

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates **November 1, 2019**

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.

Evaluation of Methods of Pasture Rejuvenation for Improved Forage Production

In an [article recently published in Crop, Forage & Turfgrass Management](#), researchers report on a three-year field-scale study from a grazing reserve in northwestern Alberta where 11 pasture rejuvenation options were evaluated.

Around 80% of cattle feed is foraged-based; therefore, producing high quality forage and maintaining productive stands several years after forage establishment is critical to beef production. Depleted pastures pose a major issue for farmers, but rejuvenation can be a management strategy that provides rapid improvement, new vigor, or increased usefulness.

The team found that three methods (spray Roundup and direct seeding in the spring, fertilizer application, and broadcast seeding with aerate/spike in the spring) had consistently higher forage yield over control treatments (range: 18 to 90%). Legume composition was as much as 29% for spray Roundup and direct seeding in the spring compared with 2–17% for other methods including the control. The Roundup and direct seeding in the spring resulted in the most profit compared with the control (\$380/ha).

Ensuring adequate weed suppression prior to direct seeding is critical to success, and while fertilization may provide an initial forage yield boost, it may not persist past the first couple of years after application.

Changes in Soybean Yield Components in Response to Dicamba

In an [article recently published in Agrosystems, Geosciences & Environment](#), researchers report on a two-year study from south Louisiana evaluating the effects of dicamba on soybean yield components.

Recent use of dicamba-resistant crops has allowed for control of herbicide-resistant broadleaf weeds but has also resulted in off-target injury to sensitive crops.

The team found that soybean exposed to dicamba during the vegetative growth stage at the lowest rate evaluated (0.6 g ha⁻¹) had minimal yield loss due to an increase in lateral branching. In contrast, dicamba exposure during the reproductive growth stage of soybean development did not lead to observed lateral branching. At the higher dicamba rates evaluated, soybean yield components limited the most were pods and seed produced per plant.

Given the high sensitivity of soybean to dicamba, producers using dicamba-resistant crop technology should follow all label restrictions to prevent off-target movement of dicamba. However, if an off-target movement event occurs, exposing soybean during its vegetative growth stage, this study suggests soybean has the ability to recover from exposure to low dicamba rates.

Weather and Crop Update

According to the latest USDA Crop Progress report (Oct. 27), only 51% of soybean had been harvested, although that number is much higher in the areas I have driven in our region. Only 75% of corn in MI had reached black layer with only Wisconsin being further behind. Only 21% of corn had been harvested by Oct. 27, and with the recent rainfall and cool weather, I suspect that number hasn't climbed much higher this past week.

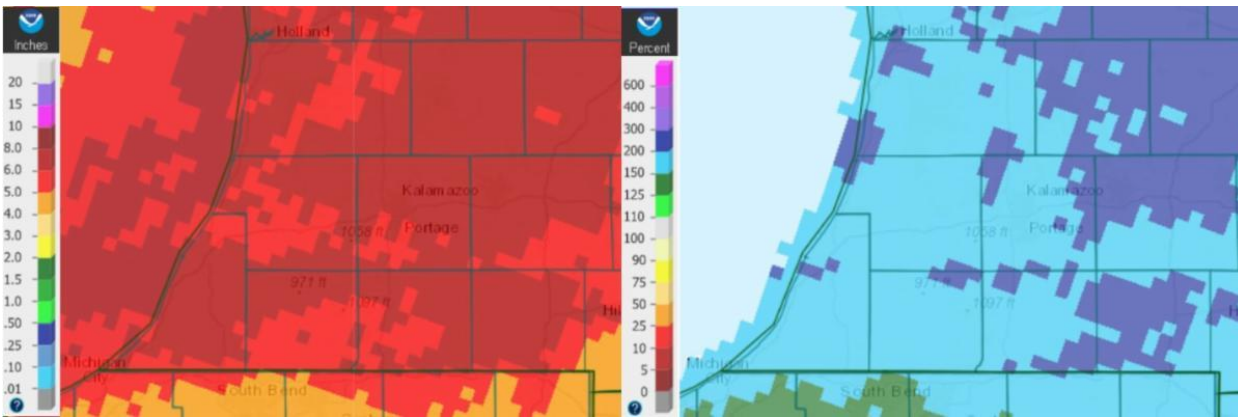
Forecasts for October did not prove accurate as we had a much cooler than normal month. Most Enviroweather locations received between 25 and 45 fewer GDD (base 50) last month compared with the 5-year average. Although some sites did not dip below 30 F (such as Mendon, Constantine and Allegan), others experienced at least three days with lows in the upper 20's F (such as Kalamazoo, Ceresco, and Lawrence). Cool and wet conditions have severely limited the ability for corn in many fields to reach black layer let alone lose moisture to degree. Many farmers are unfortunately looking at an extended harvest window into December, especially with the cold and wet forecast for the first half of November.

While sampling several corn fields last week for stalk nitrate testing, I was surprised to find that all fields had at least a low level of tar spot and most had moderate to severe levels. I did not notice a correlation between stalk strength and tar spot severity, although a few of the fields did have a fair amount of lodged corn, likely due in part to strong winds during the third and fourth weeks of October. As Bruce MacKellar has urged in recent MSU Extension articles, farmers should be checking fields for stalk strength and considering harvesting at higher grain moisture than is normally desirable.

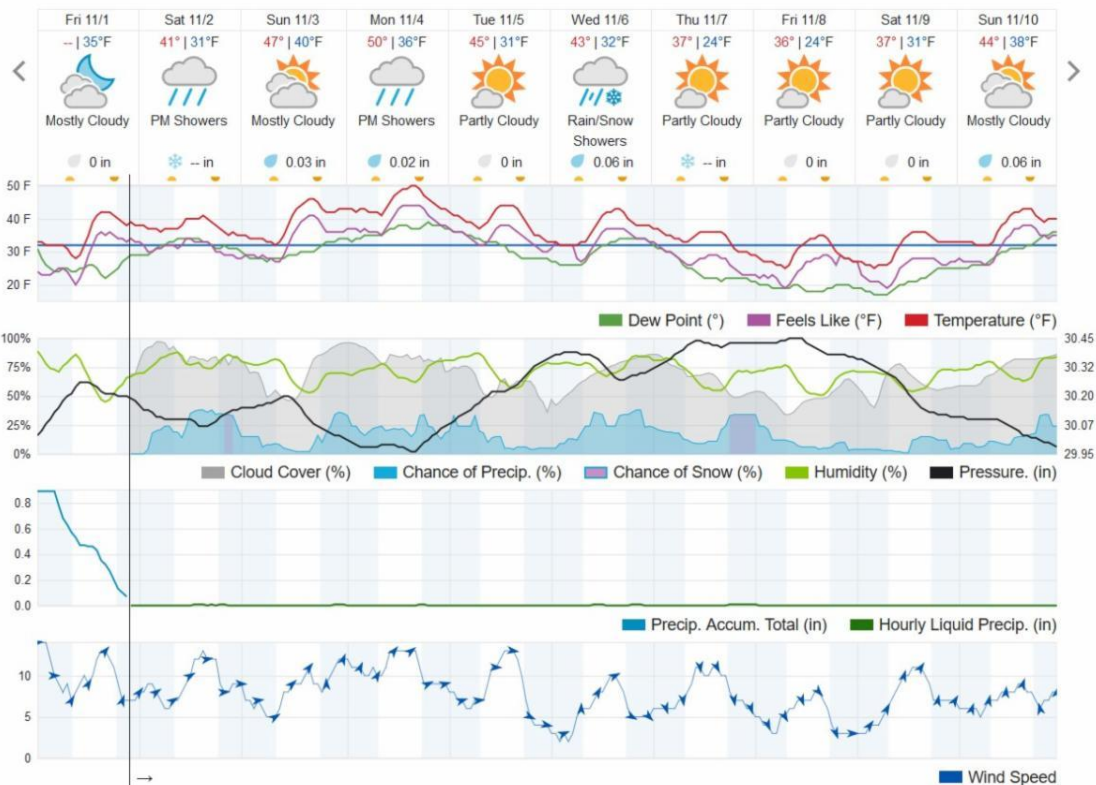


Tar spot in corn ranged from minimal (left) to moderate (center) to severe (right) in several fields visited last month in St. Joseph, Kalamazoo, Calhoun and Branch Counties.

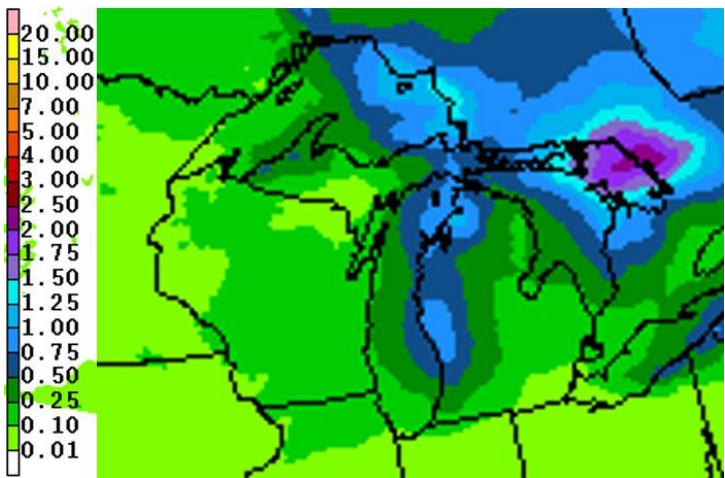
Lodged corn this fall will likely be due to a combination of tar spot, other opportunistic fungi, and strong winds that swept through the region during the second half of October.



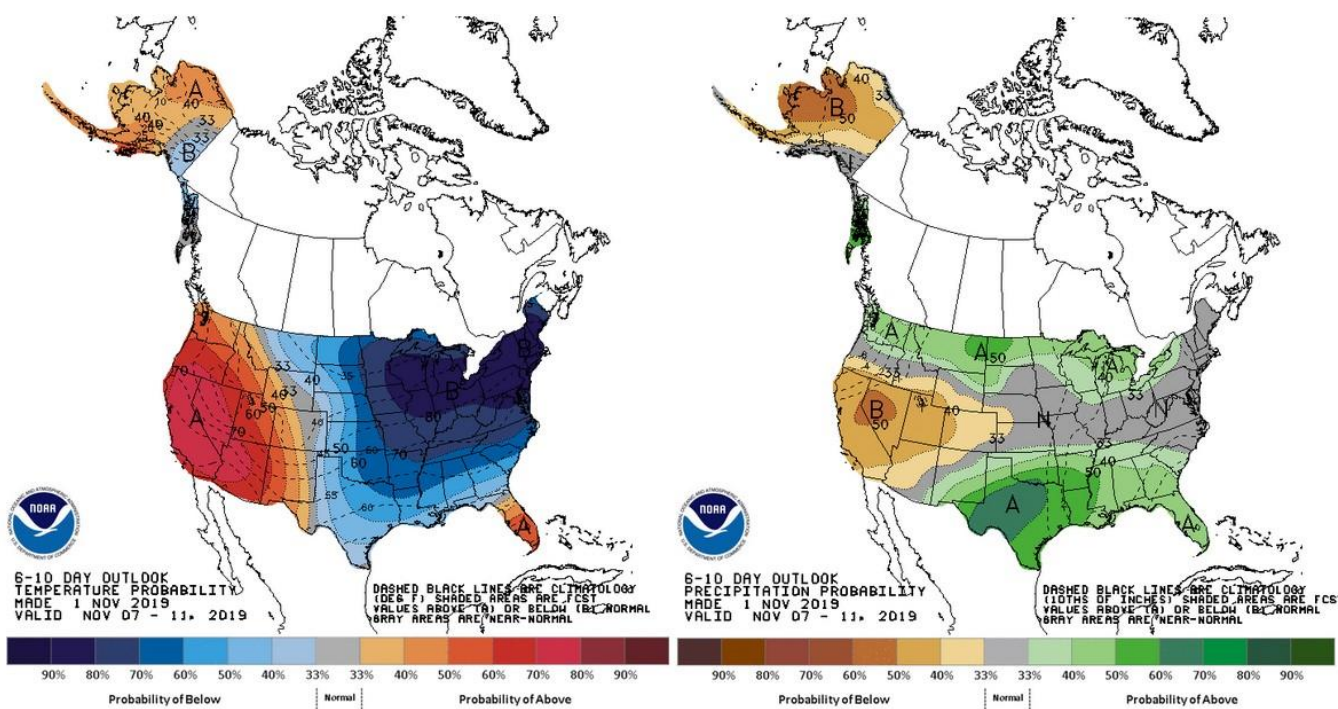
Rainfall totals (left) and percent of normal (right) in October.



The 10-day forecast for Centreville according to wunderground.com.



Forecast for precipitation totals for the week ending Nov. 8, 2019. Most of that precipitation is expected over this weekend.



National Weather Service 6-10 day outlook (Nov. 7-11) for temperature (left) and precipitation (right) - the 8-14 day outlook is essentially the same.

Calendar

Titles are clickable links to online content when highlighted and underlined

- **November 15 - 2020 Certification deadline for fall-seeded crops (e.g. barley, rye, wheat).** Contact your local FSA office with questions.
- **December 6 - 2019 Market Facilitation Program sign-up deadline.** Contact your local FSA office with questions.
- **December 10 - 2018 Farm Bill Explained.** 10am-12pm. GreenMark Equipment, 16700 Heimbach Rd, Three Rivers, MI. The MSU Extension Farm Management team is planning regional meetings to thresh out the 2018 Farm Bill and what the changes have meant and will mean for farmers. Dr. Jim Hilker and members of the farm management team will be present to answer your questions. Updates with details will be coming soon.

- **December 13 - RUP Core Training and Testing.** 8:30am-12pm. St. Joseph County MSU Extension Office, 612 E. Main St., Centreville, MI. A review of the Core Pesticide Applicators Manual to prepare for the MDARD Pesticide Applicators Certification Exam. Call the Extension office (269-467-5511) to reserve your seat. Cost is \$20/person. Those taking the exam will need to sign up on MDARD's website and bring a separate check. Three RUP credits available to those with a non-expired pesticide applicator license.
- **December 13 - Michiana Irrigation Association Annual Meeting.** 8:30am-3:00pm. Blue Gate Garden Inn, Shipshewana, IN. The most comprehensive discussion of irrigation-related issues in Michigan and Indiana with 10 speakers from university, governmental and industry on issues of irrigation management, economics, regulation and potential environmental impact. \$35/person includes dues to MIA and lunch. Flyer and registration form available by contacting MIA (mumbyde@yahoo.com or kelleyl@msu.edu). Mail in registration form and check by Dec. 6. Call 269-998-1177 for more information.
- **December 18 - 2019 Integrated Crop and Pest Management Update.** 9am-4pm. MSU Pavilion, 4301 Farm Lane, Lansing, MI. Michigan agribusiness, pesticide sales and service professionals, crop consultants, and farmers. Cost is \$60/person (includes refreshments, lunch and handouts including the 2020 MSU Weed Control Guide and other bulletins). Register online by Dec. 16. Seven RUP and six CCA credits available.
- **January 10-11, 2020 - Midwest iHemp Expo.** Lansing, MI. Sponsored by iHempMichigan. MSU specialists and educators working on industrial hemp will present 2019 research findings.
- **January 13-15 - MABA Winter Conference.** Lansing Center, Lansing, MI.
- **January 22 - SMaRT Annual Review.** GreenMark Equipment, 16700 Heimbach Rd., Three Rivers, MI. 8:45am-12:30pm. The Michigan Soybean Checkoff program is covering all costs, but online pre-registration is requested to ensure an accurate count for lunch and materials. Contact Mike Staton (staton@anr.msu.edu, 269-673-0370, ext. 2562) with questions.
- **January 29-30 - Great Lakes Crop Summit.** Soaring Eagle Casino, Mt. Pleasant, MI.
- **January 31 - Ag Action Day.** 8:30am-3:30pm. Kalamazoo Valley Community College, 6767 W O Ave, Kalamazoo, MI. \$35/person includes lunch and all educational sessions. Registration will be live soon.
- **February 10 - MSU Extension Pest and Crop Update.** 8:30am-3pm. Dowagiac Conservation Club, 54551 M 51 N, Dowagiac, MI. \$30/person includes lunch, snacks, and the 2020 Weed Guide. RUP and CCA credits applied for. Registration will be live soon.
- **February 14 - RUP Core Training and Testing.** 8:30am-12pm. Branch County MSU Extension Office, 570 Marshall Road #C Coldwater, MI. A review of the Core Pesticide Applicators Manual to prepare for the MDARD Pesticide Applicators Certification Exam. Call the Extension office (517-279-4311) to reserve your seat. Cost is \$20/person. Those taking the exam will need to sign up on MDARD's website and bring a separate check. Three RUP credits available to those with a non-expired pesticide applicator license.
- **February 28 - RUP Core Training and Testing.** 8:30am-12pm. St. Joseph County MSU Extension Office, 612 E. Main St., Centreville, MI. See Dec. 13 entry for details.
- **April 6 - RUP Core Training and Testing.** 8:30am-12pm. St. Joseph County MSU Extension Office, 612 E. Main St., Centreville, MI. See Dec. 13 entry for details.

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

Frosted sorghum and sudangrass pasture poses prussic acid poisoning risk

PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 29, 2019

Sorghum-family plants can contain prussic acid that is potentially lethal to livestock.

2020 Drainage Workshop to teach drainage concepts and design

PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 25, 2019

Learn about drainage concepts and how to design drainage systems with crop production and water quality in mind on Feb. 12-13, 2020, in East Lansing, Michigan.

Trouble controlling weeds? Submit seeds for herbicide resistance screening.

PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 23, 2019

Submit seeds to MSU Plant & Pest Diagnostics to determine if herbicide resistance is impacting your farm.

Reducing soybean harvest losses when plants are short and podded low

PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 21, 2019

Learn how to adjust and operate your combines when harvesting short soybean plants that are podded low to the ground.

MSU resources to estimate corn maturity date and accurately determine corn growth stages as harvest approaches

PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 16, 2019

With the recent tough weather season for field crops, MSU Extension provides a variety of resources to help farmers estimate corn maturity and accurately determine corn growth stages as harvest approaches.

Feeding baleage to small ruminants

PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 16, 2019

Baleage offers a low cost, high quality forage option for sheep and goats but care must be taken to reduce health risks.

Fall weed control reminders on late and prevent plant acres

PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 16, 2019

Recommendations for fall 2019 weed control that will set the stage for successful spring 2020 weed control

Survey input from industrial hemp growers needed for MSU research and Extension efforts

PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 7, 2019

Input regarding industrial hemp production practices and challenges will help ensure MSU research and Extension efforts can benefit industrial hemp growers.

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