

## Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates October 20, 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.

### Interviews for Field Crops Agronomist Extension Educator in SW MI Scheduled

Second-round interviews for the MSU Extension field crops Extension educator position in SW MI, housed in St. Joseph County, have been set for **Thursday, October 26**. The interview process includes a ~30 minute presentation that is open to the public. We are encouraging farmers, agribusiness representatives, and others in the ag support community to attend these presentations and provide feedback on the candidates. The presentations will be held in the large, main floor meeting room at the Vicksburg Community Center located at 101 S. Main Street (SE corner of Prairie and Main) in Vicksburg—look for the MSU flag. Parking is available on both streets (note that Main St. is southbound only near the building) or in the Family Fare parking lot across the street if needed.

The schedule for the presentations is as follows:

- Jonathan Kubesch 10:50-11:30 am
- Nicolle Ritchie 11:50 am -12:30 pm

The topic the candidates will be addressing is:

- *What are 2-4 issues facing the agricultural industry in Southwest Michigan? How would you approach addressing one of them in terms of research and Extension programming? What methods and technology would you use to engage the industry and disseminate educational materials to facilitate adoption by industry stakeholders?*

For those not able to attend the public presentations live, you can view them virtually via Zoom by clicking on the following link:

<https://msu.zoom.us/j/97479466524>

Meeting ID: 974 7946 6524

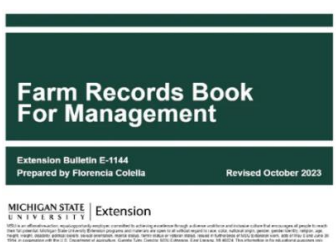
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We would also appreciate receiving your feedback on each candidate by November 1<sup>st</sup> at 5:00pm.

- [Jonathan Kubesch feedback form](#)
- [Nicolle Ritchie feedback form](#)

### 3 New Resources from MSU Extension's Farm Business Management Team

The recently-revised MSU Extension **Farm Records Book for Management** (FRBM) is a recordkeeping worksheet that allows farmers to keep records in alignment with tax filing needs. Paper booklets are now available for sale at your local extension office or online at the [MSU Extension online store](#). You can also access it online free of charge [by following this link](#) to use on your computer or to print at home. Apart from keeping records for tax purposes, the FRBM has other sections: a cash flow summary, a balance sheet, an income statement and financial ratios.



Another new resource offered is the **Small Farm Accounting Workgroup**. If you are currently using a paper journal or spreadsheets to keep farm records and would like to improve your farm's recordkeeping system but are not ready yet to invest in a paid program, consider joining this workgroup where YOU will get paid \$500 if you come to work on your records consistently throughout the year. There will be four one-hour meetings every month for 12 months, starting in March of 2024. Two of these meetings will be held in English, and two will be held in Spanish. You will be expected to attend at least 15 meetings throughout the year in your language of preference. There are 10 open spots in the English-speaking cohort and 10 open spots in the Spanish-speaking cohort. We will review your recordkeeping practices with the group, put a summary of your records in a spreadsheet format, look for any errors in the spreadsheets, learn together and support each other to keep up with our records throughout the year. In early 2025, we'll write a balance sheet and run a financial analysis on your farm's 2024 performance and interpret the results with the group. No experience with spreadsheets is required, but some degree of openness to share your financial information with the other 9 farmers in your cohort will be expected. If you are already using a paper or spreadsheet journal, you can continue to use that, or you can test and incorporate some of the free spreadsheets that will be provided through the program. Go to [bit.ly/program-registration](https://bit.ly/program-registration) to sign up for this opportunity.



A new upcoming webinar series, “**Farm Policy and Risk Management**,” will offer educational webinars on USDA insurance programs with each session will focusing on a specific Michigan production area. These sessions will review the basics of insurance and how producers can utilize programs to maximize benefits. This includes understanding the different policies, the ways each provides protection, and the advantages offered by each. Several sessions will feature guest speakers and/or panelists from within the insurance industry including GreenStone Farm Credit Services, Michigan Farm Bureau, several independent agencies, and university experts. You can find the promotional article here: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/msu-launches-the-farm-policy-and-risk-management-series>. Registration is now available by clicking on the desired session title in the article.

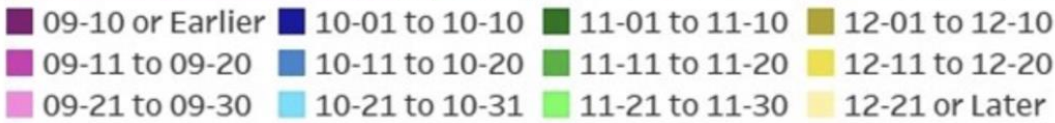
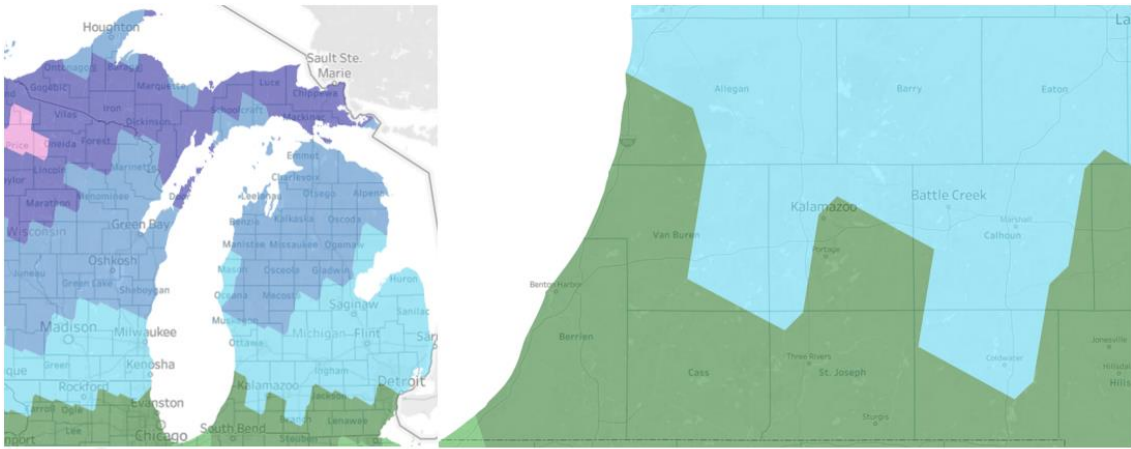


- *Fruit: Oct. 17*
- Beef/Swine: Nov. 14 at 6:30 pm
- Vegetables: Dec. 12 at 1:00 pm
- Dairy: Dec. 20 at 1:00 pm
- Late-breaking Farm Bill News: Jan. 11, 2024 at 6:30 pm
- Field Crops: Jan. 16 at 6:30 pm

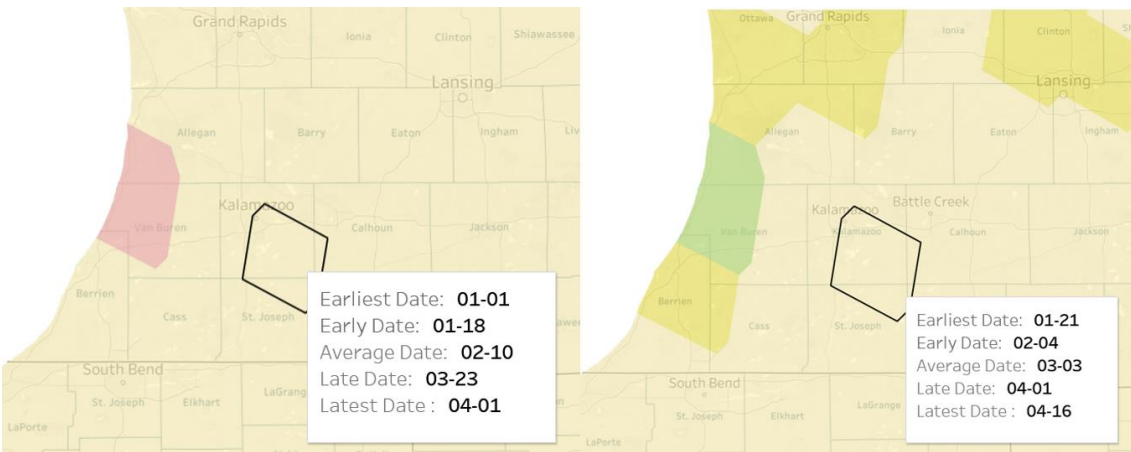
## New Soil Temperature Climatology Tool Available

The [Midwestern Regional Climate Center](#) (MRCC) housed at Purdue has produced a new tool—[Soil Temperature Climatology](#)—to estimate when soil temperatures will reach a certain level based on 30 years of data. Soil temperature is important for making many decisions on the farm including when to apply manure or nitrogen fertilizer in the fall, when the ground might be solid enough to be trafficable, when soils are warm enough for reliable seed germination, etc. The screenshots below give a few examples of parameters you can select which include dates when soils cool below a certain temperature versus when they have warmed above a certain temperature, and there are several temperatures to choose from. You can also hover over a given area to find more precise historical data.

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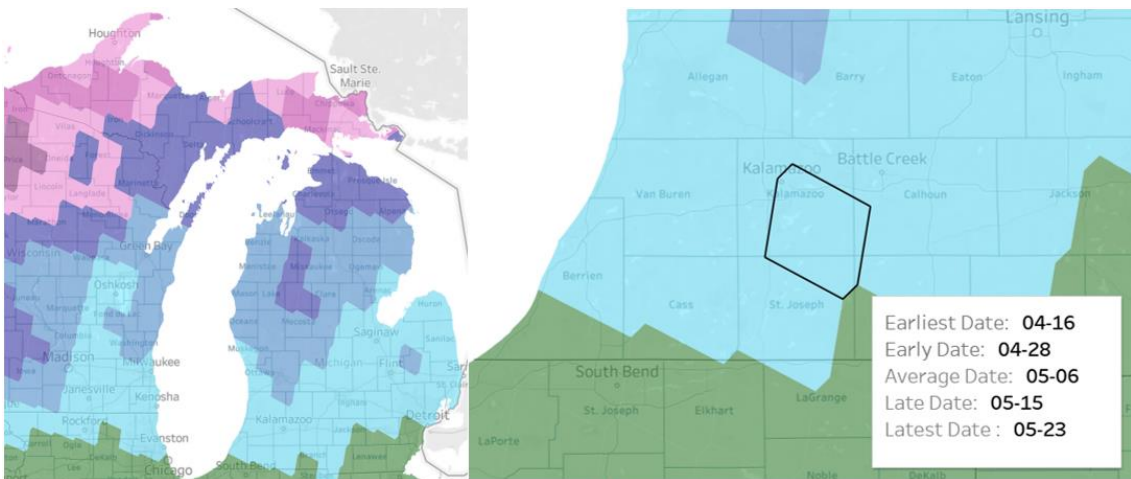
Average date when soil temperatures at 4” depth cool to below 50 F based on 7-day running average values from 1991-2020.



Earliest Date: 01-01  
 Early Date: 01-18  
 Average Date: 02-10  
 Late Date: 03-23  
 Latest Date: 04-01

Earliest Date: 01-21  
 Early Date: 02-04  
 Average Date: 03-03  
 Late Date: 04-01  
 Latest Date: 04-16

Average date when soil temperatures at 4” depth cool to below 32 F (left) and warm above 32 F (right) based on 7-day running average values from 1991-2020.



Earliest Date: 04-16  
 Early Date: 04-28  
 Average Date: 05-06  
 Late Date: 05-15  
 Latest Date: 05-23

Average date when soil temperatures at 4” depth warm above 50 based on 7-day running average values from 1991-2020.

## CMPM Requests Checkoff Amendment

Corn Marketing Program of Michigan (CMPM) and the Michigan Corn Growers Association are asking for your support to hold a referendum on changing the corn checkoff program. The CMPM board of directors has proposed an amendment to allow collection of additional funds because the checkoff rate has not been changed since its inception in 1993, which means funding has not changed to keep up with inflation or the additional costs of doing business today. [This one pager contains more information about how additional checkoff funding would be used.](#)

In order to hold the referendum, they need to collect petition signatures from Michigan corn growers who are in favor of holding a vote on the proposed amendment. [If you are willing, please fill out this petition form and mail it back to the Michigan Corn Office.](#) You will also be receiving a physical copy in the mail in the coming days.

## Deer Hunting Season Details

For the deer hunters among us, here are the 2023 season dates for various categories. For more information please visit <https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/things-to-do/hunting/hunting-season-calendar>. Hunters are allowed to begin one-half hour before sunrise and must end one-half hour after sunset.

- Independence Hunt (hunters with disabilities): Oct. 19 - 22, 2023
- Archery: Oct. 1 - Nov. 14 and Dec. 1 - Jan. 1, 2023 (Hunters may use a bow or crossbow during firearm season but need to wear orange)
- Regular firearm: Nov. 15 - 30
- Muzzleloading: Dec. 1 - 10, 2023
- Late antlerless (doe) firearm: Dec. 11, 2023 - Jan. 1, 2024

## MAEAP Website Has Moved

The Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) website has moved!

- **Old:** [www.MAEAP.org](http://www.MAEAP.org)
- **New:** [www.Michigan.gov/MAEAP](http://www.Michigan.gov/MAEAP)

Visitors will automatically be redirected to [www.Michigan.gov/MAEAP](http://www.Michigan.gov/MAEAP) if visiting the old website. If you receive an error message or it does not redirect you, contact our website administrator Christopher Greene-Szmadzinski, [GreeneSzmadzinskiC@michigan.gov](mailto:GreeneSzmadzinskiC@michigan.gov).

## Weather and Crop Update

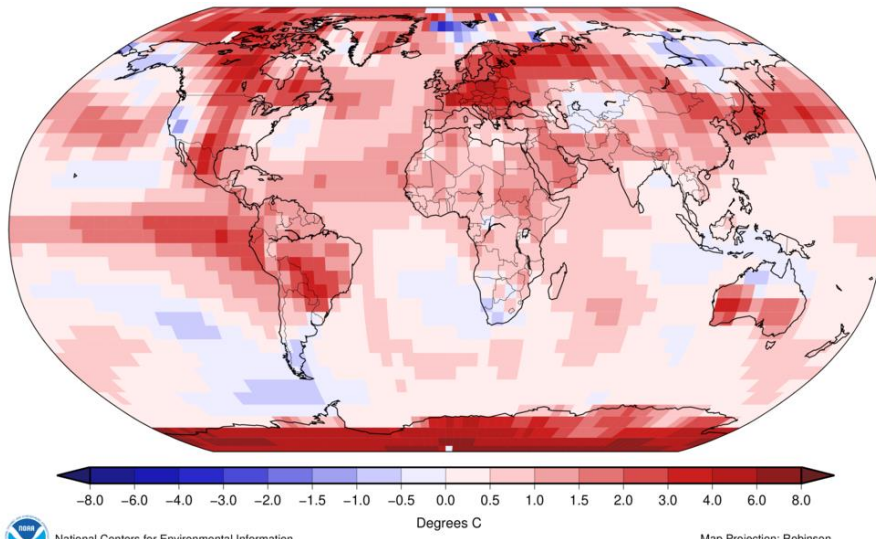
### Weather

According to NOAA, the September global surface temperature was 2.59°F above the 20th-century average of 59.0°F and ranks as the warmest September in NOAA's 174-year record. September 2023 marked the 49th-consecutive September and the 535th-consecutive month with temperatures above the 20th-century average. North America, South America, Europe and Africa each had their warmest September on record. For the sixth consecutive month, September saw a record-high monthly global ocean surface temperature. September 2023 tied August 2023 for the highest monthly sea surface temperature anomaly (+1.85°F) of any month in NOAA's 174-year record.

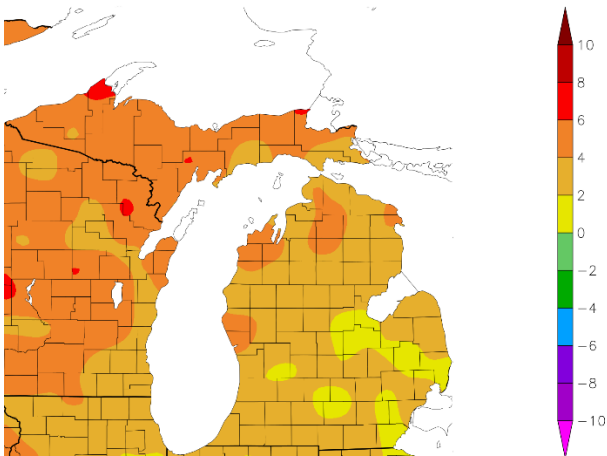
Temperatures over the past 30 days were 2-4 degrees warmer than normal in southwest Michigan. Although the region on average received roughly normal amounts of heat units over the growing season, distinct areas ranged from two weeks behind to two weeks ahead of normal. Reports have come in throughout Michigan and northern Indiana of crops maturing later than expected based on planting date and hybrid/variety selection. Speculation has been made regarding the impacts of the Canadian wildfire smoke this summer, but more research and data analysis are needed to determine what, if any, impact that has had on crop development in Michigan.

## Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update - October 20, 2023 - 5

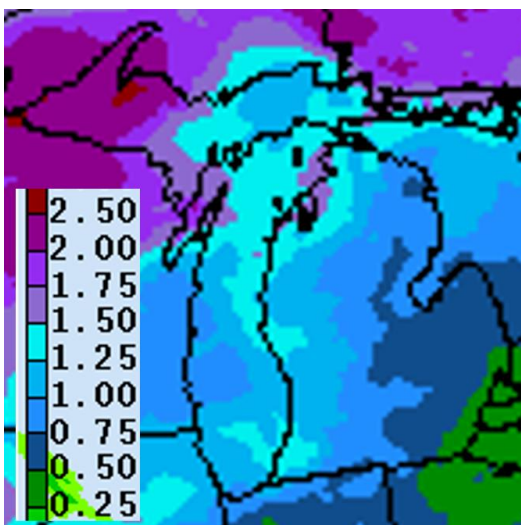
The forecasted reference evapotranspiration rate (FRET) is roughly 0.45 inch for the week ending October 25 which is about average for this time of year. The 6-10 day outlook predicts strong chances of above-normal temperatures heading into the last week of October while the 8-14 day outlook suggests a return to near-normal or even below-normal temperatures heading into November. No freezing temperatures are expected between now and the end of October.



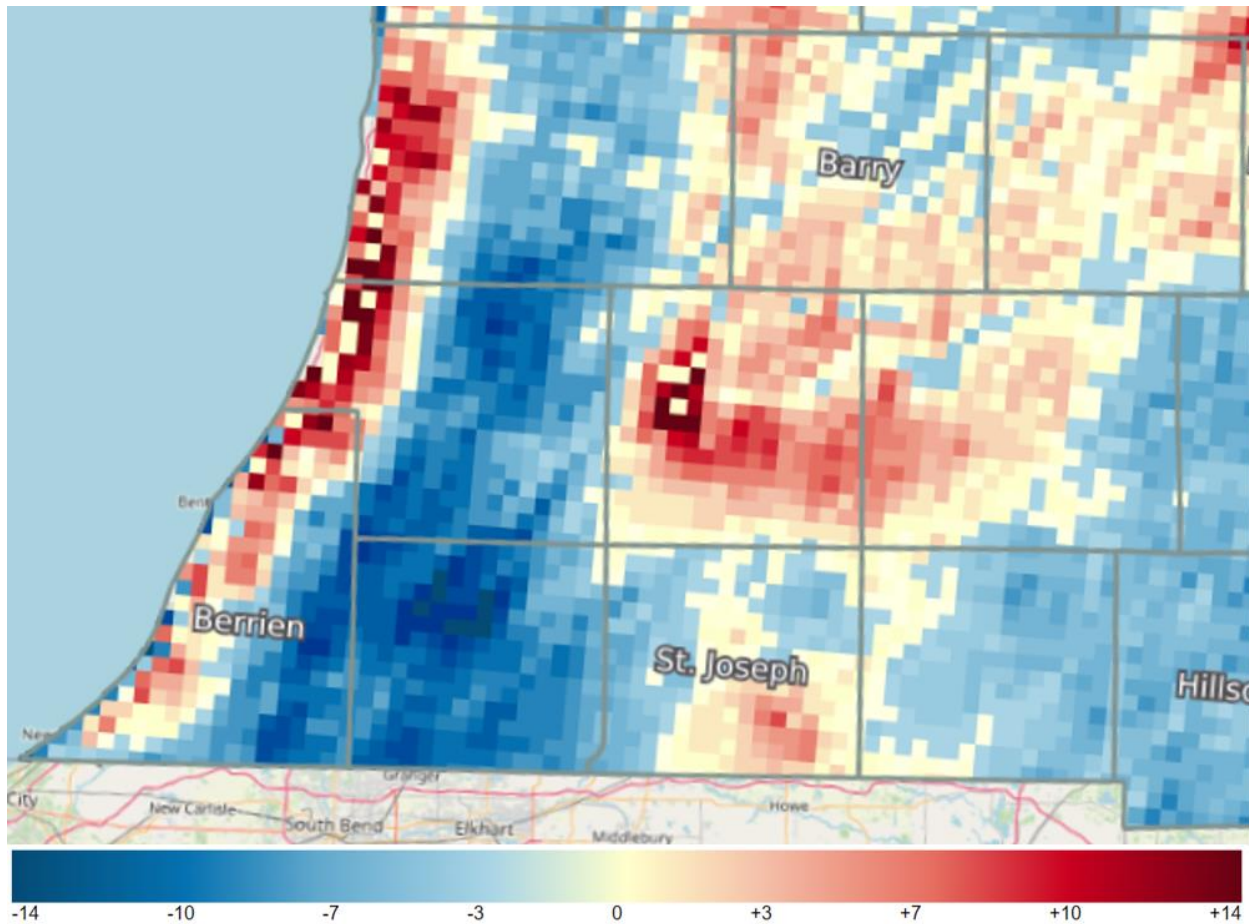
Land and ocean temperature departure from average for September 2023. Data source: NOAA GlobalTemp v5.1.0-20231008.



Departure from normal for average temperature for the past 30 days as of October 19.

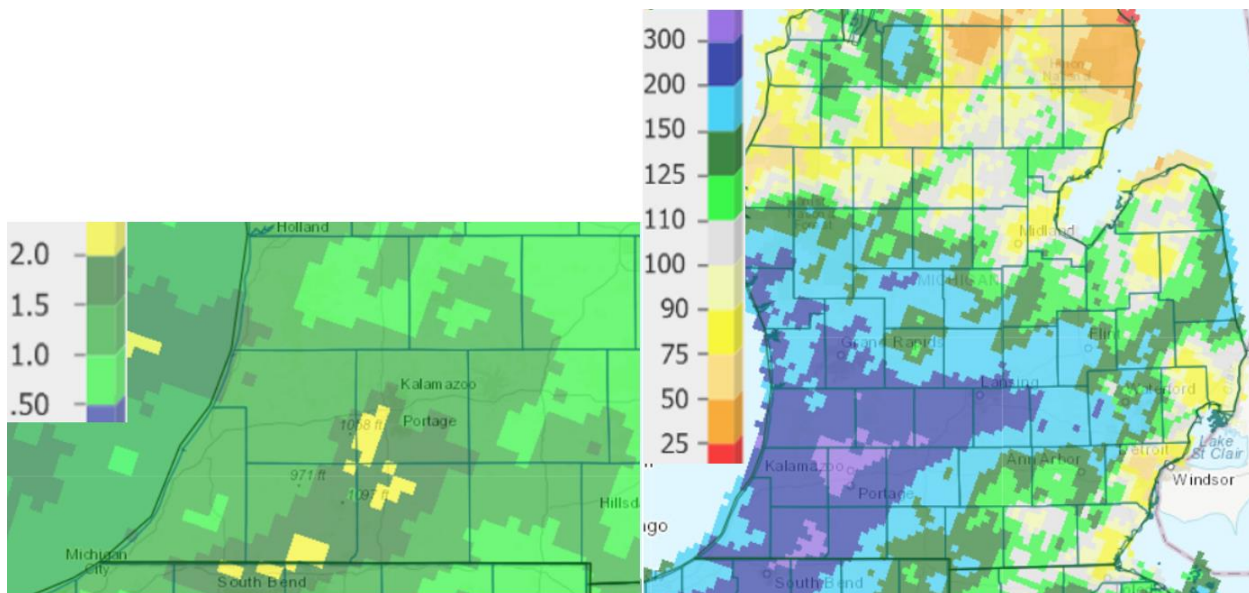


Precipitation forecast for October 19-26.

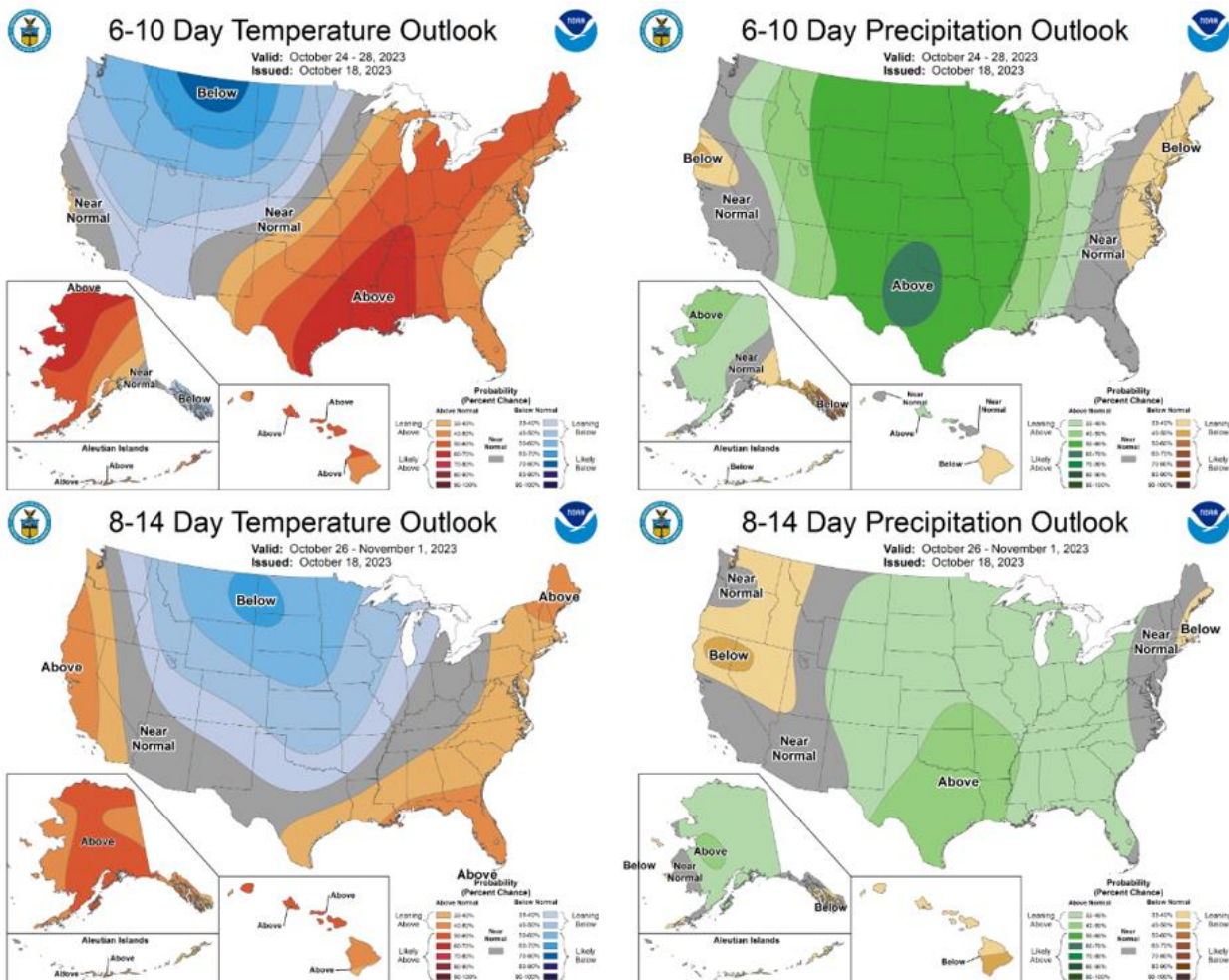


Growing degree day (base 50 degrees) departure from normal from March 1 – September 30 according to MSU Enviroweather.

Between 1 and 2 inches of rain fell across most of the region this past week with isolated pockets receiving over 2 inches. Most areas received 1-4 inches more rain than normal over the past 30 days and roughly 2-3 times more rain than normal in the past two weeks. The precipitation forecast for the coming week predicts 0.75-1.5 inches for southwest Michigan starting with the frontal system passing through today and tomorrow with more chances on Saturday and midweek next week. The 6-10 day and 8-14 day outlooks predict above-normal chances of rain through the end of the month.



Precipitation totals from the past 7 days (left) and percent of normal for the past 14 days (right) as of October 19.



The 6-10 day (October 24-28, top) and 8-14 day (October 26-November 1, bottom) outlooks for temperature (left) and precipitation (right).

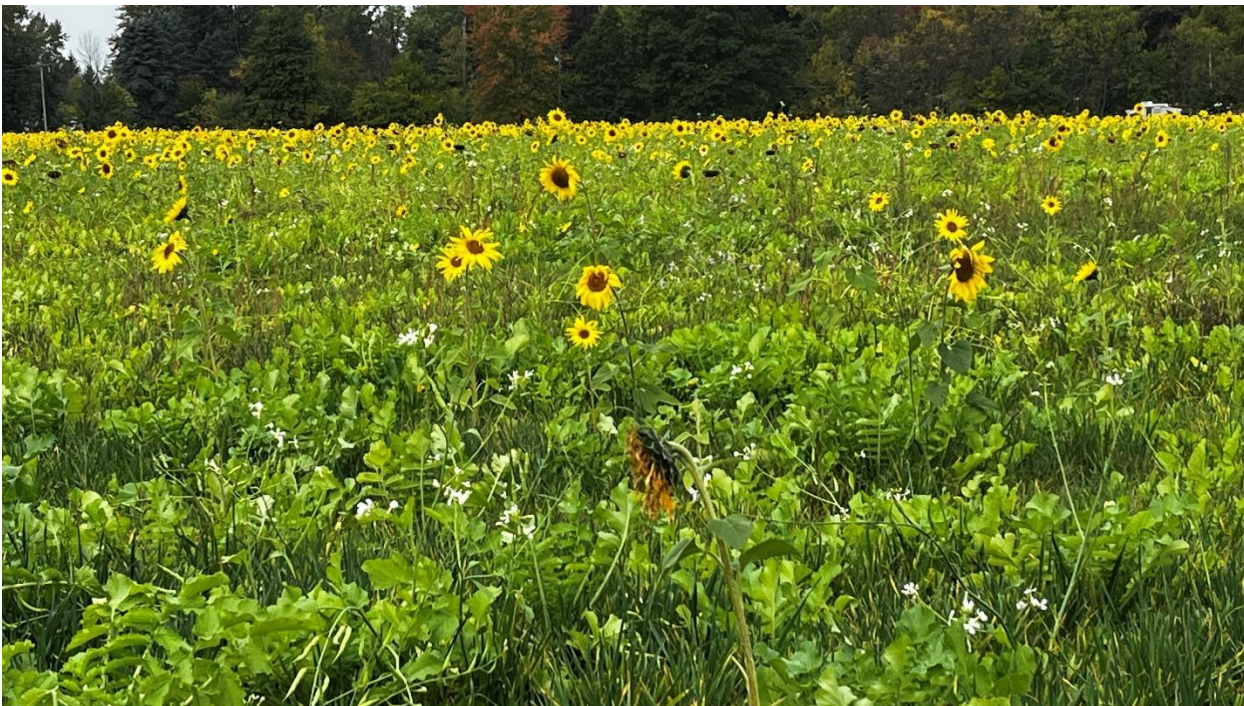
**Crops**

**Corn and soybean** harvest are only slightly behind the 5-year average across the state with 17% of corn harvested for grain (20% average) and 32% of soybean (38% average) harvested according to the latest USDA Crop Update. However, it does not appear that those numbers reflect the progress in southwest Michigan. While other major crop-producing regions of the state having received normal to below-normal rainfall over the past month, the southwest has received significantly more. Most farmers are still waiting to jump into harvest season in our region, although numerous seed corn and potato and a few corn and soybean fields have been harvested. Refer to the [Southwest Michigan field crops update from September 14, 2023](#) and the recent MSU Extension article, "[Corn kernel moisture dry down rates across hybrids and planting time,](#)" for a thorough discussion on grain dry down rates and considerations.

**Winter wheat** planting is also behind as farmers wait to get soybeans harvested with only 44% of wheat planted this year compared with the 5-year average of 58%. Refer to the recent MSU Extension article, "[Management considerations for late-planted wheat,](#)" for recommendations on making adjustments to wheat planting as delays continue.



The harvest is plentiful, but...the dry days are few. Photo courtesy of Eric Anderson.



Just for fun—a field in a grass-brassica-sunflower mix following winter wheat harvest. Photo courtesy of Eric Anderson.

**Irrigation.** Most irrigators have crops that have reached physiological maturity and yield has been set, so no further irrigation is needed. For those with very late plantings or double-crop soybeans who need to decide whether any further irrigation is needed, the MSU Extension article, “[End of season irrigation decisions](#)” will be helpful. I suspect that essentially all growers are done irrigating for the season based on recent rainfall and the current precipitation forecast. For those who find themselves kept out of fields due to wet conditions or are waiting for crops to dry down, check out the article “[Create the irrigation repair list as you end the season](#)” and get systems ready for winter.



## Calendar

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

### Dec 5-7

- [Great Lakes Fruit & Veg Expo](#). Grand Rapids, MI.

### Dec 15

- [Michiana Irrigation Association Annual Meeting](#). Contact Deanna Mumby at 269-998-1177 or Lyndon Kelley at 269-467-5511 for more information.

### 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.

### 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.
- [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 OCTOBER 19, 2023

- [MICHIGAN PESTICIDE APPLICATOR REVIEW SESSIONS, RECERTIFICATIONS CREDITS, AND TESTING OPTIONS FOR WINTER 2023 THROUGH SPRING 2024](#) - Frequently asked questions about when and where pesticide applicators can earn education credits or take the certification exam.

### PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 18, 2023

- [2023 STORED GRAIN AND SOIL FUMIGATION TRAINING SET FOR DECEMBER 11](#) - Spend a day learning about all the basics and safety concerns surrounding grain bin and soil fumigation and get enough credits to renew your fumigation standard.

### PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 16, 2023

- [STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING PHOSPHORUS LOSS](#) - Stack conservation practices to mitigate harmful algal blooms in Lake Erie.
- [FARM BILL PROGRAMS OFFER LIMITED SUPPORT FOR 2022 PRODUCTION YEAR](#) - USDA releases 2022 payment data and 2023 projections for PLC/ARC-CO.

**PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 5, 2023**

- [THE FIRST OF MANY: A SUCCESSFUL FIRST KBS LTAR FIELD DAY WITH OVER 90 PARTICIPANTS](#) - The first annual KBS LTAR field day brought together farmers, agricultural professionals, and farmers to learn about innovative research that aims to build an agricultural system for the future.
- [CORN KERNEL MOISTURE DRY DOWN RATES ACROSS HYBRIDS AND PLANTING TIME](#) - Kernel moisture dry down rate is higher for early planted corn hybrids, but with good weather conditions, dry down rate can be fairly high for late planted hybrids as well.
- [COVER CROP DEMONSTRATION PLOTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC THIS FALL](#) - Take a self-guided tour of the cover crop demonstration plots at the MSU Mason Research Farm, open Oct. 1-31.

**PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 4, 2023**

- [AGRISERVICE PROFESSIONALS PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN SUICIDE PREVENTION](#) - Support for farmers starts with the relationships they already have.

**PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 3, 2023**

- [JOIN THE 2024 MSU ORGANIC FARMER TRAINING PROGRAM IN DETROIT OR EAST LANSING](#) - Create a plan for your farm, educational garden or homestead.

**PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 2, 2023**

- [NEW USDA FUNDING SUPPORTS MENTORS FOR FARMERS TRANSITIONING TO ORGANIC PRODUCTION](#) - Sign up now to be a paid mentor or mentee in the Transition to Organic Partnership Program.

**PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 28, 2023**

- [MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS FOR LATE-PLANTED WHEAT](#) - Planting wheat in late October or early November? Make sure to follow these tips.
- [REDUCING SOYBEAN HARVEST LOSSES](#) - Learn about the causes of soybean harvest losses and practical recommendations for reducing harvest losses.

**PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2023**

- [MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOYBEAN FIELDS INFESTED WITH WHITE MOLD](#) - Manage this year's white mold inoculum to reduce the incidence and severity of white mold in future soybean crops.

**PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 19, 2023**

- [USDA OFFERS FARMS WITH FSA LOANS AN OPPORTUNITY TO EASE REPAYMENT DISTRESS](#) - Cash Flow-Based Assistance can help reset the clock on loan payments.

**PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 15, 2023**

- [APPLY NOW FOR FOUR SARE GRANT PROGRAMS TO FUND FARMERS, EDUCATORS AND RESEARCHERS](#) - Farmer Rancher, Partnership, Research and Education and Youth Educator grants are now open.

**PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 14, 2023**

- [SUSPECT HERBICIDE RESISTANCE? SUBMIT WEED SEEDS FOR SCREENING](#) - Collect weed seeds September-October to submit for herbicide resistance screening.

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