

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates February 2022

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.

Ag Action Alternative Meeting Forced Online

Due to the forecasted storm system coming through this week, the field crops meeting being offered by MSU Extension as an alternative to Ag Action Day is being switched to a virtual meeting. Since there will be no venue or lunch costs, we are able to offer the meeting free to all registrants. See the calendar of events below for details on how to register. Attendees can earn 5 RUP and 4 CCA credits.

The slightly abbreviated agenda is as follows.

9:15	Welcome
9:20	Update on the RUP Certification and Testing Options - Bruce MacKellar
9:35	An Open Mic Discussion about Soil Fertility on Southwest Michigan Soils - Dr. Kurt Steinke - MSU Soil Fertility Specialist
10:40	What to consider when building fertility program around a manure application - Sarah Fronczak, MSU Manure Utilization and Environmental Management Educator
11:25	MSUE Excel Fertilizer Planning Tool - Jon La Porte, MSU Farm Management Educator
12:00	Snow Plowing with a sandwich?
1:00	Weed Control and Manure Applications -- What situations have led to the worst challenges in Michigan to Date and Ways to Address Them -- Christy Sprague (taped presentation)
1:30	Tar Spot Considerations for 2022 - Basic Tips for Managing Tar Spot to Protect Your Corn Fields, Tar Spot Surveys and Prelim Survey Results -- Bruce MacKellar
2:00	Commodity Market Outlook and Increased Input Costs, Walking the Tightrope of Farm Profitability in 2022. - Matt Gammans, MSU Production Economics Specialist or Jon LaPorte
2:40	Program Wrap Up and Credits

ARC/PLC & Crop Insurance Decisions Webinar

With the deadline of March 15 approaching for FSA's [Agriculture Risk Coverage \(ARC\)](#) and [Price Loss Coverage \(PLC\)](#) and [Federal Crop Insurance](#) signup, many farmers are faced with big decisions for the 2022 crop year. To help inform those decisions, experts from Michigan State University Extension and USDA Farm Service Agency will host two webinars to provide with information to help them evaluate their risk and make decisions regarding Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage sign up and new crop insurance options.

The free webinar will take place on **Feb. 17, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.** online via the Zoom platform. See the event calendar below for registration details.

At these meetings producers will:

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- Hear highlights from the 2021 decisions and how those decisions played out across the state.
- Learn the latest changes regarding ARC and PLC
- Learn about the current and new crop insurance options available to you
- Work through case examples using the MSU Extension Farm Bill Calculator to help make better decisions on ARC versus PLC (Each crop and FSA farm number may result in a different choice.).
- Discuss specific program details with experts

The election and enrollment period opened on Oct. 18, 2021 and runs through March 15, 2022. Producers can now make or change elections and enroll for 2022 ARC or PLC, providing future protections against market fluctuations.

The ARC-CO program provides income support tied to historical base acres, not current production, of covered commodities. ARC-CO payments are issued when the actual county crop revenue of a covered commodity is less than the ARC-CO guarantee for the covered commodity.

PLC program payments are issued when the effective price of a covered commodity is less than the respective reference price for that commodity. The effective price equals the higher of the market year average price (MYA) or the national average loan rate for the covered commodity.

Producers are encouraged to beat the rush and sign up early for ARC/PLC. Once signed up, modifications can be made up until the deadline of March 15. For more information about USDA safety net programs, contact your [local County USDA Service Center](#) or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Michigan Soybean Committee's Herbicide Strategy Meetings

You're invited to attend a regional meeting to hear from retailers about product availability for 2022 and also learn about management strategies and product alternatives from MSU weed scientist, Dr. Christy Sprague. RUP credits have been applied for and will likely be available. Each meeting will begin with breakfast at 8:00 a.m. and run until 11:00 a.m. There is no cost to attend, but registration is required to ensure accurate counts for caterers.

To register online, please visit the links for each location below, or call the Michigan Soybean Committee office at 989.652.3294.

(Please provide your name, meeting location, phone number and the number of people attending.)

February 2, The Pinnacle Center, 3330 Highland Dr., Hudsonville, MI 49426

[Hudsonville Registration](#)

February 3, Ingham County Fairgrounds, 700 E Ash St., Mason, MI 48854

[Mason Registration](#)

February 9, MSU Saginaw Valley Research & Extension Center, 3775 S Reese Rd., Frankenmuth, MI 48734

[Frankenmuth Registration](#)

USDA and Cornell Host First National Hemp Webinar Series

The USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and Cornell University has announced the launch of a webinar series on hemp research that aims to broaden the scope of training, education, and connectivity within the hemp community.

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Lectures will be given by various hemp research experts from academia, research laboratories, production facilities, and private industry:

- Feb. 9 – Indoor Cultivation: Dr. Bruce Bugbee
- Feb. 23 – Hemp Processing Systems: Dr. Heather Grab
- March 9 – Extraction Chemistry/Facility Design: Alisia Ratliff
- March 23 – The Endocannabinoid System: Ethan Russo M.D
- April 6 – Hemp Food Science: Hunter Friedland
- April 20 – Hemp Diversity/Genetics: Dr. Daniela Vergara
- May 4 – Economics of Hemp Production: Dr. Tyler Mark

The webinars will occur every other Wednesday from 2 pm – 3 pm EST and include an interactive Q&A session. [Registration is required.](#)

2021 Michigan Corn Hybrids Bulletin

The 2021 Michigan Corn Hybrids Compared Extension Bulletin E-431 is available and posted online on our website <https://www.canr.msu.edu/agronomy/Michigan-Corn-Hybrid-Trials/bulletins> and MSU trials website <https://varietytrials.msu.edu/corn>. Also available at the latter website are results for dry beans, soybean and wheat.

2021 Land Value & Leasing Rates

Every year, the USDA and many land grant universities conduct surveys in an attempt to measure various aspects of agricultural land prices. Due to recent departures of ag econ folks at MSU, it had been a couple of years since that survey was conducted for Michigan. However, in 2021, Dr. Matt Gammans did conduct the survey and summarized the results in the [2021 Land Value & Leasing Rates](#) which is available online.

Producers in Michigan Counties Eligible to Apply for FSA Emergency Loans

This Secretarial natural disaster designation allows the FSA to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters through emergency loans. [Emergency loans](#) can be used to meet various recovery needs including the replacement of essential items such as equipment or livestock, reorganization of a farming operation or the refinance of certain debts. FSA will review the loans based on the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability.

There were two triggering disasters in 2021: a frost/freeze that occurred during April 2 through May 30, 2021 and the drought that occurred from May 5, 2021 and continuing. The deadline to apply for both of these events is Sept. 19, 2022.

The following are counties included in the frost/freeze event in our region: St. Joseph County along with contiguous counties including Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, Van Buren, and Elkhart and LaGrange in Indiana.

The following are counties included in the drought event in our region: Allegan County along with contiguous counties including Barry, Kalamazoo, Kent, Ottawa and Van Buren.

On farmers.gov, the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster Assistance-at-a-Glance fact sheet](#), and [Farm Loan Discovery Tool](#) can help you determine program or loan options. To file a Notice of Loss or to ask questions about available programs, contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

New Insurance Option for Conservation-Minded Corn Farmers

Corn farmers who “split-apply” nitrogen now have another option for insurance coverage. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Risk Management Agency (RMA) announced the details of its Post Application Coverage Endorsement (PACE) in certain states for non-irrigated corn, providing coverage for producers who use this practice that saves producers money and is considered better for natural resources.

PACE provides payments for the projected yield lost when producers are unable to apply the post nitrogen application during the V3-V10 corn growth stages due to field conditions created by weather. PACE is offered in select counties in 11 states, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. It is available as supplemental coverage for Yield Protection (YP), Revenue Protection (RP), and Revenue Protection with Harvest Price Exclusion (RP-HPE) policies. The first sales closing date to purchase insurance is March 15, 2022.

This new crop insurance option builds upon RMA’s efforts to encourage use of conservation practices, including cover crops. For example, RMA recently provided \$59.5 million in premium support for producers who planted cover crops on 12.2 million acres through the new [Pandemic Cover Crop Program](#). Additionally, RMA recently updated policy to allow producers with crop insurance to [hay, graze or chop cover crops](#) at any time and still receive 100% of the prevented planting payment. This policy change supports use of cover crops, which can help producers build resilience to drought. To learn more about PACE, visit the [RMA’s Conservation webpage](#), which has frequently asked questions, a fact sheet and other resources.

NRCS Announces Conservation Funding Opportunities for 2022

USDA has several fiscal year 2022 assistance opportunities for agricultural producers and private landowners for key programs, such as the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP), [Conservation Stewardship Program](#) (CSP), [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program](#) (ACEP), [Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#) (RCPP) and [Agricultural Management Assistance](#) (AMA) program.

Applying for Assistance

NRCS accepts applications for its conservation programs year-round. State Technical Committees, composed of representatives from conservation and agricultural-related organizations, work with NRCS to set state-specific, ranking dates to evaluate applications for funding. These dates account for producer needs, staff workload and ensure potential participants have ample opportunity to apply. Producers should apply by their state’s ranking dates to be considered for funding in the current cycle.

Funding is provided through a competitive process. [State-specific, ranking dates](#) for all programs are available. Applications received after ranking dates will be automatically deferred to the next funding period.

Program Options

EQIP provides cost share assistance for producers to use 170-plus conservation practices to address a wide variety of resource concerns. Within EQIP, Conservation Incentive Contracts allow producers to further target priority resource concerns. CSP helps producers take their conservation activities to the next level through comprehensive conservation and advanced conservation activities. ACEP helps producers enroll wetlands, grasslands and

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farmlands into easements for long-term protection. Additionally, through RCPP, producers and landowners can work with partners who are co-investing with NRCS on targeted projects.

Historically Underserved Producer Benefits

Special provisions are also available for [historically underserved producers](#). For EQIP, historically underserved producers are eligible for advance payments to help offset costs related to purchasing materials or contracting services up front. In addition, historically underserved producers can receive higher EQIP payment rates (up to 90% of average cost). NRCS sets aside EQIP, CSP and ACEP funds for historically underserved producers.

Conservation Practices and Climate

NRCS conservation programs play a critical role in USDA’s commitment to partnering with farmers, ranchers, forest landowners and local communities to deliver climate solutions that strengthen agricultural operations and rural America. States may prioritize a variety of voluntary conservation practices through these NRCS programs, including those that support climate-smart agriculture and forestry (CSAF).

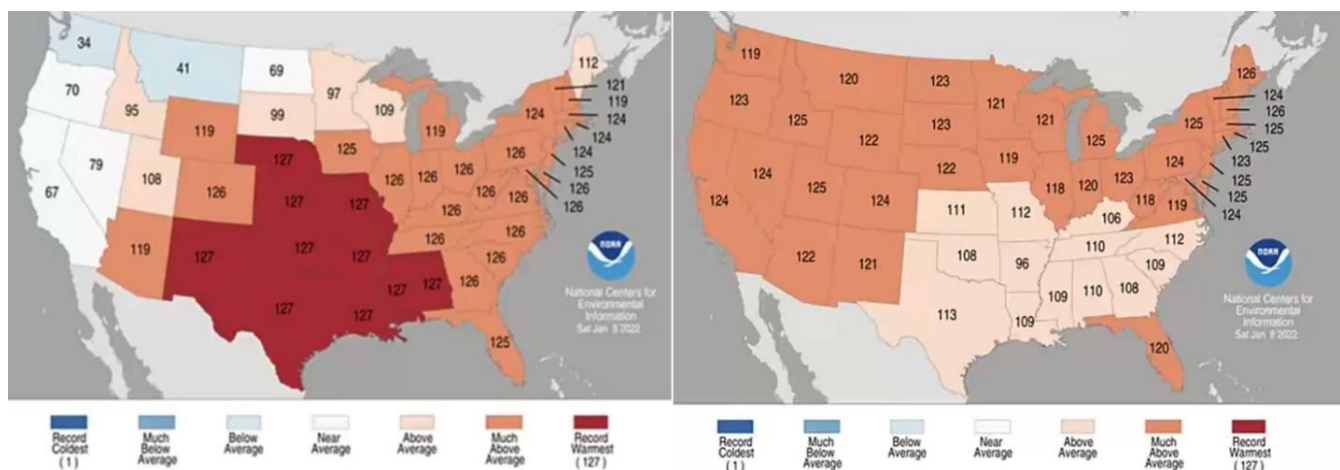
In fiscal year 2022, EQIP and CSP will provide targeted funding for CSAF practices, and Conservation Incentive Contracts – a new EQIP program – will be available nationwide with an emphasis on CSAF practices. Building on these efforts, NRCS will also prioritize climate investments through ACEP, RCPP and Conservation Innovation Grants.

Producers, landowners and forest managers interested in applying for assistance should contact the NRCS at their [local USDA Service Center](#).

Weather and Crop Update

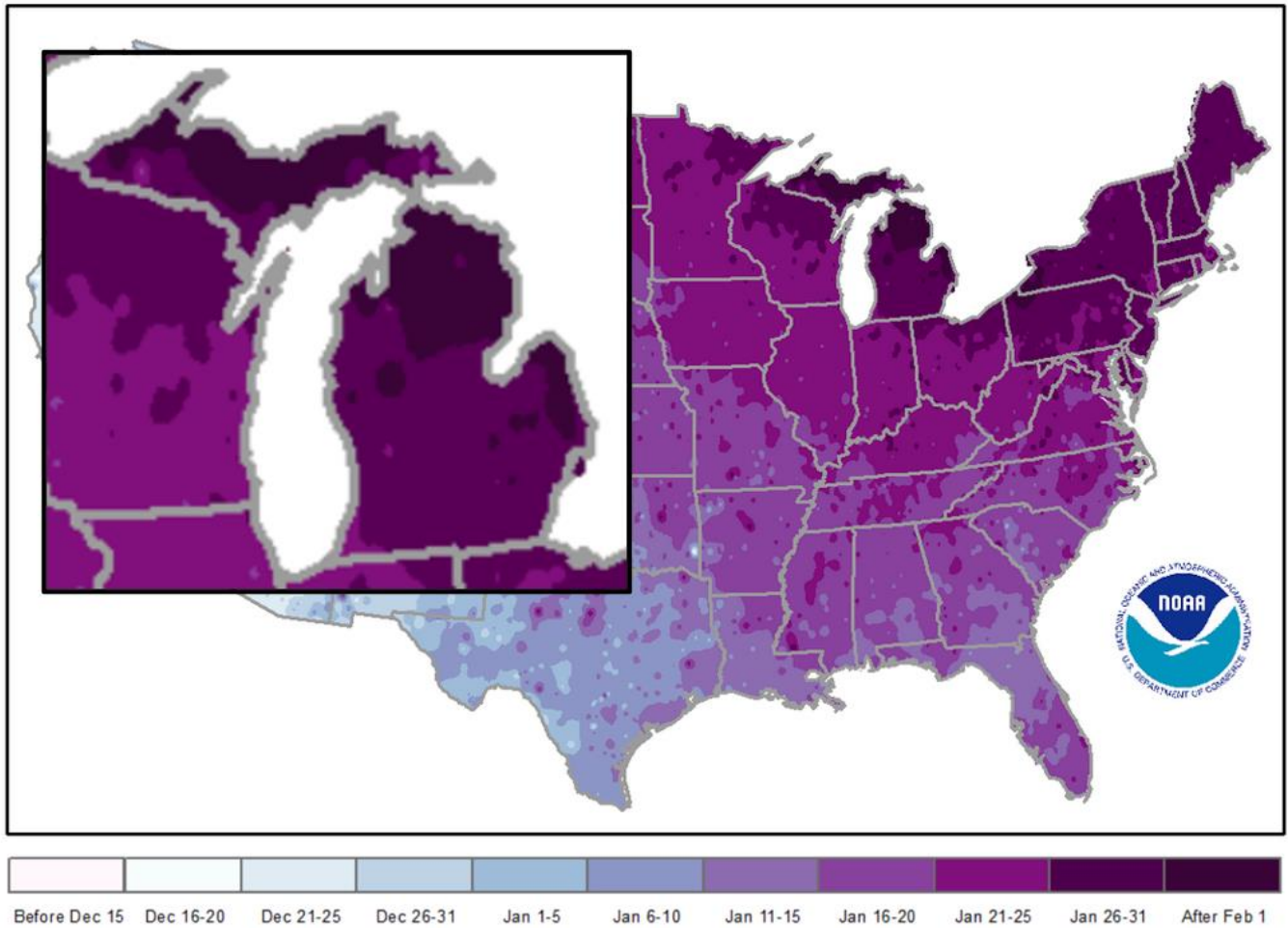
Temperatures in December were near record-setting in many states in the Upper Midwest—9th warmest over the past 127 years in Michigan. That kept some farmers out of fields that still needed to be harvested as equipment was still sinking in before temps dropped in January. Historically, the coldest day of the year occurs in the last week of January for much of the state, so although winter is far from over, on average we should be slowly climbing out of the deep cold. One trend of interest with regards to temperature is that Michigan has seen a 3 °F increase in mean annual temperature since 1900. According to NOAA, warming has been concentrated in winter and spring, while summers have not warmed substantially, a feature characteristic of much of the Midwest.

Precipitation so far this winter has been below normal, although the weather system moving through the region this week will change that a bit. Just for “fun”, I am including a few charts depicting changes in precipitation totals in Michigan over the past century...nothing surprising, but interesting to step back and get a long-term view of how things have been changing.

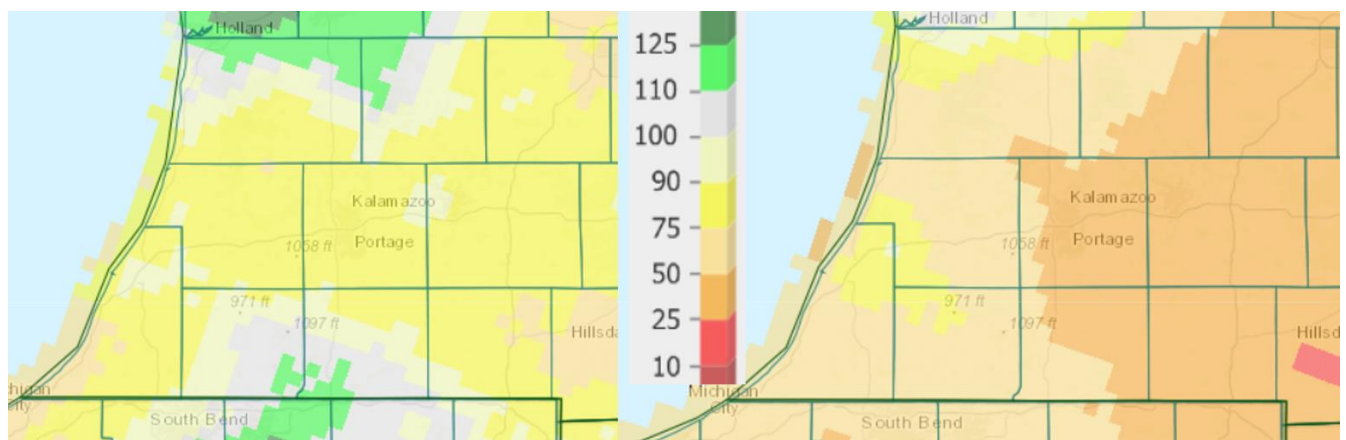


Statewide average temperature ranks for December 2021 (left) and January-December 2021 (right). A rank of 127 means the highest record on average. Reporting period 1895-2021.

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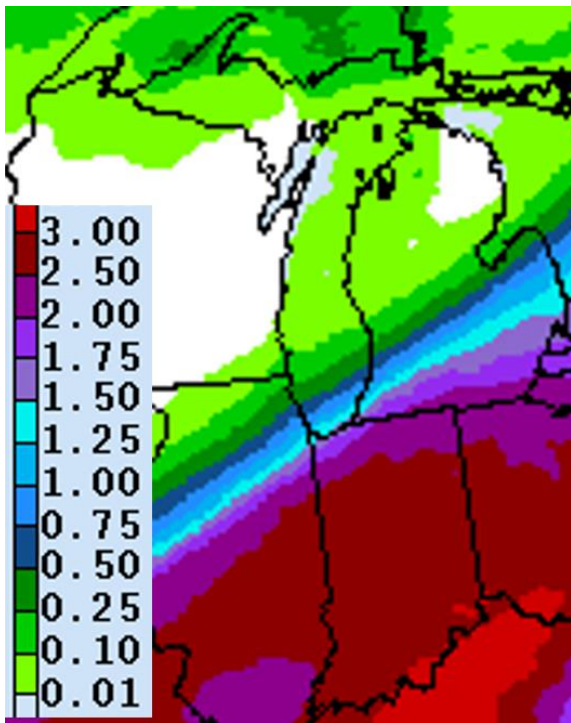


Day of coldest low temperature from 1991-2020.

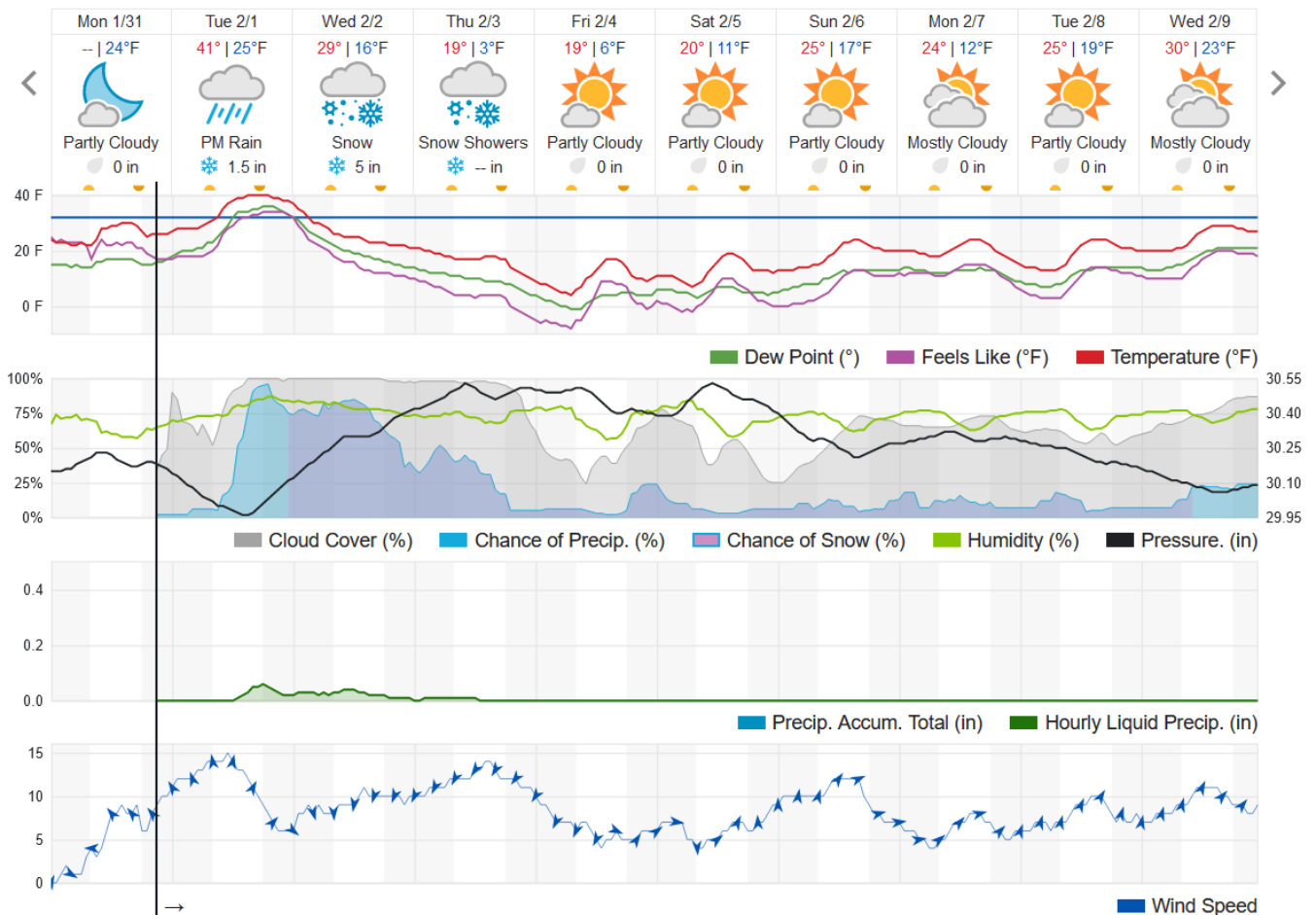


Precipitation percent of normal over the past 60 days (left) and 30 days (right) as of January 31.

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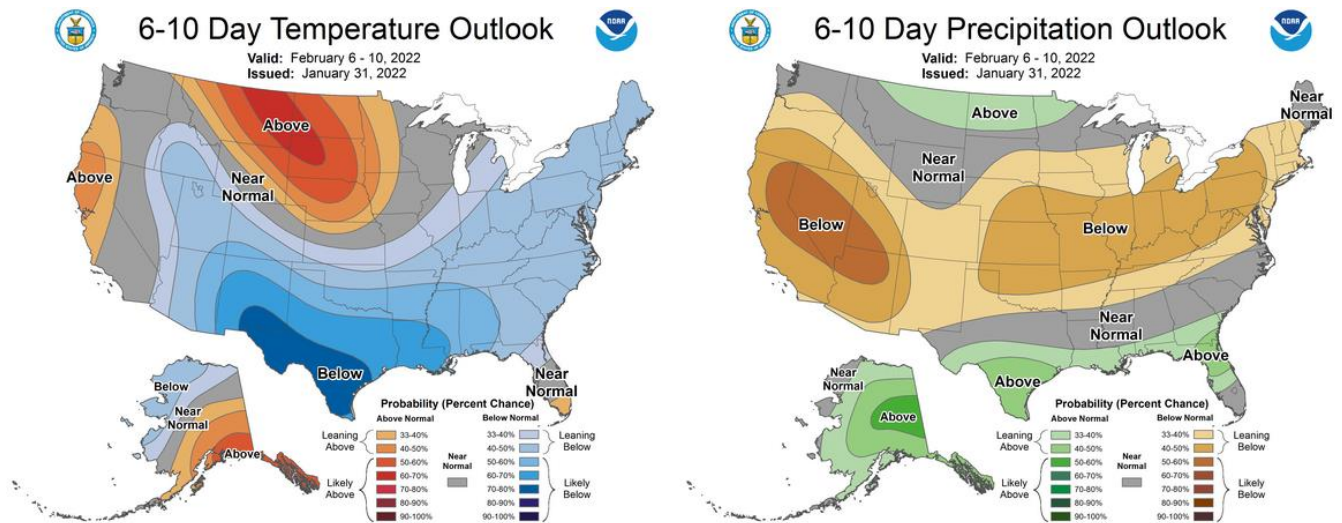


Precipitation forecast (in water equivalent) for Feb 1-8 with all of this predicted between Tuesday and Thursday.



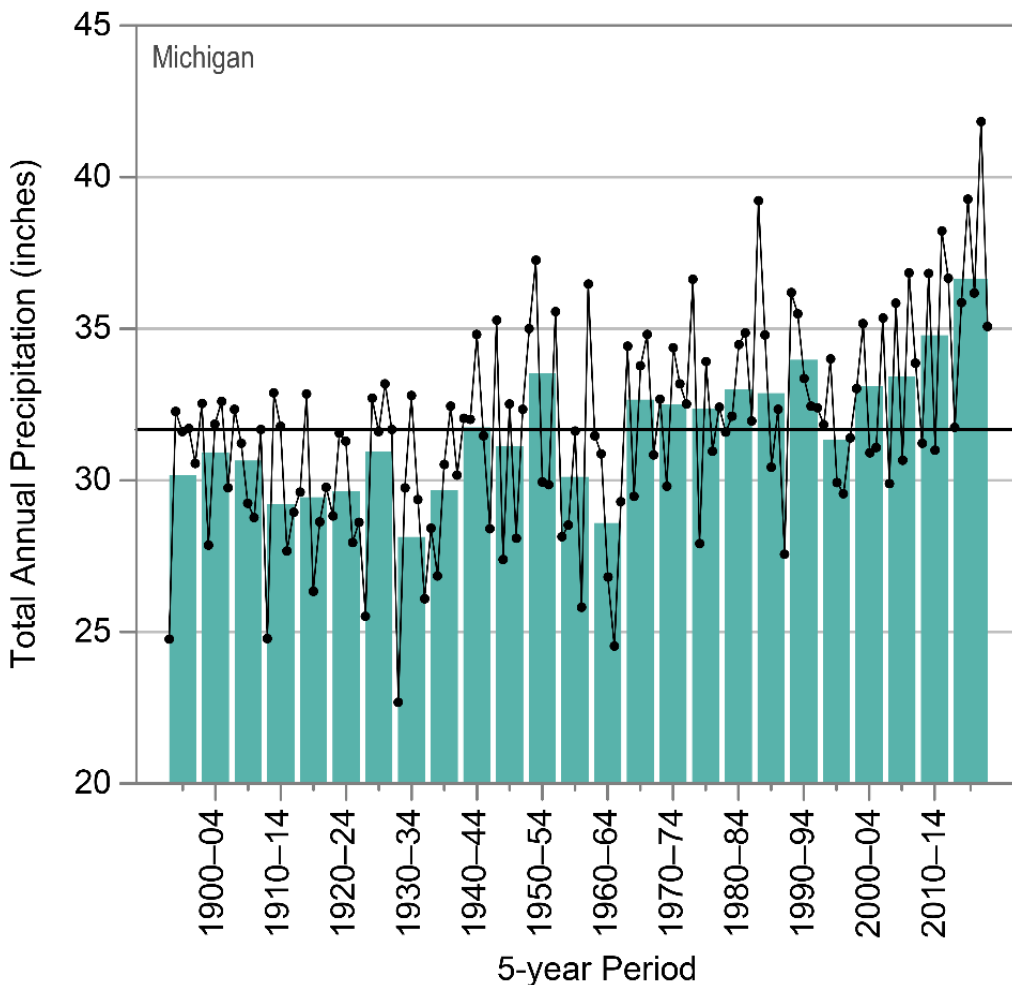
The 10-day weather forecast for Kalamazoo according to wunderground.com.

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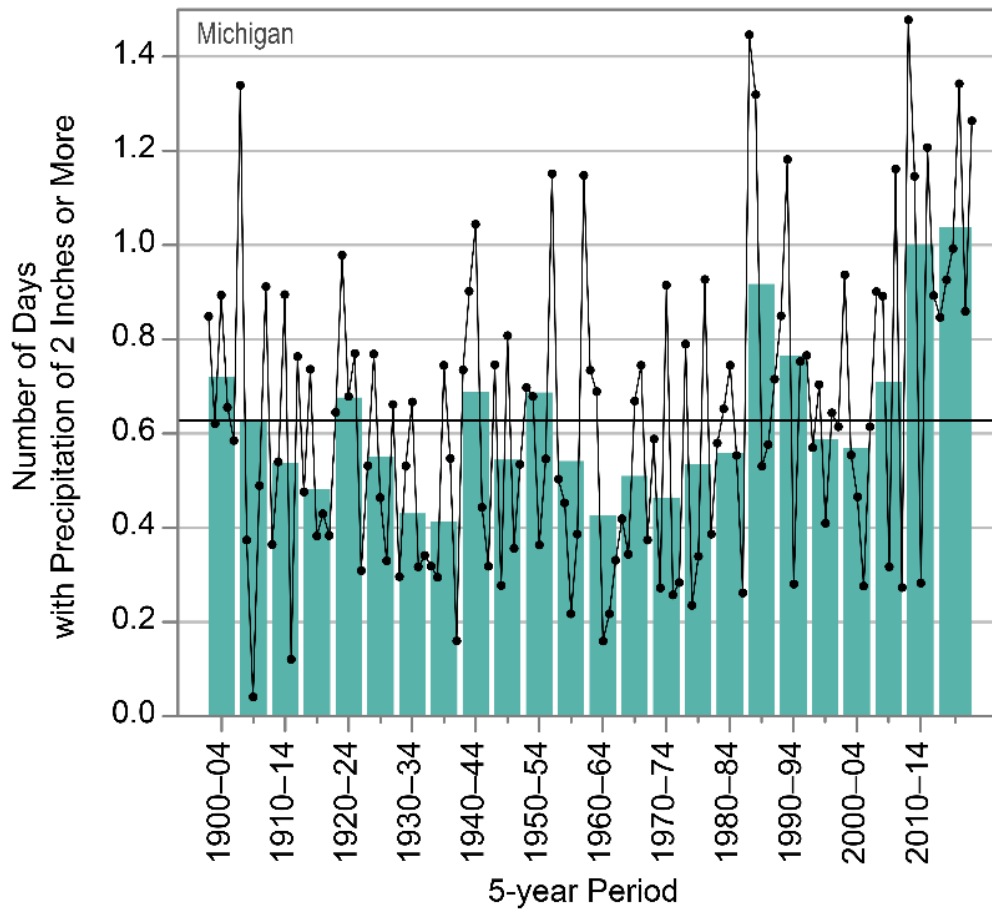
The 6-10 day outlook (Feb 6-10) for temperature (left) and precipitation (right) as of Jan 31.

Observed Annual Precipitation



Total annual precipitation for Michigan from 1895 to 2020. Dots show annual values, bars show averages over five-year periods. The horizontal black lines show the long-term (entire period) average of 31.7 inches.

Observed Number of 2-Inch Extreme Precipitation Events



Observed annual number of 2-inch extreme precipitation events (days with precipitation of 2 inches or more) for Michigan from 1900 to 2020. Dots show annual values, bars show averages over 5-year periods. The horizontal black line shows the long-term (entire period) average of 0.6 days.

Crops

The following is an excerpt from the year-end summary of crop production in Michigan from the USDA.

- Record high yields for corn, soybeans, dry beans and sugarbeets were recorded in Michigan in 2021
 - Corn: average yield was 174 bu/ac, up 21 bu from 2020
 - Soybean: average yield was 51 bu/ac, up 3 bu from 2020
- Nationally, corn for grain production was estimated at 15.1 billion bu, up 7% from 2020. Average yield in the United States was estimated at a record high 177.0 bu/ac, 5.6 bu above 2020.
- National soybean production totaled a record 4.44 billion bu, up 5% from 2020. The average yield was estimated at 51.4 bu/ac, 0.4 bushel above 2020.
- Michigan winter wheat seeded area for 2022 is estimated at 470,000 acres, a decrease of 23% from last year. Winter wheat planting progress lagged the five-year average for most of the season due to significant rainfall throughout much of October, before wrapping up just behind schedule around mid to late November. The crop condition was rated 50 percent good to excellent as of November 28, compared with 73 percent during the same period last year.

Announcements & Jobs

I tried adding this section about a year ago but it didn't take, so I'm trying again. If you have anything you would like to post here, please send it to me. That could include jobs available/wanted, services offered/needed, etc. If there is enough interest, I would consider switching this to a non-static board on Facebook that would be accessible to the entire ag community.

District Administrator Cass County Conservation District

The Cass County Conservation District is seeking a District Administrator to join our team of natural resource and environmental protection professionals. The primary function of this position is to provide program oversight, grant management, and records maintenance to support District activities, workflow, and financial operations.

The District Administrator will work from our Cassopolis office, located at 1127 E. State Street, Cassopolis, MI 49031. Due to COVID-19, staff presently split work between home and office. The District Administrator is a part-time position, working 28-32 hours per week with a full time option available per financial/program changes. While the majority of the workload is administrative and performed in an office setting, some fieldwork is required. The District Administrator takes direction and reports to the District Chair and Board of Directors while working cooperatively with all staff.

For position summary and responsibilities please visit cassccd.org for details.

Calendar

Titles are clickable links to online content when highlighted and underlined

- Feb 2** [Ag Action Field Crop VIRTUAL Update Meeting](#). 9:00am-3:00 pm. Held online via Zoom due to hazardous weather. Due to COVID-related issues, [Ag Action Day is cancelled for 2022](#). **However**, field crop sessions will be offered at this make-up meeting. Cost is free, register online.
- Feb 2-3** [Southwest MI Hort Days](#). Lake Michigan College's Mendel Center, 1100 Yore Avenue, Benton Harbor, MI. Sessions for vegetable tree fruit, grape, blueberry. Lunch both days is included. Preregistration will be available online or by mail. Contact Renee Tinkey at 269-944-1477 ext. 201 or tinkeyre@msu.edu or watch www.michigangrapesociety.org for more information.
- Feb 8** [MSU Extension Pest and Crop Management SE Regional Update](#). 9am-3pm. Family Center at Immaculate Conception Parish, 21 Ann St., Milan, MI (15 min from Cabella's and 15 min south of I-94). Cost is \$35. Register online.
- Feb 7** [Field Crops Webinar Series Begins](#). 7-8pm Monday evenings through March 28. Participants can register for single sessions (\$5 each) or the entire 8-week series (\$20). One RUP credit will be available for each live session. Register online. Contact Eric Anderson (eander32@msu.edu, 269-359-0565) with questions.
- Feb 16** [Michiana Irrigated Corn and Soybean Production Workshop](#). 8:30am-3pm. Blue Gate Restaurant, Shipshewana, IN. Call Purdue Extension (260-499-6334) or print out flyer and mail in form to register.
- Feb 17** [ARC/PLC & Crop Insurance Decisions Webinar](#). 6:30 to 8 p.m. Cost is free, register online.
- Feb 21** [Branch County Farmers Day Field Crops Sessions](#). 8am-12pm. Dearth Community Center, 262 S Sprague St, Coldwater, MI. [BCFD has been cancelled due to COVID challenges](#). **However**, the field crops educational sessions will be offered at this alternative event. RUP and CCA credits available. Cost is free due to generous local sponsors. Register online. Call the Branch County Extension office (517-279-4311) for more details.

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- Feb 21** **Pesticide Applicator Testing.** 8am-2pm. Dearth Community Center, 262 S Sprague St, Coldwater, MI. Pesticide training+testing session will be offered concurrently with the BCFD field crops educational session. This is the only testing session scheduled this winter for this part of the state. Must attend both training and testing. Core exam only, no categories, and no RUP credits available. Cost is \$25 for training, separate fee paid to MDARD for licensing. Register online. Contact John Stone at stonejo2@msu.edu or 517-353-5134 for more information.
- Mar** **MI Ag Ideas to Grow With.** This online program was offered to replace several ag-related meetings in the southwest last year due to COVID, and we will be offering it again during MSU's ANR month in 2022. Sessions related to field crops, animal ag, fruit and vegetable, farm management, home horticulture and other topics are planned. Check the MSU Extension website (<https://www.canr.msu.edu/outreach>) or the MI Ag Ideas to Growth With site (<https://www.canr.msu.edu/miagideas>) for more information.
- Mar 8-10** **2022 Drainage Workshop.** 524 S Shaw Ln, Farrall Ag Eng Hall, Room 106, East Lansing. Workshop intended for producers, landowners, drainage contractors, consultants, NRCS soil conservationists, engineers, MAEAP or other agency technicians, technical service providers, and others interested in learning about drainage concepts and design of subsurface drainage systems for crop production and environmental protection. Cost is \$450.
- Mar 11** **CRP General Signup Closes.** Agricultural producers and landowners can sign up for the [Conservation Reserve Program](#) (CRP) Jan. 31 to March 11, and the Grassland CRP signup will run from April 4 to May 13.

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING EMPLOYEES: AN INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOP FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYERS

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 31, 2022

Agricultural labor program features regional specialists in employment and human resources.

HERBICIDE STRATEGY MEETINGS FOR SOYBEAN GROWERS

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 28, 2022

The outlook for herbicide availability and specific weed control recommendations for soybeans will be presented at three regional meetings in early February.

MSU EXTENSION FIELD CROPS WEBINAR SERIES KICKS OFF WITH WEED CONTROL FOCUS ON FEB. 7

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 27, 2022

A team of two weed science specialists will address the topic of “Weed Management in 2022 – Herbicide Availability and Alternative Effective Options” in this 1-hour, online, evening session.

MICHIGAN WHEAT 101

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 24, 2022

A Guide for Soft Winter Wheat Production in Michigan.

NITROGEN FERTILIZER COST COMPARISON TABLE

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 23, 2022

Table of nitrogen fertilizer values and cost per acre at different rates.

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MICHIANA IRRIGATED CORN AND SOYBEAN CONFERENCE SLATED FOR FEB. 16 IN SHIPSHEWANA, INDIANA

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 18, 2022

This one-day conference is the only meeting dedicated to top production and best management practices for irrigated corn and soybean production in the Midwest.

SECOND CAREERS IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 18, 2022

MSU Organic Farmer Training Program and other MSU programs welcome retirees and career-shifters starting farms.

WEED GENOMES CROPPING UP AT PSM

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 17, 2022

PSM's Dr. Eric Patterson along with colleagues at MSU, Colorado State University, and industry partners have launched the International Weed Genomics Consortium, a program to sequence, annotate and publish genomes for up to 30 common weed species.

MICHIGAN PESTICIDE APPLICATOR REVIEW SESSIONS, RECERTIFICATIONS CREDITS AND TESTING OPTIONS FOR WINTER 2022

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 17, 2022

Frequently asked questions about when and where pesticide applicators can earn education credits or take the certification exam.

COMPOST HANDLING IN AGRICULTURE SYSTEMS: DISEASE-SUPPRESSING AND GROWTH-PROMOTING COMPOSTS

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 14, 2022

Part two of a six-part series on compost utilization and management on farms.

BRANCH COUNTY FARMERS DAY 2022 ALTERNATIVE FIELD CROPS EDUCATIONAL SESSION

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 13, 2022

MSU Extension will be hosting an alternative educational session on Feb. 21, 2022, in light of the recent cancellation of Branch County Farmers Day.

NEW CROP INSURANCE OPTION (PACE) HELPS PROTECT NITROGEN INVESTMENT

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 12, 2022

Farm records are key to coverage assistance.

COMPOST HANDLING IN AGRICULTURE SYSTEMS: HOW IS COMPOST MADE?

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 12, 2022

Part one of a six-part series on compost utilization and management on farms.

SCALING-UP CONSERVATION PRACTICES: HOW MUCH CAN FARMERS AFFORD?

PUBLISHED ON JANUARY 3, 2022

Prairie strips have the potential to contribute a suite of ecosystem services. A new study from the MSU Kellogg Biological Station finds a large swath of corn and soy cropland could be converted to prairie strips under appropriate payment schemes.

MANAGE YOUR NUTRIENTS AND POCKETBOOK

PUBLISHED ON DECEMBER 23, 2021

How to minimize cost of production and retain farm profits.

PROTECTING CROP YIELDS STARTS WITH EARLY SEASON WEED CONTROL

PUBLISHED ON DECEMBER 20, 2021

MSU Extension Weed Control Guide for Field Crops offers specific guidance for several crops.

SETTING THE STAGE FOR SUCCESSFUL WEED CONTROL IN 2022: WHAT CAN WE DO THIS FALL?

PUBLISHED ON DECEMBER 20, 2021

Screen your weeds for herbicide-resistance to maximize herbicide application success.

WE CAUGHT THE BUG. PLEASE EXCUSE OUR PODCASTS.

PUBLISHED ON DECEMBER 20, 2021

MSU Extension offers two insightful podcasts covering timely topics for commercial agriculture producers.

2021 MICHIGAN CORN PERFORMANCE TRIALS BULLETIN NOW AVAILABLE

PUBLISHED ON DECEMBER 16, 2021

Performance data of corn hybrids from your region over multiple locations and years is important in making corn hybrid selection decisions. Check out our 2021 Michigan corn hybrids compared bulletin.

2021 MICHIGAN SOYBEAN ON-FARM RESEARCH REPORT IS AVAILABLE

PUBLISHED ON DECEMBER 15, 2021

Soybean producers and agribusiness representatives can download the results from 12 different on-farm research projects conducted by MSU Extension and the Michigan Soybean Checkoff.

Eric Anderson

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