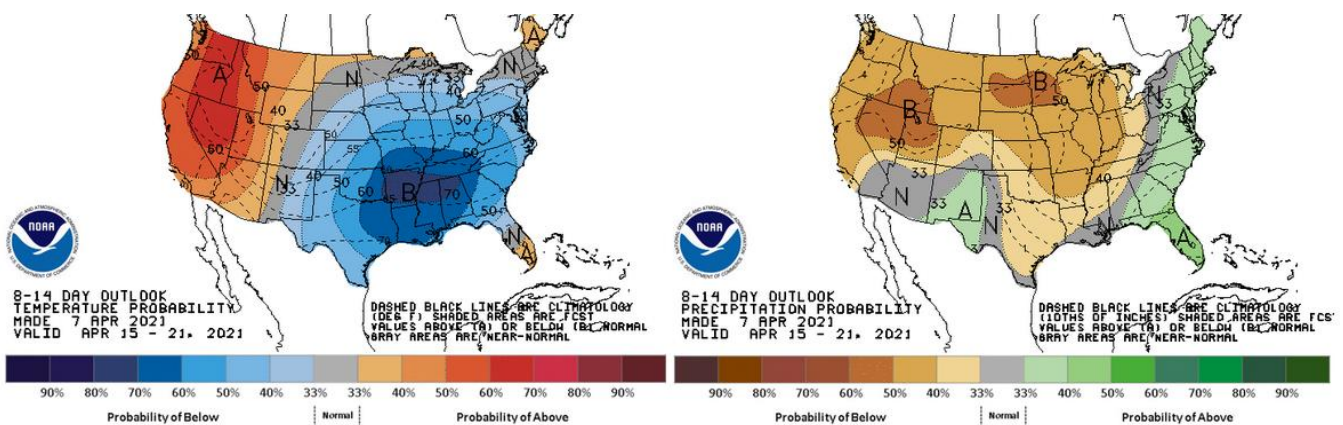


Precipitation forecast for Apr 8-15. Up to 0.5 in could fall today (Thursday) but most of this is expected over the weekend. Hopefully this will help to replenish soil moisture for early-planted fields.

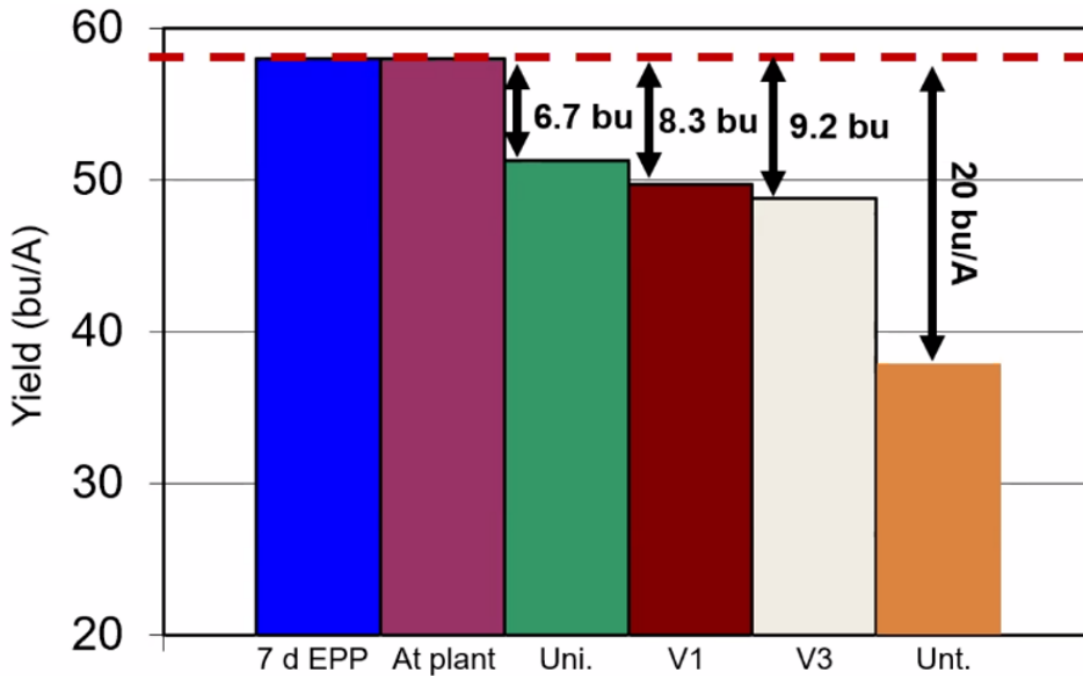
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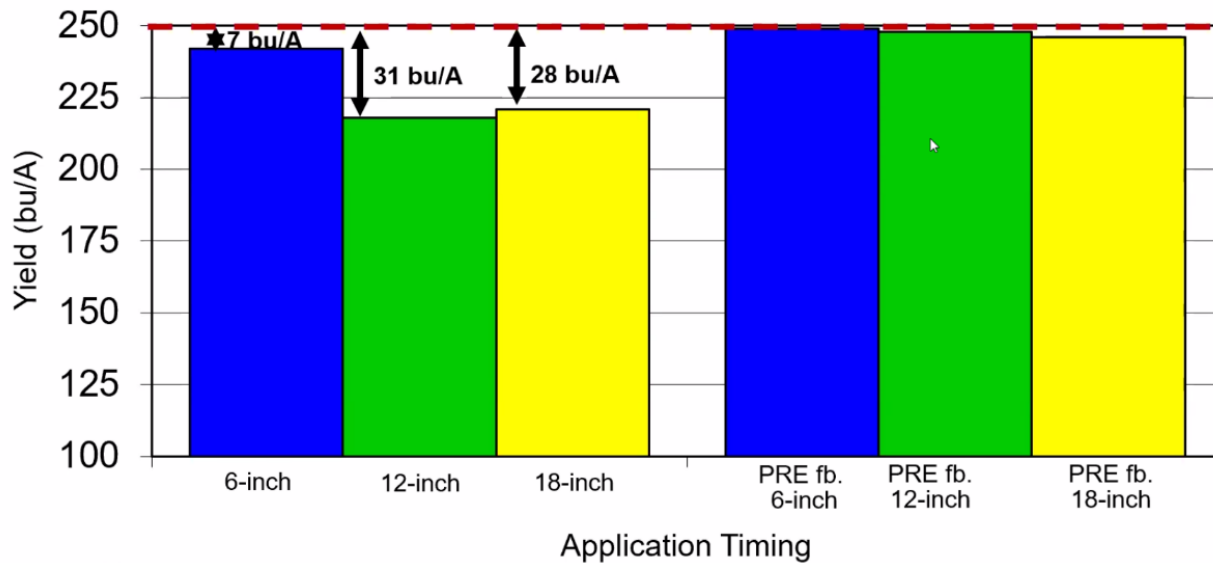
The 10-day weather forecast for Kalamazoo according to wunderground.com. Temperature and precipitation are expected to be near-normal to above-normal over the extended weekend before turning cooler.



The 8-14 day outlook (Apr 15-21) for temperature (left) and precipitation (right). The 6-10 day outlook is essentially the same.



Impact of weed control timing on soybean yield. Christy Sprague shared that according to their research, delaying herbicide applications to even the unifoliolate stage results in significant yield reduction—as much as 0.25 bu/ac/day. For example, delaying until V1 resulted in a \$37.81/ac loss (at \$13.75 beans).



Including a PRE herbicide in the burndown for corn followed by a POST herbicide application at 6, 12 or 18 in resulted in essentially no yield loss compared with not including a residual. Graphic courtesy of Christy Sprague during this week’s Virtual Breakfast.

One effective SOA <sup>§</sup>	Two effective SOA's
1. 2,4-D ester (1 pt)* + glyphosate <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">4</span>	<b>Combinations -</b>  1. 2,4-D ester (1 pt)* + Sharpen (1 oz) + glyphosate + MSO <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">4</span> <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">14</span> 2. Sharpen (1 oz) + Liberty + MSO <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">10</span> <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">14</span> 3. Liberty (32 - 43 fl oz) + Metribuzin <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">5</span> <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">10</span> 4. Gramoxone (3 pt) + Metribuzin <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">5</span> <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">22</span>
2. Sharpen (1 oz) + glyphosate + MSO <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">14</span>	
3. Liberty (36 - 43 fl oz) <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">10</span>	
4. Labeled <b>dicamba</b> (0.5 lb ae) <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">4</span> <i>(Xtend or XtendFlex soybean only)</i>	
5. Enlist One (1 qt) <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;">4</span> <i>(Enlist soybean only)</i>	

\* Apply at least 7 d prior to planting

<sup>§</sup> Glyphosate-resistant horseweed

Another chart from Christy Sprague’s presentation highlighting the importance of including at least one (two is better) effective site-of-action herbicide for weed control in soybean. In these examples, she assumed horseweed (marestail) was glyphosate-resistant... a safe bet.

## Calendar

Titles are clickable links to online content when highlighted and underlined

- Apr 15**     **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast.** 7-8am. Soil Fertility Issues with Kurt Steinke. One RUP and one CCA credit available for each live session. No cost to you, register online once for whole season.
  
- Apr 19**     **How to Put Together a Balance Sheet Online Workshop.** 10-11am. In this MSU Extension meeting, we will have an open, hands-on discussion about how to put together your own balance sheet using just a couple handy, free tools. Cost is free, register online.
  
- Apr 22**     **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast.** 7-8am. Soil Fertility Issues with Kurt Steinke. One RUP and one CCA credit available for each live session. No cost to you, register online once for whole season.
  
- Apr 22**     **Converting Agricultural Equipment for No-Till/Low-Till Farming.** 9-10am. The Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District is hosting a free virtual workshop on Converting Agricultural Equipment for No-Till/Low-Till Farming. Registration is not necessary, visit the website and follow the “Live from Avilla” Zoom link to join.
  
- Apr 23**     **CRP Grasslands Signup.** Deadline for CRP Grasslands signup. Contact your local FSA office for more information and to apply.
  
- Apr 29**     **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast.** 7-8am. Soil Fertility Issues with Kurt Steinke. One RUP and one CCA credit available for each live session. No cost to you, register online once for whole season.
  
- July 12&13**     **Large Truck and Tractor Tire Collections.** 9am-12pm (12<sup>th</sup>) and 4-7pm (13<sup>th</sup>). Van Buren County Building & Grounds, 753 Hazen Street, Paw Paw. The Van Buren Conservation District is hosting large truck and tractor tire collections this year at no direct cost to you. Sign up at the link above, you will hear from the recycling coordinator, Emilly Hickmott, by phone or email with more details closer to the event. You can also email her at [resourcerecovery@vanburencd.org](mailto:resourcerecovery@vanburencd.org) with any questions.

## MSU Extension Digest Briefs

### ALL HANDS NEEDED TO PROTECT WILD BEE POLLINATORS

**PUBLISHED ON APRIL 8, 2021**

New research expands understanding that collaboration among farmers, consumers, policymakers and researchers is needed to support pollination by wild bees and honey bees across agricultural landscapes.

### SIGN UP TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MIDWESTERN HEMP DATABASE AND CULTIVAR CHECK PROGRAM

**PUBLISHED ON APRIL 7, 2021**

Participants will receive discounted cannabinoid testing.

### EARLY SEASON WEED CONTROL ON FIELD CROPS VIRTUAL BREAKFAST

**PUBLISHED ON APRIL 2, 2021**

Join us April 8, 2021, to hear about early season weed control recommendations from Christy Sprague.

### SOIL FERTILITY: START RIGHT TO FINISH WELL WITH FIELD CROPS VIRTUAL BREAKFAST

**PUBLISHED ON APRIL 2, 2021**

Join us April 15, 2021, as Kurt Steinke shares nutrient management recommendations for the 2021 field crops season.

### PLANT IDENTIFICATION? THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT—ACTUALLY SEVERAL!

**PUBLISHED ON APRIL 2, 2021**

Plant identification apps for smart phones have seen significant improvements over the past several years, offering the opportunity to take a photo and get an instant identification in many cases.

### WOMEN SHAPING AGRICULTURE: INTERVIEW WITH MEGGHAN HONKE SEIDEL

**PUBLISHED ON APRIL 1, 2021**

Women Shaping Agriculture is an initiative in which MSU Extension educators host conversational interviews that enable women to share their experiences and perspectives about their diverse roles in Michigan agriculture.

### CROP BUDGET ESTIMATOR TOOL FOR GRAINS (DETAILED)

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 29, 2021**

This is the detailed version of the Crop Budget Estimator Tool. This tool allows more in-depth analysis and budget construction.

### BEGIN MANAGING WHITE MOLD IN SOYBEANS THIS SPRING

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 24, 2021**

White mold can be a damaging disease of Michigan soybeans. Consider implementing management practices this spring in fields prone to white mold.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLANTING SOYBEANS AFTER SOYBEANS

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 18, 2021**

Make sure the benefits of planting second-year soybeans exceed the risks and manage the increased risk with proven practices.

### FALL HARVEST CONDITIONS LEFT A MIXED BAG OF CHALLENGES IN SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN FIELDS

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 18, 2021**

Late harvest during wet conditions left ruts in some fields in 2020. Waiting for dry conditions to fix them may be beneficial, but don't overlook the value of wheat and deep rooted cover crops to help remediate compaction.



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### FIELD CROPS VIRTUAL BREAKFAST SERIES KICKS OFF 2021 GROWING SEASON BEGINNING APRIL 1

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 15, 2021**

This free weekly series for farmers and agribusinesses focuses on field crop pest and crop management topics during the growing season.

### PHOSPHORUS AND POTASSIUM FERTILIZER RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGH-YIELDING, PROFITABLE SOYBEANS

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 12, 2021**

Maximize your economic returns from phosphorus and potassium fertilizer applications to soybeans.

### NEW GRANT TO HELP CARROT AND WHEAT GROWERS DETER INVISIBLE PESTS

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 12, 2021**

Entomologist Marisol Quintanilla will lead a team in unraveling the mysteries of a microscopic pest of carrots and wheat.

### COVID-19 VACCINE VIDEOS FOR AGRICULTURE WORKERS IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 5, 2021**

In Michigan, agricultural employees are now eligible to receive the vaccine. Information about the vaccine is important for reaching high vaccination coverage against COVID-19.

### CONSIDER CONDUCTING AN ON-FARM SOYBEAN RESEARCH TRIAL IN 2021

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 4, 2021**

Producers can learn new information about how new products, management practices and equipment perform on their farms by conducting replicated research trials.

### STATUS OF MICHIGAN'S OVERWINTERING 2021 WHEAT CROP

**PUBLISHED ON MARCH 2, 2021**

Even though air temperatures dropped to as low as -18 degrees Fahrenheit in February, the wheat crop around the state is still in excellent condition.

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