

## Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates November 2, 2023

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.

### Got Johnsongrass?

Johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*) is a perennial grass weed related to sorghum that has become a problem with several farmers in southern MI and northern IN. Johnsongrass populations have been found that are resistant to herbicide Groups 1 (e.g. Assure II, Select Max), 2 (Classic, Pursuit), 3 (Prowl, Treflan) and 9 (Roundup). Even if the population in a given field may not be resistant to any of these herbicides yet, the weed is still difficult to control due to its ability to spread via rhizome and seed. MSU Extension weed specialist Erin Burns just wrote an article, "[Fall options to control johnsongrass](#)," that is very helpful with fall control options and herbicide programs in corn that are effective against johnsongrass.

We would like to hold a meeting this winter (most likely after the first of the year in Branch or St. Joseph counties) where farmers who are battling johnsongrass can come and share their stories—when it became a problem, your rotation, what control strategies and herbicides you have tried, what level of success you've had—and talk with Dr. Burns about research findings and possible future on-farm research collaborations. If you are interested, please contact Eric Anderson at [eander32@msu.edu](mailto:eander32@msu.edu) or 269-359-0565.

### Field Crops Agronomist Extension Educator in SW MI

First of all, THANK YOU to all who participated in the search, including Dave Mumby and Larry Walton who served on the search committee, those who met with MSU Extension administrators over the summer to discuss the needs in the region, those who met with the candidates during a farm tour the day of the interviews, and all those who heard the candidates public presentations (both in-person and via recordings) and gave feedback. I think we came away with a very good picture of people's perceptions and insights.

At this point, MSU Extension administrators now have the task of going over all recommendations and notes from the search committee and other submissions and deciding on the best candidate. Then an offer will be made and negotiations will ensue, as negotiations are wont to do. The hope is that we will have a new field crops educator in place by the end of the calendar year. I will post any updates in future newsletters.

### Corporate Transparency Act – What Is It, and Does It Affect Me?

The Corporate Transparency Act (CTA) is an anti-money laundering law and requires most businesses, especially small businesses and many nonprofits, to report information about their owners. Existing businesses will need to report during 2024 to be sure to avoid substantial penalties. Many business lawyers are concerned that people are not aware that the CTA rules are coming into effect January 1, 2024.

MSU Extension Farm Business Management Educator Chris Bardenhagen has written a concise but informative article, "[Corporate Transparency Act: Farm and Ag Businesses must report beginning January 1, 2024](#)," which is available in both English and Spanish. It answers questions like: What is a beneficial owner? Who must file and who does not need to file? When and where to file? What information is required?

## Pesticide Recertification Options

Most farmers won't have time until at least after Thanksgiving to start thinking about pesticide applicator recertification unless we have many precipitation events keeping equipment out of the field. If you or your employees have a license that will expire at the end of this calendar year, read on for information on renewal.

You should have already received a packet of information from MDARD if your license is expiring at the end of this year. However, you can check expiration date anytime at [MDARD's pesticide license information webpage](#). If you have accumulated pesticide recertification (aka RUP) credits, you can also see how many credits you have earned on [MDARD's accumulated pesticide credits website](#). You need to search by your certification number.

If you plan to renew via recertification credits, you can check [MDARD's pesticide seminar look-up tool](#) to find programs that have already been approved for various credit types, organized by month. This list includes both free and fee-based programs including those offered by MSU Extension. For a thorough explanation of how to gain or renew certification, check out [this recent MSU Extension article](#).

**Select a Month Below to Get Upcoming Pesticide Applicator Renewal Seminar Meeting Dates and Locations**

December | Find Training

Commercial and private pesticide applicator certification and registered technician credentials expire on December 31st every third year. There are two ways to renew these credentials:

- Attend training seminars during the applicator's 3-year certification/registration period. (Use the search function above to find seminars in upcoming months.)
- [Online Seminars can be found by clicking here.](#)
- [Applicator Credit Report \(click here to see how many credits you have\).](#)
- [Renew by examination.](#)

Registered technician credentials may be renewed by seminar credit or by taking a category-specific training program refresher and a written examination.

### Seminars

Seminar	Date	Location	Category	Credit	Phone #
GLEXP0: PICKLES AND VINE CROPS	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	1B, Priv CORE	2	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: INTO TO ORGANIC PRACTICES	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	1A, 1B, 1C, Priv CORE	1	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: GRAPE RESEARCH (GRAPE 1)	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	1C, Priv CORE	2	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: ROOT VEGETABLES	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	1B, Priv CORE	2	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: BERRIES	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	1C, Priv CORE	2	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: SWEET CORN	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	1B, Priv CORE	2	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: ACHIEVING PLANT GROWTH MANAGEMENT I - SUCCESS WITH PGRS	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	3A, 3B, Priv CORE	1	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: ASPARAGUS	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	1B, Priv CORE	2	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: ON-FARM PRODUCE SAFETY	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	1A, 1B, 1C, Priv CORE	2	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: ADOPTION IN THE AG TECH SPACE	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	Priv CORE	1	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: GREENHOUSE DISEASE MANAGEMENT UPDATE	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	3A, 3B, Priv CORE	1	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: BRASSICAS	12/5/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	1B, Priv CORE	2	(734)239-8027 13
GLEXP0: PEACH/PLUM	12/6/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	1C, Priv CORE	2	(734)239-8027 13
PRODUCTION					
GLEXP0: BIOCONTROL AND BIOPESTICIDES	12/7/2023	GRAND RAPIDS, MI	Comm CORE, Priv CORE	2	(734)239-8027 13
MPMA DECEMBER 8 2023 TRAINING	12/8/2023	ANN ARBOR, MI	7A, 7B, Comm CORE	8	(888)345-5879 13
MSU TURF SCHOOL	12/11/2023	EAST LANSING, MI	3A, 3B, 8	8	(517)353-0147 13
STORED GRAIN AND SOIL FUMIGATION TRAINING	12/11/2023	EAST LANSING, MI	FUM	4	(888)289-0949 13
MSU TURF SCHOOL	12/12/2023	EAST LANSING, MI	3A, 3B, 8	8	(517)353-0147 13
MSU TURF SCHOOL	12/13/2023	EAST LANSING, MI	3A, 3B, 8	8	(517)353-0147 13
MSU TURF SCHOOL	12/14/2023	EAST LANSING, MI	3A, 3B, 8	8	(517)353-0147 13
MPMA DECEMBER 15 2023 TRAINING	12/15/2023	SAGINAW, MI	7A, 7B, Comm CORE	8	(888)345-5879 13
INTEGRATED CROP AND PEST MANAGEMENT UPDATE FOR AGRIBUSINESS 2023	12/19/2023	EAST LANSING, MI	1A, 1B, Priv CORE	5	(269)467-5511 13
MASA AIR AVIATION FYP0	12/19/2023	PLAIN SPRINGS, PA	1A, 1B, 1C, 2, 8, 9, 7F, AE	6	(717)406-7658 13

Screenshots of approved pesticide seminars look-up tool (top) and sample list of information included in the seminar list for a given month.

Applicator Name	Street	City	State	Zip	Expiration Date	Issue Date	Certification Type
BOUGH-SOLOMON, ZACHARY	4710 STEIN RD	ANN ARBOR	MI	48105	12/31/2024	11/12/2021	Registered
JONES, DON GIORIO	3030 WYOMERHILL DR #1 GARAGE	CLINTON TWP	MI	4803	12/31/2022	01/24/2020	Commercial
LIVESTOCK SOLUTIONS	GRIFIN PEST SOLUTIONS SOUTH KILGORE RD	KALAMAZOO	MI	49007	12/31/2025	05/21/2022	Commercial
MELI, GIACOMO	25 N MADRAINE APT 103	BROWSTOWN	MI	48183	12/31/2022	03/13/2020	Commercial
MELI, GIACOMO	4701 LORRAINE APT 109	BROWSTOWN	MI	48183	12/31/2025	02/13/2023	Commercial

Certification Number:

Clear Filter

Certification Number	Expiration Date	Category	Credits
C001010036	12/31/2025	1A	1
C001020011	12/31/2023	6	12
C001020011	12/31/2023	CO	12
C001020029	12/31/2023	1A	1
C001020029	12/31/2023	CO	6

Screenshots of MDARD’s pesticide license look-up tool (top) and recertification credit look-up tool (bottom).

## Soil Testing Through MSU Extension - Reminder and Update

Commercial soil sample bags and home lawn and garden mailers are available for purchase from MSU Extension. A&L Great Lakes Laboratories, Inc. (A&L), analyzes the soil samples and sends the data to MSU Extension. MSU Extension staff then generate MSU recommendations and send those directly to the client. All MSU recommendations utilize the latest research and follow state laws and guidelines, including Generally Accepted Agricultural Management Practices (GAAMPs), enabling farms to stay within the provisions of the Michigan Right to Farm Act.

MSU provides specific recommendations for the unique needs of over one hundred crops, many of which are not covered by recommendations from commercial labs. MSU’s recommendations are built on decades of research and designed to optimize plant health and productivity while protecting Michigan’s soils and abundant water resources.

Other fertilizer recommendations will often be higher than what is provided by MSU Extension, resulting in higher input costs for fertilizer and potentially detrimental effects on the environment. Thus, any initial savings on testing your soil directly through a commercial lab may be lost, in the long run, as you pay for additional — and unnecessary — fertilizer and soil amendments.

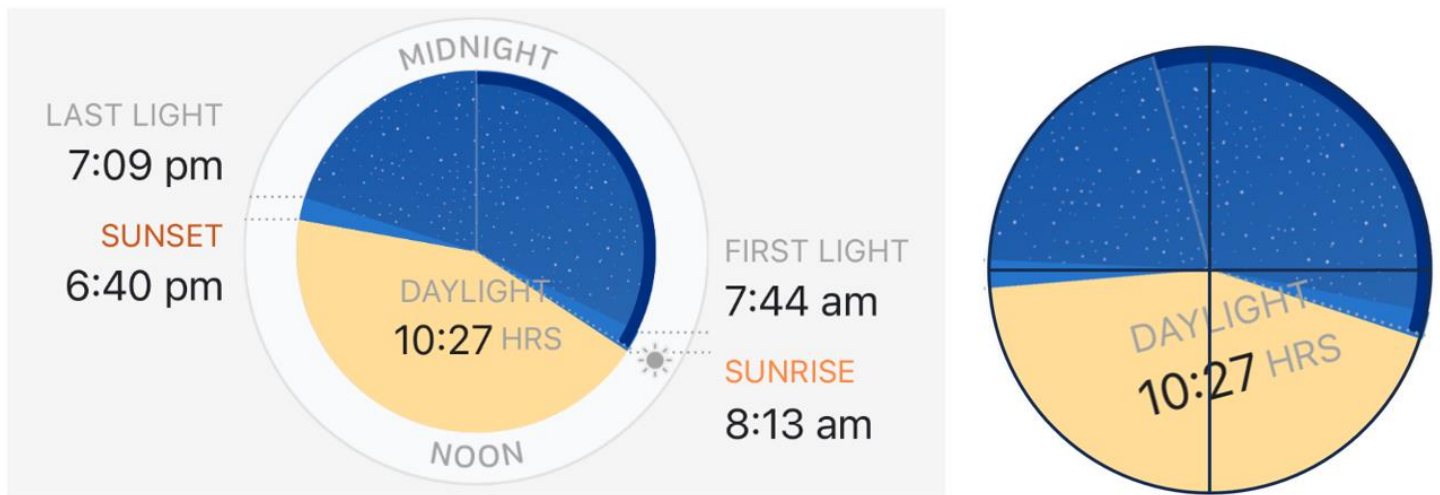
As a reminder, please do not send samples to the MSU Soil and Plant Nutrient Laboratory (SPNL), which closed on Dec. 31, 2022. Samples sent to SPNL will not be processed.

For more information, check out the MSU Extension article, [“Soil testing through MSU Extension.”](#)

## Daylight Savings - Why Do We Do This Anyway?

Daylight savings begins the second Sunday in March and ends the first Sunday in November (this Sunday) each year. We all seem to enjoy the “fall back” where we gain an extra hour of sleep—not so much when we “spring ahead” and lose an hour. Why do we do this, and whose idea was it anyway?

Sources vary on the first to try this time shift. [One report](#) says some Canadians tried it on a localized basis starting 1908, but Germany and Austria were the first countries to do it during WWI to save fuel used for artificial lighting. Reducing electricity use is the primary reason for shifting the time in spring and fall. The U.S. also briefly implemented it during WWI for less than a year, then brought it back during WWII for four years, and then established the policy with the Uniform Time Act of 1966. The timeframe for shifting the time has changed over time: the last Sunday in April through the last Sunday in October; a brief stint during the 1973 oil embargo when it was year-round; the first Sunday in April through the last Sunday in October; and since 2007, it has been what we have now.



Sunrise and sunset times on October 30 (left). Note how shifting the time by an hour (15 degrees) makes the nighttime and daytime periods center more closely around 12:00 noon and midnight (right).

## What is the Cost of Hitting a Fiber Optic Line?

A message from the [Pipeline Safety Alliance](#)

The answer: it's complicated. There are 2 factors to consider. The first is the physical repair cost, including troubleshooting the damage and digging up the cut piece of fiber. Depending on how many individual fibers are damaged, the cost can be anywhere from \$2,500 to \$10,000 (costs vary significantly across geographical areas). The second is the number of affected customers. The more customers affected, the higher the cost to the operator that owns the fiber due to lost revenue and/or downtime.

Consider nearly all cell towers in the nation are connected to a fiber optic backbone to carry most of the phone and internet traffic. If those were taken offline, countless customers would be affected. If the operator chose to pursue reimbursement, it would take little time to add up. Contacting 811 and working with the operator in the event of a line strike will help get the utility back online as soon as possible. Calling MISS DIG (811) and waiting until an area is flagged before working below the ground can avoid an incident in the first place.

## An Open Letter to Michigan's Deer Hunters

Chad Stewart, deer, elk and moose management specialist with Michigan Department of Natural Resources, wrote a recent open letter to Michigan deer hunters that is [available to read on the MDNR website](#). In it he shares several eye-opening statistics about the decline in deer harvest over the past two decades, particularly with antlerless deer. These statistics are now available in part due to recent online reporting that allows MDNR to cite not only total number of deer



taken but categories and timing of harvest. The overall message of the letter: "If you are in the Lower Peninsula, we simply aren't taking enough does during the season to control the growth of our deer herd in many areas."

Though the main gist of the letter is to encourage taking more antlerless deer each year, he also points to some specific shifts in hunting strategies that could help to not only control the deer population but help alleviate deer damage impact on crop production and deer collision on roads. This can be a contentious topic for Michigan deer hunters, but I felt he did a good job of striking a balance in describing the current state of affairs, what hunters say they want, and the end goal of a well-managed deer population in the state. I recommend you read the (long) letter—if nothing else, it will give you a better sense of the thought process of MDNR and some of the options they are considering.

## New Web Book Explores the Potential of Biopesticides

In response to the evolving agricultural landscape and the escalating demand for environmentally friendly farming practices, biopesticides have emerged as a pivotal focal point. In the new FREE Crop Protection Network web book [Biopesticides for Crop Disease Management](#) readers are given an in-depth look into the world of natural pest solutions and their potential as an effective alternative to synthetic pesticides.

Researchers and extension specialists collaborate to provide insights gleaned from extensive studies and consultations, providing a well-rounded understanding of this burgeoning field of study. The book serves as a valuable guide for farmers and industry professionals seeking sustainable pest management strategies that align with the pressing need for environmentally responsible practices.

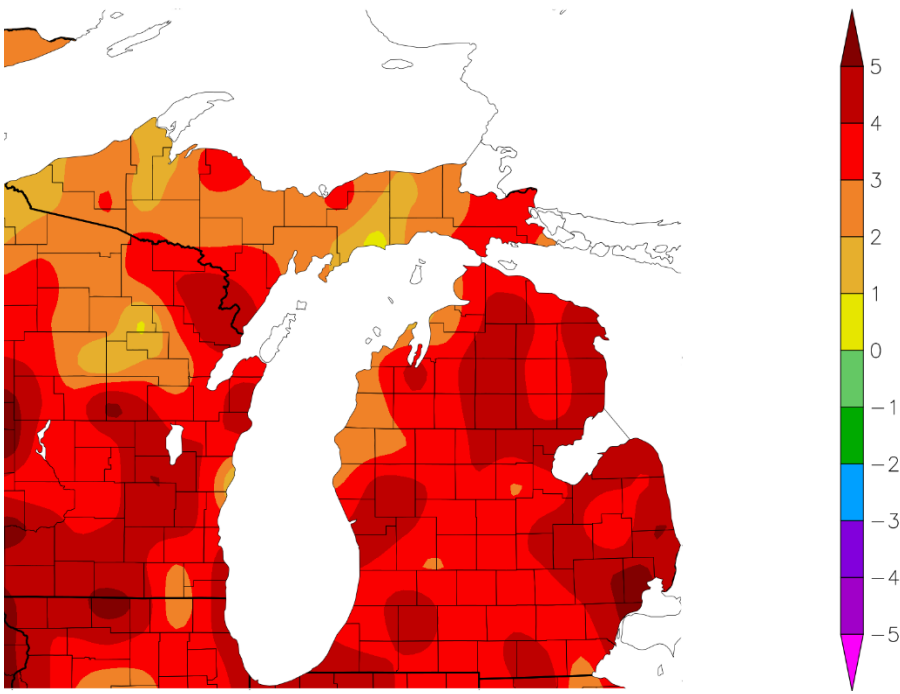
## Weather and Crop Update

### Weather

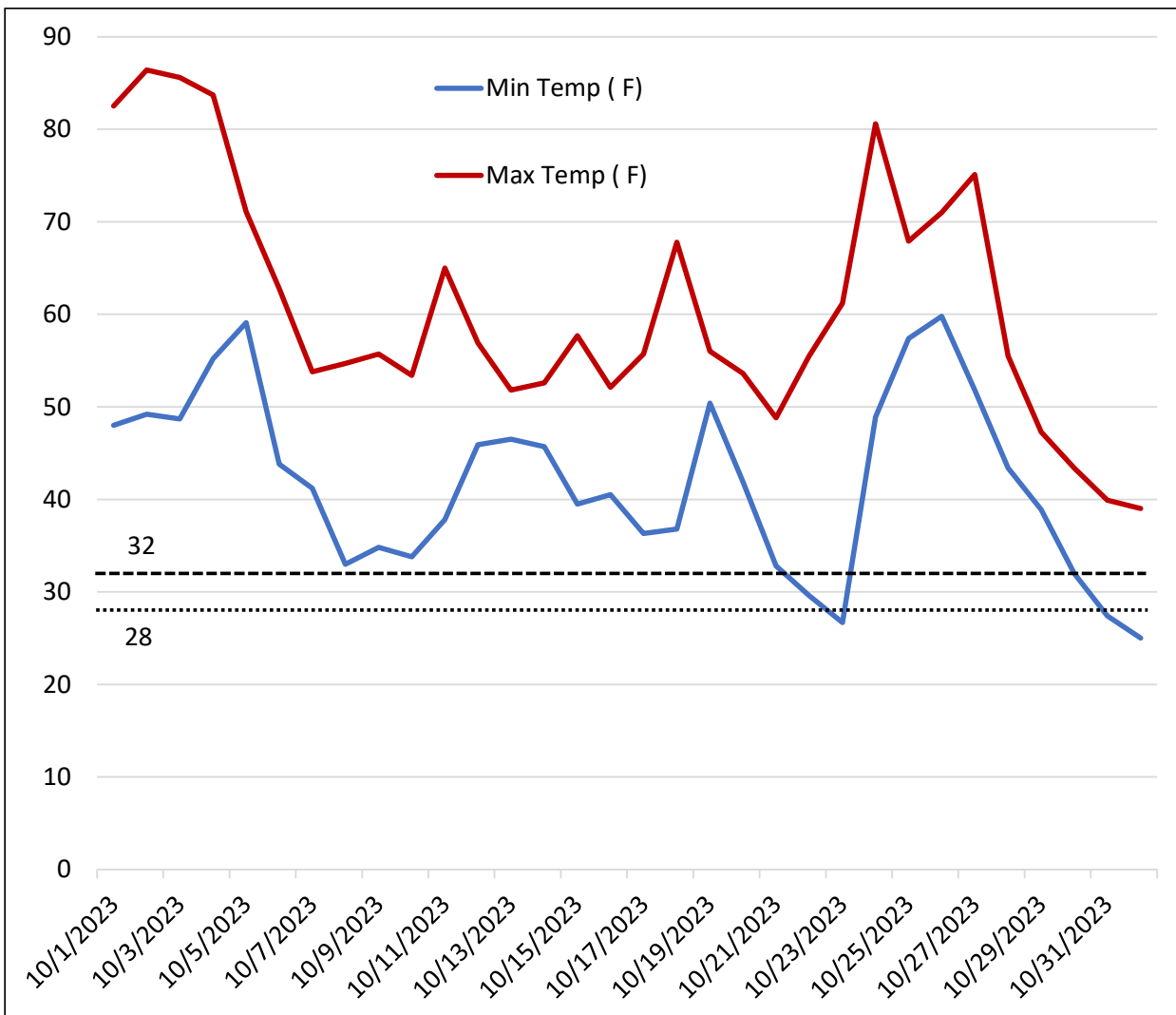


Temperatures over the past two weeks were 3-5 degrees warmer than normal in southwest Michigan which was true for both daytime and nighttime temperatures. Our first freezing temperatures came the morning of October 23, and we again experienced a killing frost on October 31 and November 1. The forecasted reference evapotranspiration rate (FRET) for the coming week is slightly below average for this time of year. Aside from precipitation, other factors this fall have limited field drying including higher relative humidity, lower wind speeds and lower solar radiation compared with the 5-year average. The 6-10 and 8-14 day outlooks predict moderate chances of below-normal temperatures.

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Departure from normal for average temperature for the past 14 days as of October 30.



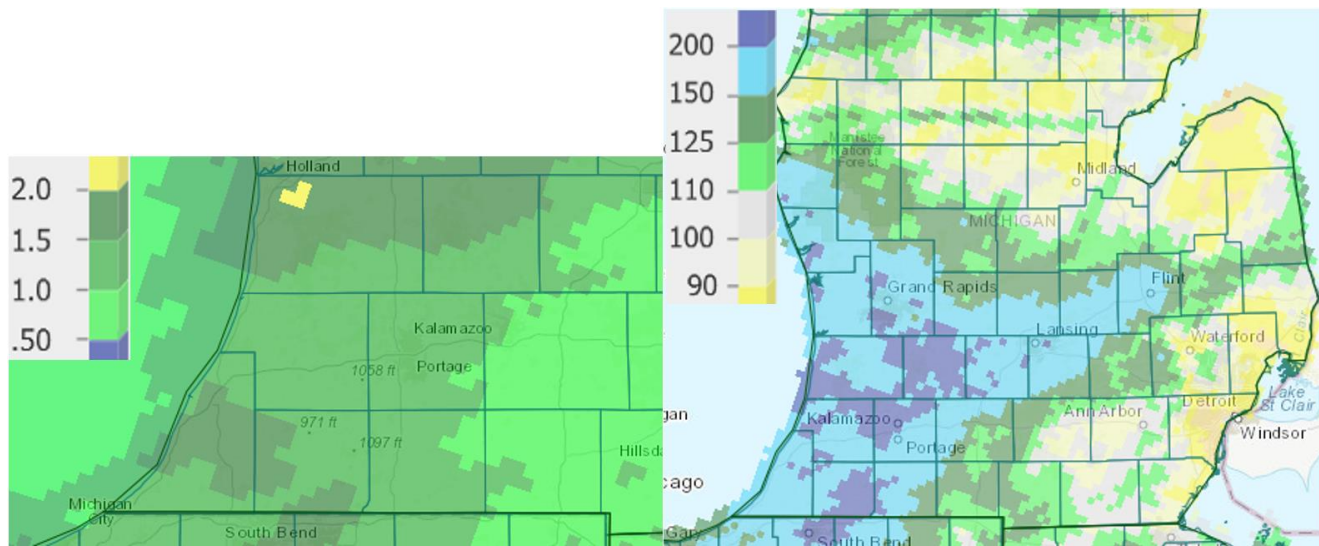
Maximum and minimum air temperature since October 1 as measured at the Kalamazoo Enviroweather station.

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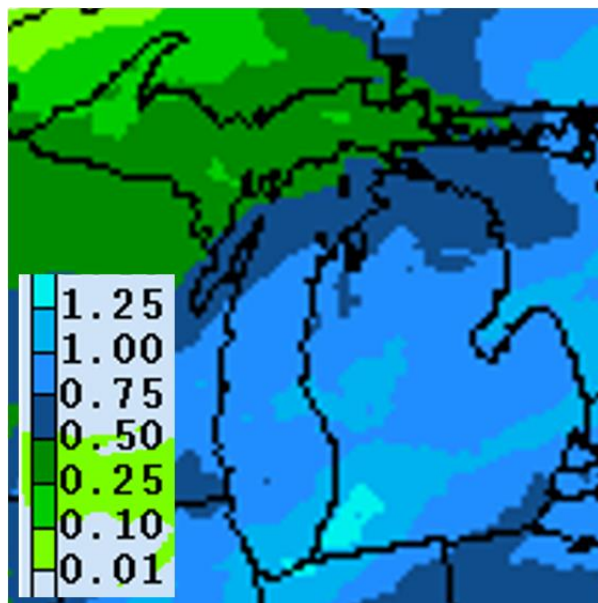
	Temperature average (°F)	Humidity average (%)	Precipitation total (in.)	Solar radiation total (x1000)	Wind speed average (mph)
2019	57.2	76.9	10.8	15.7	14.5
2020	52.8	74.9	7.2	16.3	15.3
2021	59.1	78.9	8.5	16.1	15.0
2022	55.7	73.7	5.2	17.3	15.3
2023	56.9	78.5	9.2	14.8	13.6
5-year average	56.3	76.6	8.2	16.0	14.7

Factors affecting drying conditions in September and October over the past five years as measured at the Kalamazoo Enviroweather station. Colors indicate degree of difference from the 5-year average.

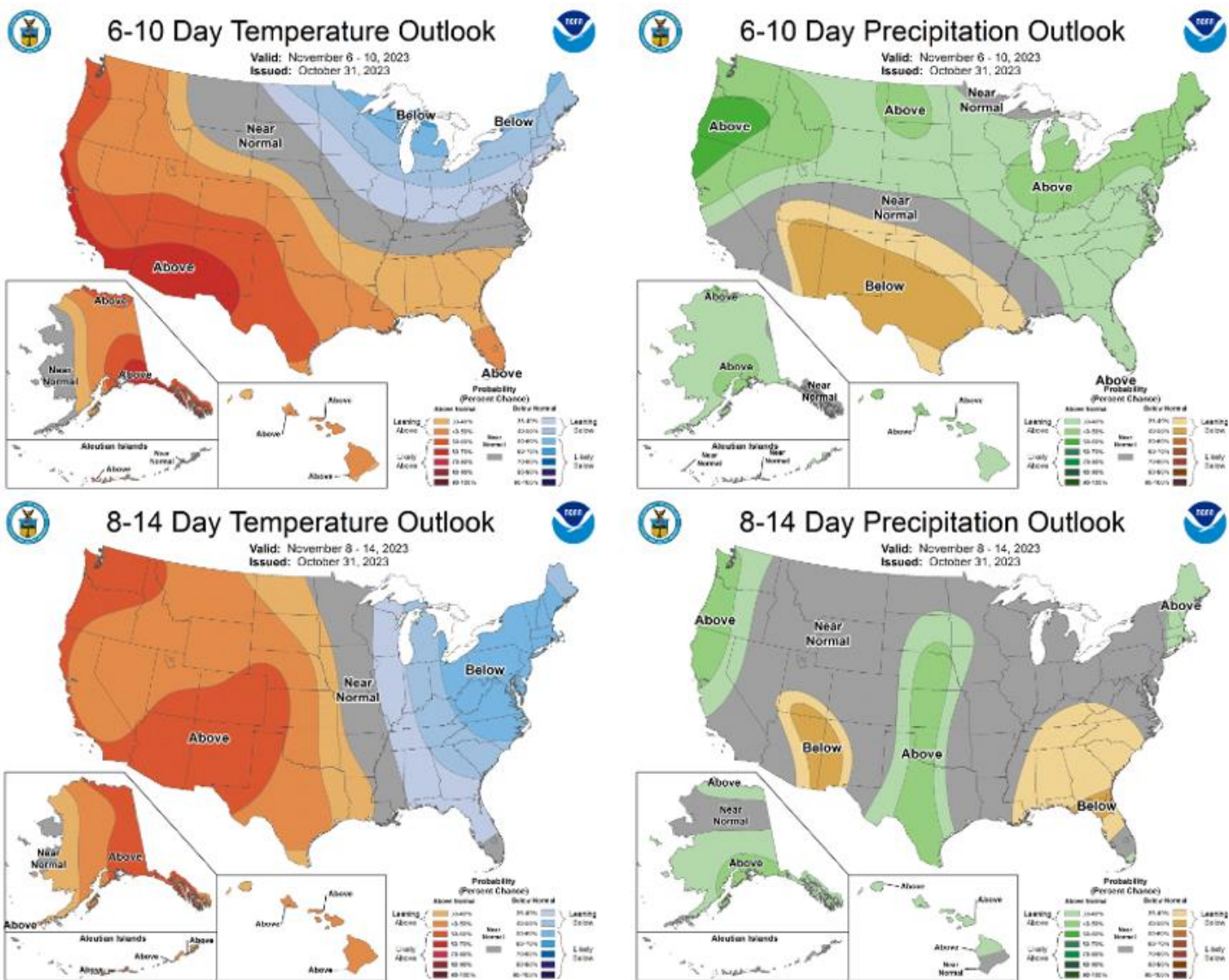
Between 0.5 and 2 inches of precipitation fell across the region this past week. Most areas received 1.5-2.5 times the normal amount of rain over the past 30 days or roughly 2-5 inches more rain than normal. Conditions continue to be very wet in our region compared with the rest of the state which is a major reason why our harvest progress is well behind the rest of the state—more on that below. The precipitation forecast for the coming week predicts 0.75-1.5 inches for southwest Michigan, most of that predicted from Sunday through Wednesday. The 6-10 day outlook calls for moderate chances of above-normal precipitation while the 8-14 day outlook predicts near-normal chances.



Precipitation totals from the past 7 days (left) and percent of normal for the past 30 days (right) as of November 1.



Precipitation forecast for November 1-8.



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

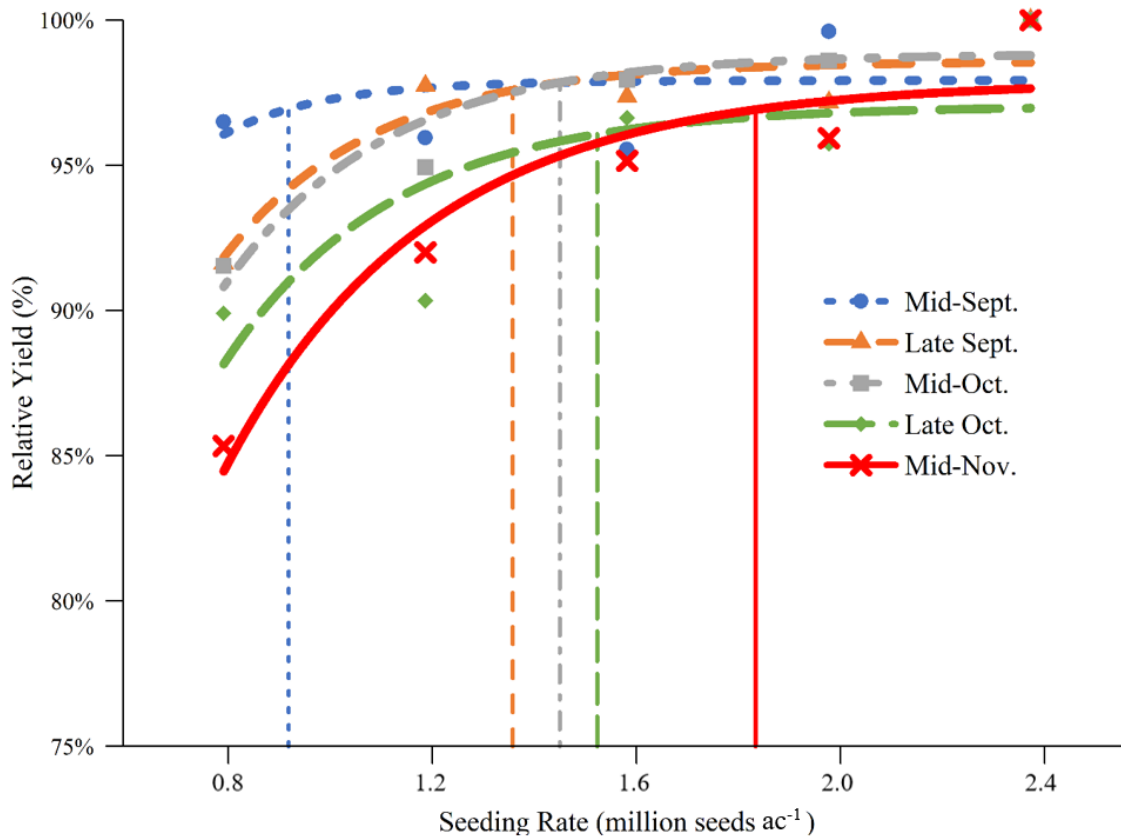
**Crops**

**Corn and soybean** harvest progress continue to lag behind the 5-year average across the state with 30% of corn harvested for grain (41% average) and 55% of soybean (65% average) harvested according to the latest USDA Crop Update. As was the case a couple of weeks ago, the situation in the southwest is not as bright as we have received small but frequent rainfall amounts since the middle of October. Reports are coming in that some farmers have decided to leapfrog over soybeans to begin harvesting corn even though moistures are still 22-27%.

**Winter wheat** progress also continues to be behind the 5-year average with 69% of wheat planted in the state (85% average) and 58% emerged (63% average). MSU wheat specialist Dennis Pennington says as we head into the first half of November, farmers should be planting close to 1.8 million seed to minimize yield lag due to late planting. Be sure to spread soybean residue the full width of the combine to promote uniform planter performance, and plant treated seed. Planting shallow may help to quicken emergence. Apply approximately 20 lbs N/ac this fall and include a phosphorus starter. Refer to the recent MSU Extension article, “[Management considerations for late-planted wheat](#),” for recommendations on making adjustments to wheat planting as delays continue.



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Winter wheat yield response (% relative yield) as influenced by planting date and seeding rate at Lansing, Michigan. Vertical lines represent agronomically optimal seeding rate for each planting date. See "[Maximizing winter wheat yield through planting date and seeding rate management](#)" for more details.

### Calendar

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

- Nov 14** [Cover Crop Fall Field Training](#). 9am-3pm EST. Purdue University ACRE, 4550 US-52, West Lafayette, IN. This one-day in-person cover crop training is intended to provide important basics of cover crop management for field professionals working with farmers on cover crop implementation. Cost is free, register online by Nov 3.
- Nov 17** [EQIP Applications Due](#). Visit your local [USDA Service Center](#) or go to [www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov) for more information.
- Dec 5-7** [Great Lakes Fruit & Veg Expo](#). Grand Rapids, MI.
- Dec 15** [Michiana Irrigation Association Annual Meeting](#). 8:30am-3:30pm. Beacon Health and Fitness Center, 200 E Jackson Blvd, Elkhart, IN. Cost is \$45, includes MIA dues and lunch. Contact Deanna Mumby at 269-998-1177 or Lyndon Kelley at 269-467-5511.
- Dec 15** [Fall-Seeded Grains Acreage Reporting Deadline](#). Those who have not yet completed their [crop acreage reports](#) after fall planting should make an appointment with their county Farm Service Agency (FSA) office.
- Dec 19** [Integrated Crop and Pest Management Update for Agribusiness](#). 9am-4pm. MSU Livestock Pavilion and online via Zoom. Cost is \$65 for in-person when pre-registering, \$80 when registering onsite, \$35 for virtual option, both including the 2024 MSU Weed Guide. Register online by Dec. 10 for in-person or Dec. 14 for virtual.
- Jan 9-10, '24** [MABA Winter Conference](#). Lansing, MI.
- Jan 16** [Michigan Soybean On-farm Research Program Update](#). 9am – 1pm. GreenMark Equipment, Three Rivers, MI. Check back soon, details to follow.

## Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update – November 2, 2023 - 10

- Jan 24-25** [Great Lakes Crop Summit](#). Mt Pleasant, MI.
- Jan 29** [MSU Extension SW Crop and Pest Management Update](#). 8:30am – 3:30 pm. Dowagiac Conservation Club, Dowagiac, MI. Check back soon, details to follow.
- Feb 19** [In-Person Core Pesticide Review and Core Testing](#). 8:00am. Branch Area Career Center, Coldwater, MI. Cost is \$15 for morning training payable to MSU, cost for testing dependent on license type. Morning training session is required before afternoon testing, only core and standards exams (no commercial categories) offered. Other locations and dates available. Register online.
- Feb 19** [Branch County Farmers Day Field Crops Track](#). 8am-12pm. Branch Area Career Center, Coldwater, MI. Check back soon, details to follow.
- Apr 10** [In-Person Core Pesticide Review and Core Testing](#). 8:00am. GreenMark Equipment, Three Rivers, MI. Cost is \$15 for morning training payable to MSU, cost for testing dependent on license type. Morning training session is required before afternoon testing, only core and standards exams (no commercial categories) offered. Other locations and dates available. Register online.

### MSU Extension Digest Briefs

#### PUBLISHED ON NOVEMBER 1, 2023

- [HEROES TO HIVES PROGRAM REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR THE 2024 BEEKEEPING SEASON THROUGH MICHIGAN FOOD & FARMING SYSTEMS](#) - Michigan State University Extension provides educational resources and hosts hands-on beekeeping workshops to veterans in the program.
- [FALL OPTIONS TO CONTROL JOHNSONGRASS](#) - Johnsongrass rhizomes are not very cold tolerant. Take advantage of Michigan winter temperatures to help reduce its population.

#### PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 26, 2023

- [HARVESTING AND HANDLING FROST-DAMAGED SOYBEANS](#) - Soybean producers can try these recommendations to reduce adverse effects of frost or freeze damage to immature soybeans.

#### PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 25, 2023

- [REGISTER NOW FOR THE 2024 CROP AND PEST MANAGEMENT UPDATES](#) - The annual series will be held regionally with a virtual option tailored to northern Michigan producers that has four proctored sites.

#### PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 24, 2023

- [2023 POTATO TRIAL HARVESTS IN MONTCALM COUNTY](#) - Potato trial harvest by MSU's Potato Outreach Program is an integral part of varietal development that strengthens Michigan's potato industry.

#### PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 19, 2023

- [FIVE COMPELLING REASONS TO ATTEND THE 2023 INTEGRATED CROP AND PEST MANAGEMENT UPDATE FOR AGRIBUSINESS ON DECEMBER 19](#) - The 25th annual Integrated Crop and Pest Management Update for Agribusiness will be on Dec. 19, 2023 in-person and virtually via Zoom and will feature crop and pest management recommendations, on-farm research data and pesticide certification credits.
- [SPEEDING UP SOYBEAN HARVEST OPERATIONS](#) - The advantages and disadvantages of various options for increasing soybean harvest efficiency.

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