

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Update May 16, 2024

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.

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Agricultural Job Opportunities

Great Lakes Seed Solutions, LLC. is looking for an employee or intern. Primary duties would be Soil Sampling, Field scouting, Warehouse work, deliveries, etc. Reach out to Justin Davidhizar at (269)535-2125 to apply or learn more.

There is an opening for an Extension Program Worker/ Field Crops Intern based out of Clinton or Gratiot County. Responsibilities include helping with wheat, cover crop, integrated pest management and Michigan Soybean Committee research projects. For more information, the job posting is linked here: [Extension Program Worker/Field Crops Intern](#).

Electric Tractor Demo

[Indian Creek Ag](#), a full-service Vermeer and Deutz Fahr tractor dealer based in Olivet, MI, is holding a 2024 Demo Day. They will have a 55 hp electric tractor on site that will be pulling Vermeer's newest 10-wheel rake and 17-foot 4 basket hay tedder. This is a great opportunity for anyone looking to vet the efficacy of electric tractors. There is no preregistration required and no cost to attend. Hamburgers and sides will be served. It is on Saturday, June 1 from 11:00 am - 3:00 pm at Indian Creek Ag, 7904 McDonald Rd, Olivet, MI 49076.

Cover Crop Directory

The [CoverCropServiceProviderDirectory](#) is now published and live, and I was pleased to see Southwest Michigan and Northern Indiana well-represented! Access the directory at the link above. If you haven't joined the directory and would like to, you still can.

New MSU Extension Water Use Efficiency Educator

Angie Gradiz will start with MSU Extension on Monday, May 20 as a water use efficiency and irrigation educator. Her office will be in Branch County, but she will cover much of Southern Michigan. Here is a brief background from Angie on her education and experiences:

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"As a child, Angie felt a deep connection to agriculture. Growing up in Honduras, where farming and nature grow in abundance, she found herself drawn into crop fields. Her interest led her to the Pan American Agricultural School, Zamorano in her home country, where she majored in environmental science and rural development, with a special interest in agricultural water management.

During her college years, Angie did an internship in Mexico, where she explored innovative ways to clean wastewater using micro algae. This increased her curiosity for research. In 2021, Angie found herself at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Panhandle Research and Extension Center working on a project to help farmers in western Nebraska adopt new technologies for better irrigation practices. It was here that she realized the power of community and peer-learning in driving change.



The following year, she pursued a master's degree in mechanized systems management with a specialization in water resource planning and management. Her research focused on understanding how different irrigation scenarios affect the growth of dry beans. Also, how different irrigation regimes can increase irrigation water use efficiency without affecting the yield. This is important because it means that we can reduce the water input and obtain similar yields. Also, part of her research was to use infrared thermometers on dry edible beans to determine irrigation rates and schedule irrigation.

During her free time, she likes camping, doing pottery, painting, going to art museums and learning new languages."

Field Crops Update

Soybean and corn planting was slow this week due to frequent rainfall. As of May 12, the USDA NASS reports that 26% of corn and 22% of soybeans have been planted. This is behind the five-year average for both crops. However, in his article [The Planting Date Conundrum for Corn](#), R.L. (Bob) Nielsen of Purdue reminds that yields are not based solely on planting date. He wrote, "Mudding in' a crop early to avoid planting late will almost always end up being an unwise decision."



Fields planted earlier have continued to emerge and progress. Seedcorn maggot has caused significant damage to some soybean fields in Southwest Michigan. MSU insect specialist Chris DiFonzo outlined perfect conditions for seedcorn maggot as "tillage plus freshly decaying green stuff plus slow emergence". [Enviroweather](#) has a [seedcorn maggot model](#), which can be used to predict the severity of damage we'll see now and in the coming weeks. DiFonzo recommends that producers who replant after seedcorn maggot forego the insecticide seed treatment, as the green matter is drier and less attractive now, and the warmer soil conditions will contribute to faster emergence. Cutting damage from black cutworm is another thing to be scouting for. Fields with heavy winter annual weeds that were recently sprayed are at higher risk for black cutworm.

Winter wheat heads have fully emerged, entering Feekes stage 10.5. The fields have been quite wet for the past couple weeks, and that is expected to continue. This has affected some flag leaf fungicide applications and may require fungicides at flowering to be flown on rather than applied through a ground rig. Flowering is just starting in a small percentage of some fields. Right now the forecasted head scab risk is low, but states to the south of us are at higher risk, and that risk is expected to move northward. Light powdery mildew and aphid pressure continues in heavier soils.

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Potatoes continue to emerge and progress. Some producers have finished planting, but others are still waiting out the weather to finish planting all their acres. Insecticide seed treatments on early planted potatoes are nearing the end of their effective control period, so Colorado potato beetle should start soon. Historically, the first surviving egg mass on neonic treated potatoes has been found around the first week of June in the earliest planted potatoes. Scout for potato beetle by watching for feeding on young and emerging leaves and checking leaf undersides for the orange egg masses.



Alfalfa cutting should commence as soon as possible for the highest quality hay (such as for dairies) according to the Enviroweather [Alfalfa Cutting Model](#). Wet fields and scattered showers may make that difficult. Cutting would also control alfalfa weevil, although in most of Southwest Michigan, it is mostly under control now. Many producers sprayed for it this year, as it reached thresholds in some locations before the alfalfa was tall enough to cut.

Black Cutworm moths are present in the state. Bucket traps in Berrien (near Berrien Springs) and St. Joseph Counties have caught the following:

Date	Berrien	Centreville	Sturgis
4/8	0	2	1
4/15	0	12	4
4/22	0	16	3
4/29	4	10	3
5/6	5	46	0
5/13	8	25	0

One **True Armyworm** moths are present in the state with significant flights in Sturgis. Bucket traps in Berrien (near Berrien Springs) and St. Joseph Counties have caught the following:

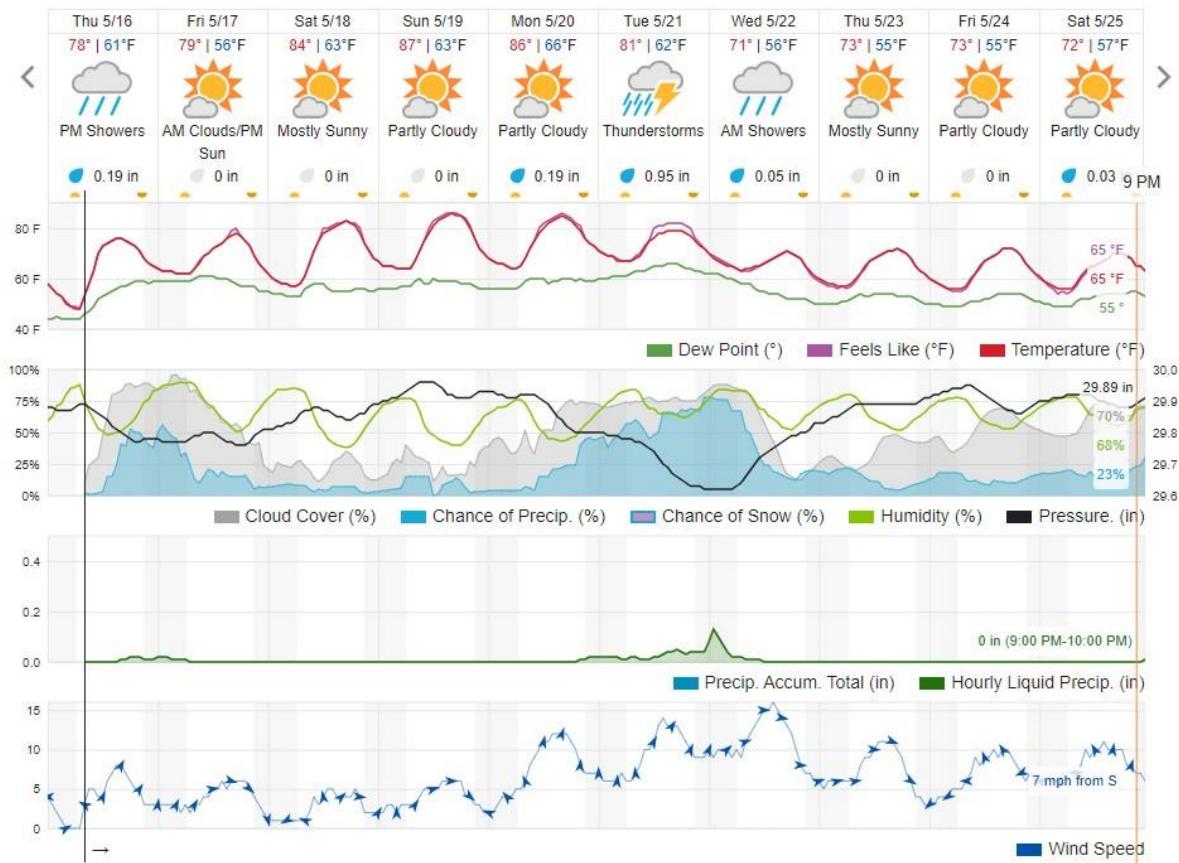
Date	Berrien	Centreville	Sturgis
4/8	0	0	0
4/15	1	0	0
4/22	0	0	14
4/29	0	0	20
5/6	0	0	14
5/13	4	0	7

Weather Update

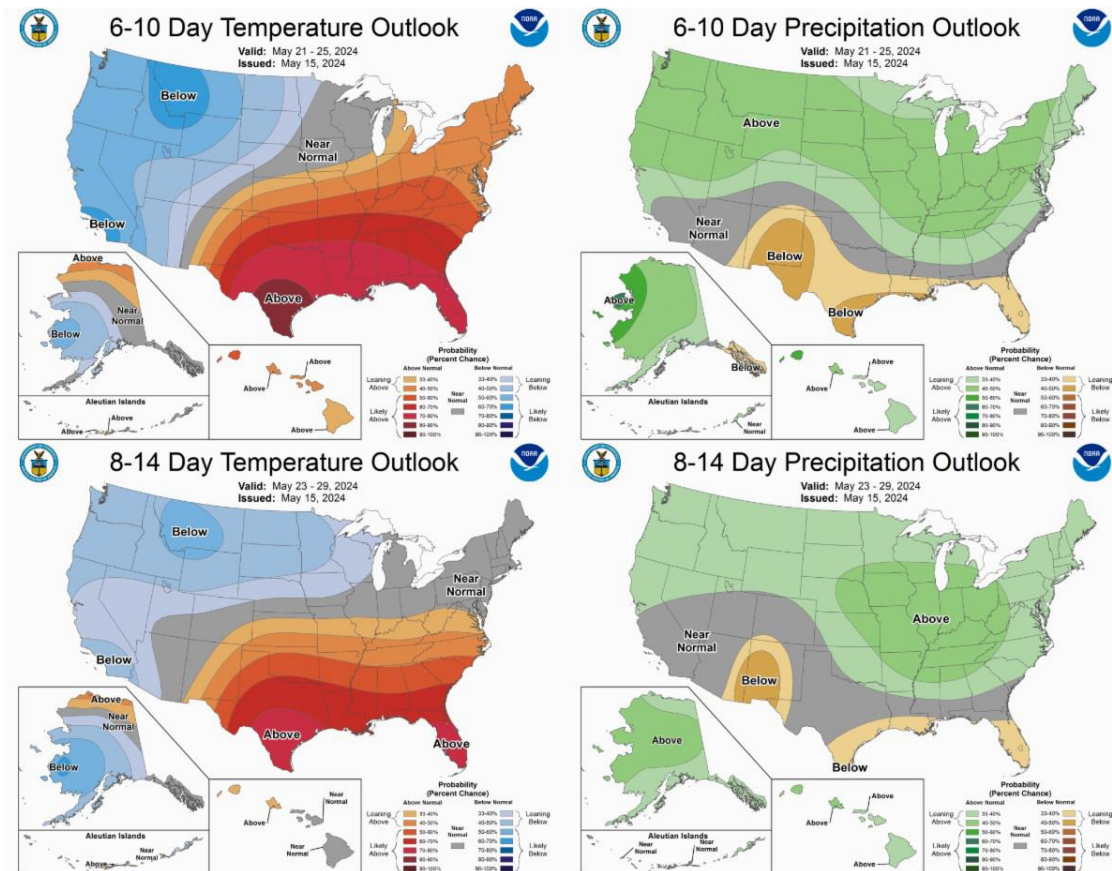
Cleanup and repairs from the storms early last week continue. This past week, the soil continued to warm, and the accumulation of degree days shows that we are still about 10-14 calendar days ahead of normal from the warm spring. Tonight, May 16, will see some scattered showers with low predicted precipitation (less than 0.25"). The weather forecast calls for a warm and mostly dry weekend followed by a large rain event early next week, predicted at 0.5-1" of precipitation.

For a weekly weather outlook from MSU's Jeff Andresen, join the free [Virtual Breakfast](#) meeting every Thursday through Sept 19. The weather update starts around 7:15 am (after the weekly topic).

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Ten-day weather forecast for Kalamazoo according to www.wunderground.com.



The 6-10 day (May 21-25, top) and 8-10 day (May 23-29, bottom) outlooks for temperature (left) and precipitation (right).

Calendar

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

- May 18** [Kalamazoo Garden Festival](#). 9:00 am. Kalamazoo Expo Center. Come join the Southwest Michigan Master Gardeners at the Kalamazoo Garden Festival! This event will feature vendors, educational workshops and much more. The event is free for participants to attend but registration by May 15 is required.
- May 23** [Virtual Breakfast: Dry Bean Planting Options](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- May 30** [Virtual Breakfast: Wheat Fungicide Recommendations](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- June 1** [2024 Indian Creek Ag Demo Day](#). 11:00 am. Indian Creek Ag, 7904 McDonald Rd, Olivet, MI 49076. Equipment demos, including an electric tractor. No cost or preregistration required.
- June 6** [Virtual Breakfast: Sprayer Setup](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- June 13** [Virtual Breakfast: Irrigation](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- June 19** [Food-Grade Grains Field Day](#). 9:00 am. Kellogg Biological Station. The Food-Grade Grains Field Day will highlight the steps to growing food-grade grains from the field to mug, spoon, and jug! At each stop presenters and attendees will discuss the agronomic, processing, and end user quality needs and considerations for the specific grain. Lunch is included.
- June 20** [Virtual Breakfast: Wild Weather for Hay](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- June 25** [Michigan Wheat Program Summer Field Day](#). 8:15 am. Saginaw Valley Research and Extension Center. This year's MI Wheat Programs annual field day in conjunction with MSU Extension will be hosted Tuesday, June 25th at the MSU Saginaw Valley Research and Extension Center. Pre-registration is encouraged for an accurate head count for food.
- June 27** [Virtual Breakfast: Insect Update Beneficials and Corn Borer](#). 7:00 am. The weekly online program provides timely, relevant information to keep field crop farmers and consultants up to date with rapidly changing crop conditions, pests, diseases and environmental conditions during the growing season. Register once for entire series online.
- June 27** [Rebel Pastures Pasture Walk](#). 6:00 pm. Rebel Pastures is a first generation, regenerative farm in Rockford, MI that focuses on animal and soil health. Realizing farming is one big experiment, they've used several methods to raise animals and grow pasture and are looking forward to sharing them at this pasture walk.

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

Wheat watchers week of May 13, 2024

PUBLISHED ON May 16, 2024

See how the wheat crop is progressing across the state this week.

Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series continues with dry bean production in Michigan

PUBLISHED ON May 15, 2024

The May 23 Field Crops Virtual Breakfast will feature Scott Bales, MSU dry bean specialist, discussing dry bean production in Michigan.

Wheat watchers week of May 6, 2024

PUBLISHED ON May 09, 2024

See how the wheat crop is progressing across the state this week.

Southwest Michigan field crops update - May 9, 2024

PUBLISHED ON May 09, 2024

Crops are starting to emerge. Wheat hit Feekes 10 and alfalfa weevil feeding continues.

Grass photography tips for ID: Help us help you!

PUBLISHED ON May 09, 2024

Need help identifying a grass? Learn how to capture those critical photos that can help your identifier.

Togetherall cultivates online support for farmers

PUBLISHED ON May 09, 2024

Discover Togetherall, an online community for farmers, and explore additional resources provided by MSU Extension. Remember, you're never alone in your journey.

Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series continues with planning postemergence weed control for the season ahead

PUBLISHED ON May 08, 2024

Join the Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Series on May 16 to plan your postemergence weed control options with Erin Burns.

Cover Crop Service Provider Directory

PUBLISHED ON May 03, 2024

The purpose of this document is to highlight some of the businesses that offer cover crop related services to farmers across Michigan.

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