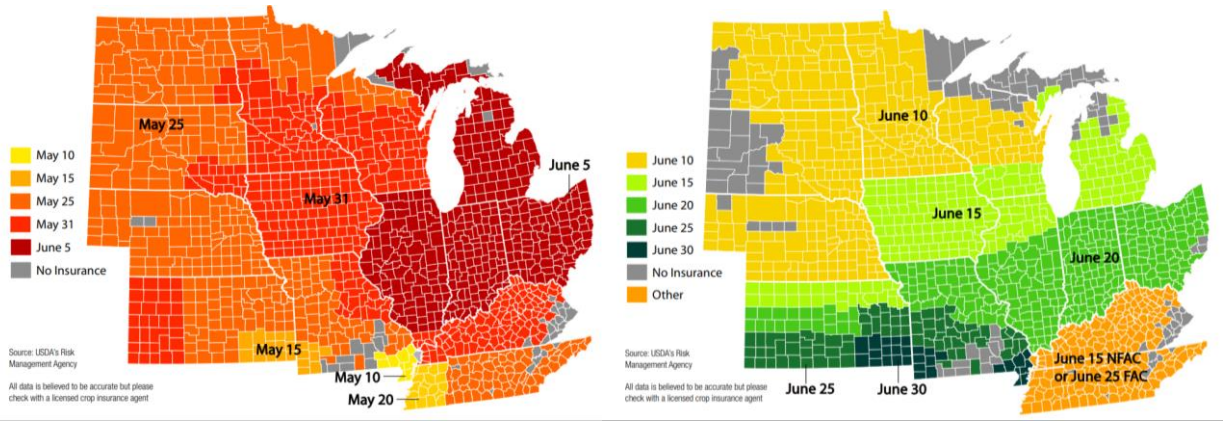
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

Southwest Michigan Field Crops Updates
May 26, 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.

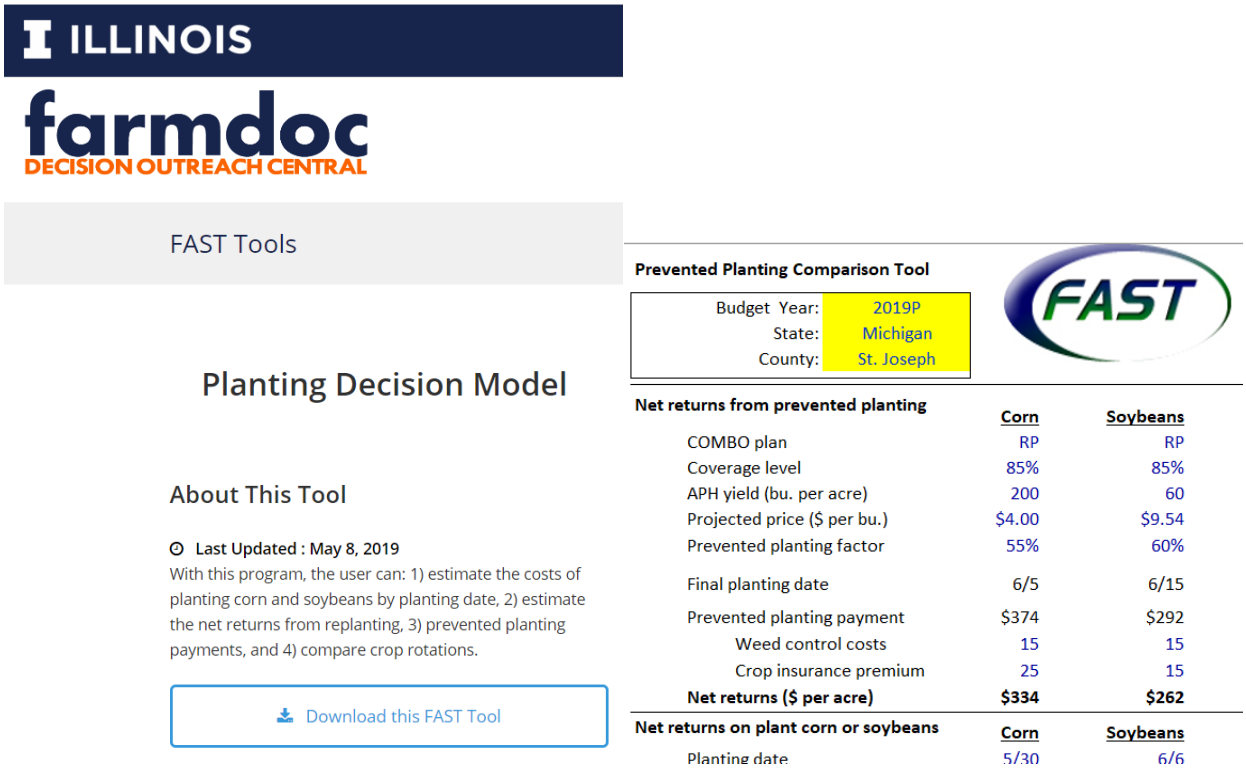
Delayed Planting vs Prevented Planting

With continued planting delays occurring throughout Michigan, many are considering their options with regards to crop insurance and prevent plant. The deadlines for planting corn and soybean with federal crop insurance in Michigan are June 5th and 15th, respectively. Recently, Jamie Wasemiller, Gulke Group senior market analyst and crop insurance expert, was interviewed by Farm Journal's AgWeb about the options available. "With spring insurance prices of $4.00 for corn and $9.54 for beans, Wasemiller says, along with the bearish nature of futures prices moving forward, the indemnities provided by prevent plant could be close to or even higher than profits from producing a crop on those acres. 'I do think prevent plant is a viable option this year." He went on to outline four options, including: 1) Submit a prevented planting claim; 2) Do not submit a prevented planting claim and plant a second insurable crop before the late planting period; 3) Submit a prevented planting claim and plant a second insurance crop after the late-planting period; and 4) Plant the original crop during the late planting period.



Final planting dates for corn (left) and soybean (right) crop insurance for 2019.

On the Virtual Breakfast on May 30, MSU Extension farm finance educator Roger Betz will talk through this topic and answer questions. If you are not already receiving a weekly email reminder for the VB with a link, you can go to the Field Crops Team's Virtual Breakfast page to sign up and learn more. Another useful tool comes from the University of Illinois' farmdoc group called the Planting Decision Model. It is an Excel spreadsheet that can be downloaded from their website for free. There are multiple variables that you can manipulate to generate net returns and other metrics.



farmdoc's Planting Decision Model Excel tool can be downloaded and customized to calculate returns under different planting and prevented planting scenarios.

Interseeding Cover Crops

Karen Renner, a professor in the MSU Plant, Soils and Microbial Sciences Department and graduate student Aaron Brooker have been conducting research into interseeding cover crops into corn between the V1 and V7 growth stages. They tested three different cover crops in corn - annual rye, tillage radish, crimson clover - and a mixture of all three. Their research was conducted over three years at multiple locations across the state to determine if results changed based on soil type, latitude and growing season conditions. They found that the use of cover crops did not reduce corn yield and is an effective strategy to improve soil health and suppress winter annual weeds. To learn more about their research, key findings and recommendations, watch their recorded presentation (37 minutes).

AW and BCW Counts

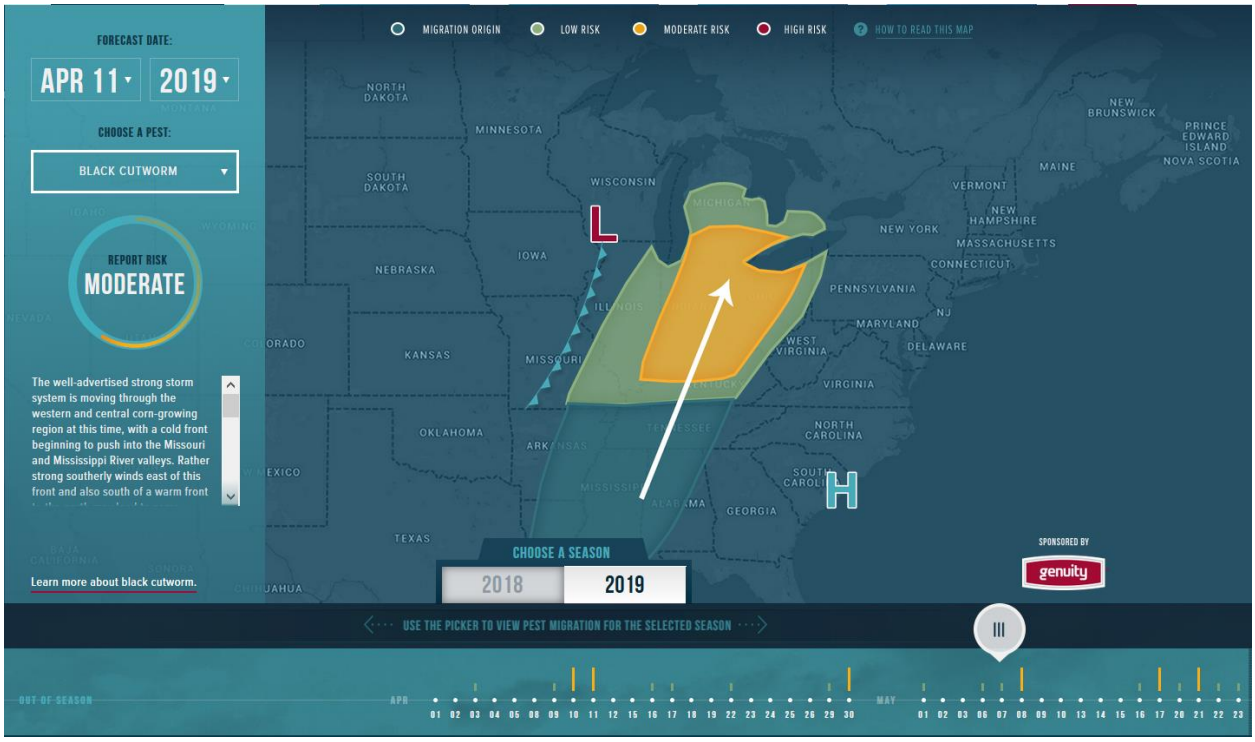
Purdue has ceased its black cutworm trapping for the season, and they are now into the scouting phase. The northern tier of counties had significant catches beginning the week of April 11-17 all the way through to May 15 in different locations. According to John Obermeyer, "Based on the black cutworm's growth development model, it takes approximately 300 heat units (base 50ºF) from egg hatch to early 4th instar; this is when black cutworm larvae begin to cut plants. Some minor leaf injury may be present before then." Assuming we also experienced a significant flight and subsequent egg laying the week of April 11-17 (before I set my traps), since then we have accumulated 224 GDD_{50} as of Wednesday. If the current forecast holds, we will reach 300 GDD by the end of this weekend and 343 by May 28.

Armyworm counts for Pinney (NW) have dropped significantly (39) from their peak in mid- to late-April, but at NEPAC (NE) the counts were still very high (739) between May 9-15. Counts from MI traps are below. I also ran across an interesting website, Insect Forecast, that predicts flights of key crop pests—including black cutworm, corn earworm, corn rootworm, soybean aphid, and western bean cutworm—based on weather patterns.

The site predicted a couple of dates fairly well for several locations, as correlated with Purdue's trap counts, but missed on many others.

		3-May	10-May	17-May	24-May
	Crop				
Armyworm	Wheat	64	98	17	25
	Wheat	8	11	4	3
	Grass pasture	-	16	3	7
	Grass pasture	-	27	16	33
Black Cutworm	Alfalfa	0	0	3	0
	Grass/alfalfa mix	4	15	6	0
	Pasture w/ dandelion	1	2	4	0
	Alfalfa	1	0	3	3

Moth trap counts for true armyworm (AW) and black cutworm (BCW). It appears peak flight for both species may have been around the first or second week of May, but AW continue to be found in fairly high numbers.



Black cutworm flights based on weather patterns as predicted by www.insectforecast.com. The yellow bars at the bottom indicate when the risk is moderate.

Weather and Crop Update

Wheat: The USDA Crop Progress stats from last week were similar to the previous week with only 10% of MI wheat rated excellent with an additional ~30% each rated good or fair. Most wheat is estimated to be at Feekes 9 with the flag leaf fully exposed. One field I visited however had already headed and was at Feekes 10.4 (pic below).

The Virtual Breakfast session this week featured MSU's wheat specialist Dennis Pennington talking about the condition of wheat this season. Dennis said wheat development is 7-10 days behind normal. The flag leaf has

emerged in many fields here in the southern part of the state, and flowering will probably occur in about two weeks. Variability within fields is high with as much as three growth stages separating plants in the same field. This will make timing a head scab fungicide application difficult. The ideal timing would be when 50% of plants in the field have reached Feekes stage 10.5.1 when anthers can be seen on the head. Check the Fusarium Head Blight Prediction Center online to see what the current risk is for head scab in Michigan. For those who have either not been able to make a nitrogen application yet this year or think they might be short on nitrogen, Dennis said it's not too late to make an application as the nitrogen uptake curve gets steep at this stage, but you will want to dilute the fertilizer to avoid burning the flag leaf.

This wheat is around Feekes 10.4 with the head almost fully exposed. Flowering should occur in this field in about a week.

Corn: According to the latest crop progress report, Michigan was 19% planted as of last week which is well behind last year (48%) and the 5-year average (54%). With the warmer temps toward the end of last week, planted corn began emerging, and we are roughly 1% emerged as of last week. All the corn I have seen is still around V1-V2 and is fairly yellow—not uncommon with the cool temps earlier this week and saturated soils. Reports of planting progress from field crop educators in other regions of the state earlier this week ranged from 60% in the Thumb and Moncalm to as low as <15% in the southeast. I estimate we're 15-20% in this area.

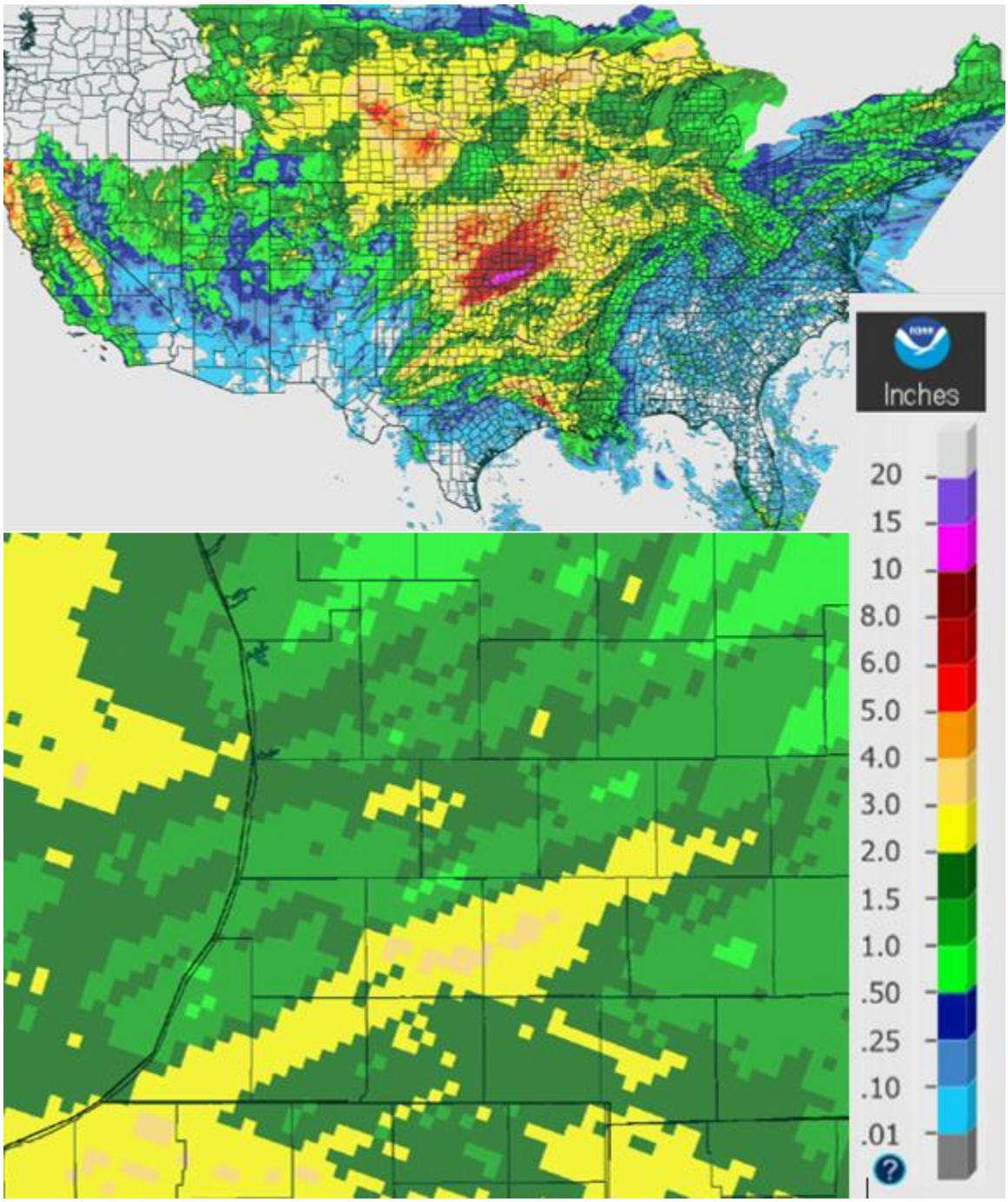
Soybeans: According to the latest crop progress report, Michigan was 10% planted as of last week which is behind last year (27%) and the 5-year average (31%). As with corn, we are roughly 1% emerged as of last week. Planting progress reports around the state were all below 15% for soys.

Alfalfa: The crop overall looks good, but I have begun to see the lodging that others had seen. As of May 23, the average number of growing degree days (base 41 for alfalfa) for all Enviroweather stations in the south central and southwest regions was at 552 since March 1st. We should be at 745 GDD_{41} by May 29th according to the current forecast. I have not seen any tip feeding yet.

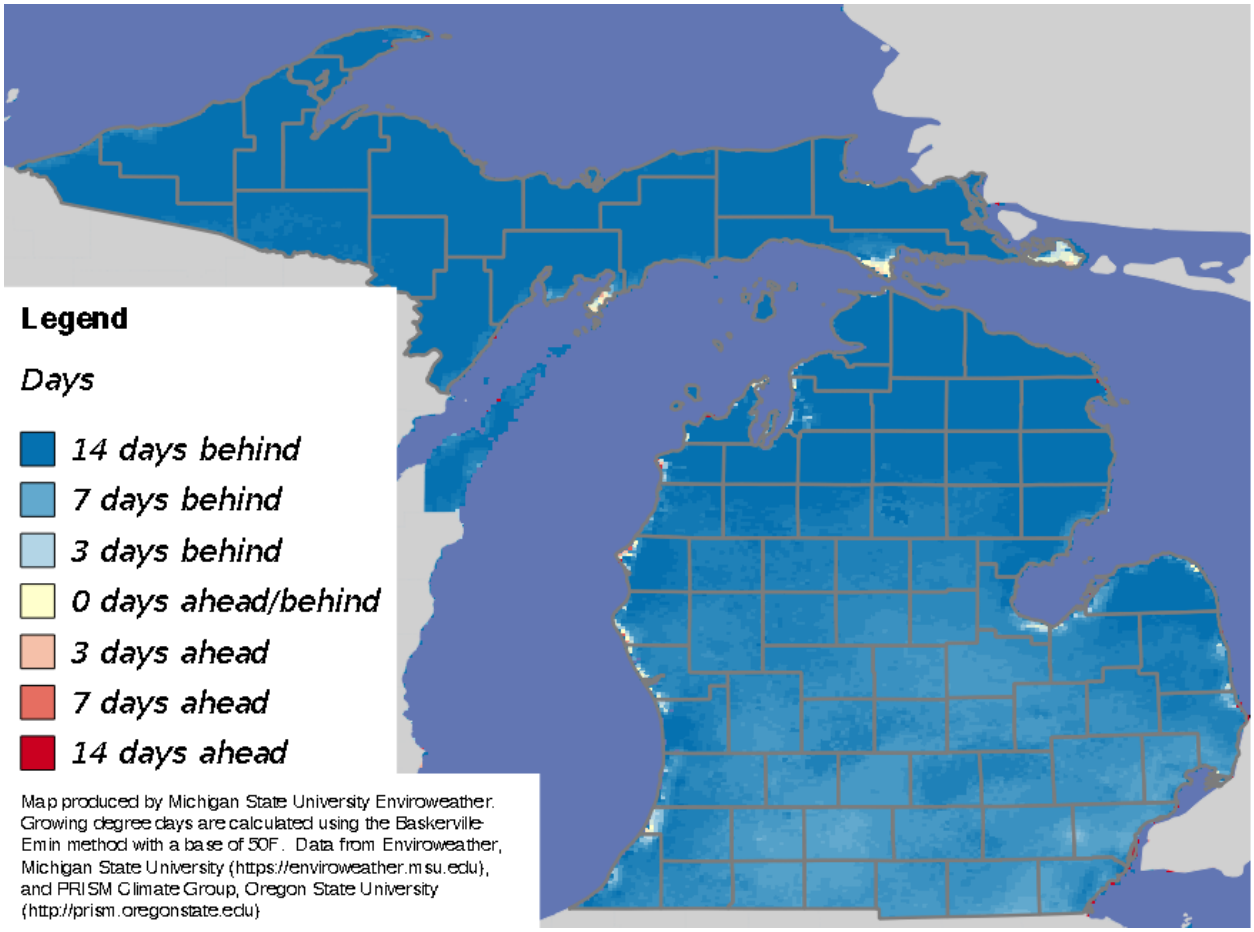
Lodged alfalfa—not bad throughout the field, but present.

Weather: Rainfall in our area this past week was 1.5 inches but varied from less than an inch to over 3 inches. We are still up to a week behind in heat units, but the northern part of the state is as much as 2+ weeks behind. The jet stream is moving from SW to NE which is expected to continue through the rest of the month and into early June. This will be bringing more chances of rain and a prime situation for moving southerly plant pests up to us. The 6-10 day outlook is calling for below normal temperatures and above normal rainfall which won't help as most of the ground is at 99% saturation. We are the furthest behind in corn planting that we have been since the USDA began tracking this back in 1980. Currently, Michigan is 19% planted for corn and 10% for soybean.

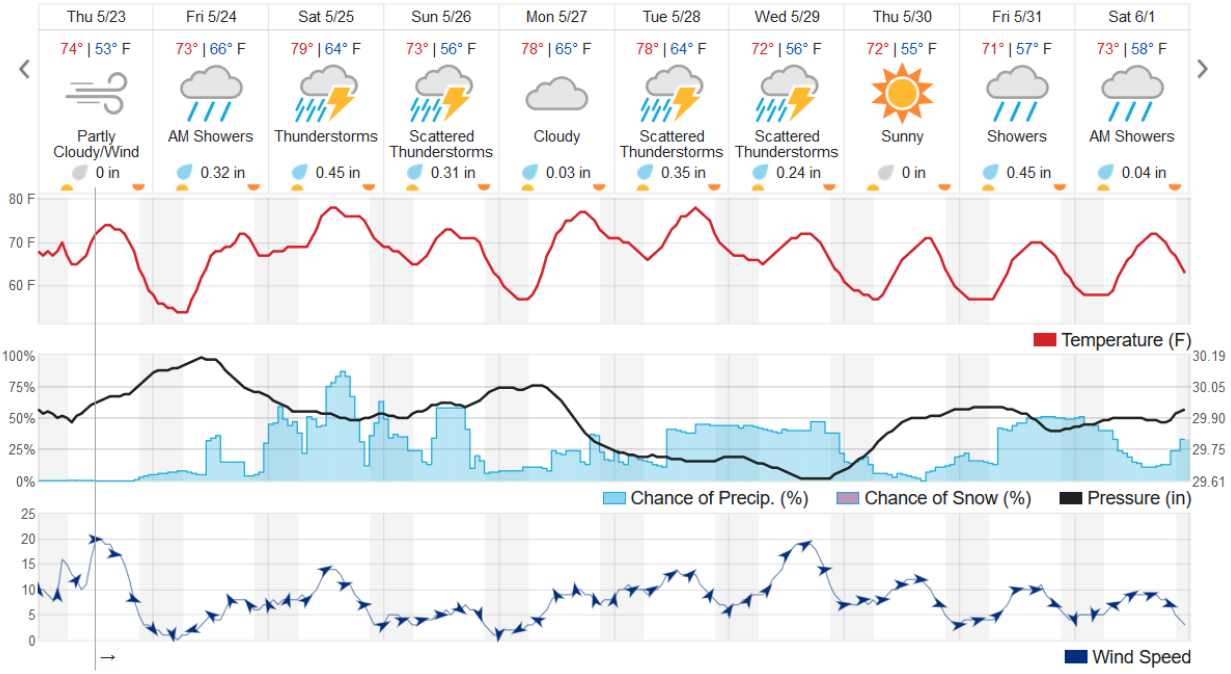
Some farmers will need to consider whether prevented planting will be a viable option for some of their acres this year.



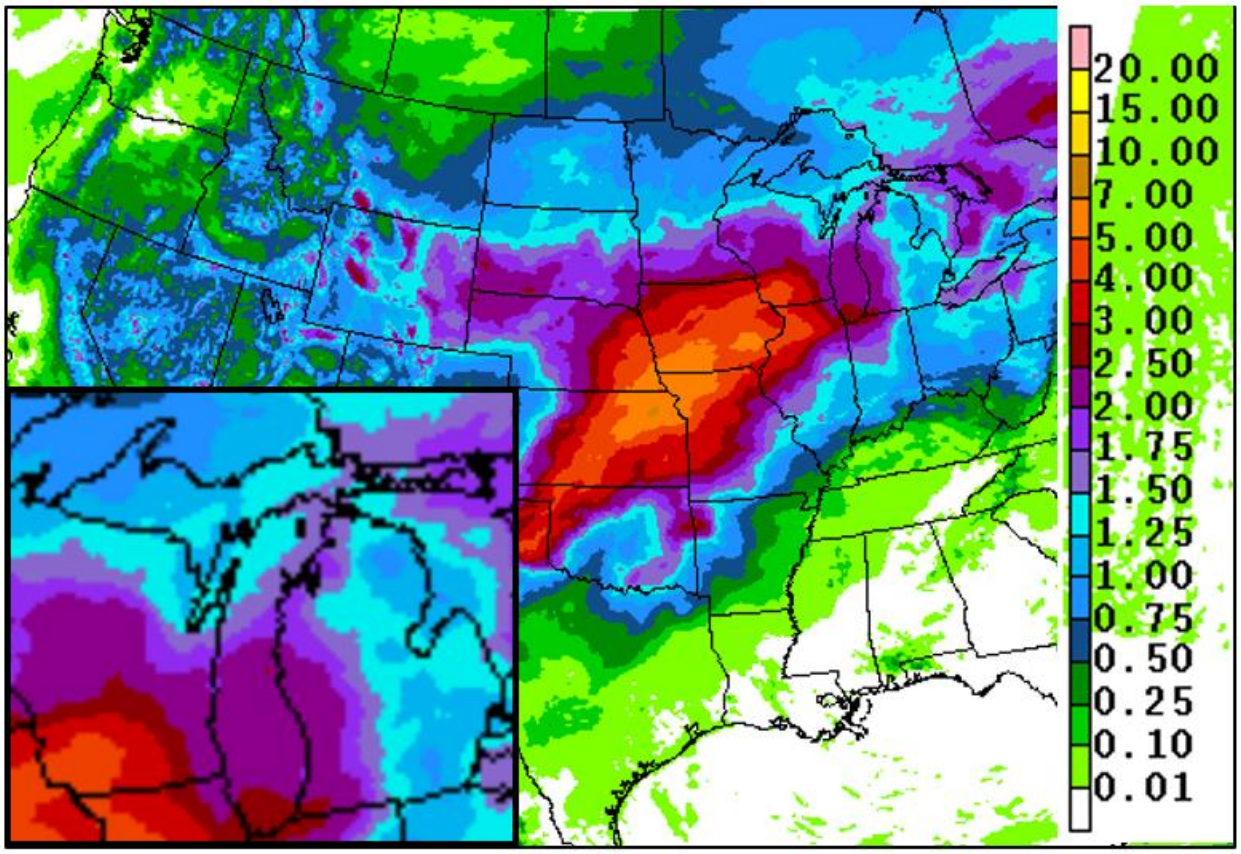
Precipitation totals for week ending May 23, 2019. Rainfall was highly variable with 0.5-4.0 inches falling in the region.



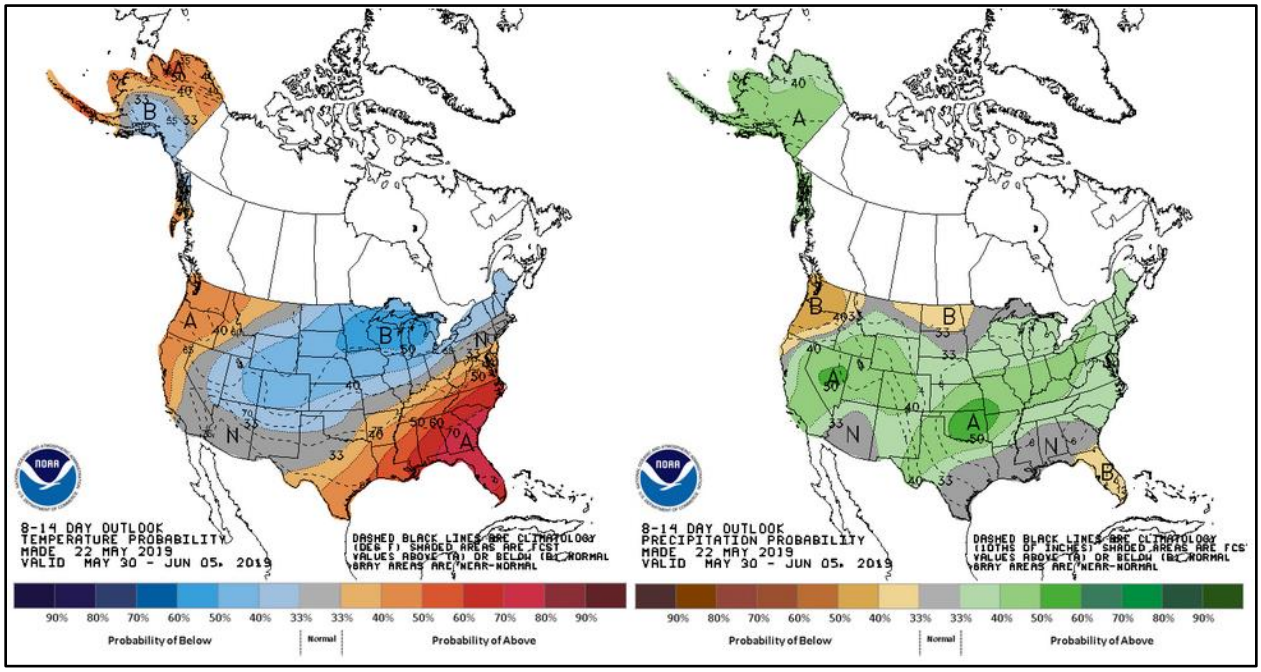
Growing degree day accumulation compared with normal, March 1 through May 22, 2019. We caught up just a bit but are still nearly a week behind in heat units. Soil temps have been holding steady in the mid- to upper-50's.



The 10-day forecast for Centreville according to wunderground.com. Same story as last week—warmer overall but several chances of rain.



Forecast for precipitation totals for the week of May 17-223-30, 2019. This is eerily similar to the one from last week…if this holds true, we can expect another 1.25-2.25 inches in the next week.



National Weather Service 8-14 day outlook (May 30-June 5) for temperature (left) and precipitation (right)—the 6-10 day outlook is similar. The darker the color, the greater the chances of cooler and wetter than normal conditions.

Calendar

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

May 30 **Field Crops Virtual Breakfast Free Webinar.** Thursdays 7:00-7:30 AM. This week: "Delayed Planting vs Prevented Planting" with Roger Betz. Join via computer or mobile device (audio and video, https://msu.zoom.us/j/552324349) or by phone (audio only, **669-900-6833** and enter meeting ID **552-324-349**). To receive a weekly reminder of the Virtual Breakfast, sign up at http://eepurl.com/gm-PIv

June 12 **Wheat Field Day**. 8:15am-4:00pm. MSU Plant Pathology Research Center, 3735 College Rd., Lansing, MI. Registration online.

June 26 **MSU Weeds Day.** 8:30am-12:00pm. 4450 Beaumont Rd, Lansing, MI. Registration information will be available soon.

July 15 **Deadline for FSA Acreage Reporting.** Deadline for 2019 acreage reporting for spring seeded crops. Contact your local FSA office for details.

July 26 **Ag Innovation Day.** 8:30am-5:00pm, MSU Research Farm, East Lansing, MI. Day will be split into morning and afternoon tours with a free lunch. Attendees are asked to register beforehand (coming soon) to help with logistics and food ordering.

August 20-21 **2019 Bridging the Experience Gap.** Saginaw Valley Research and Extension Center, 3775 S Reese Rd, Frankenmuth, MI. This program provides a platform for professionals to gain experience, network with their peers and ask questions from knowledgeable instructors without fear of rejection or criticism. Cost is $350, supplies and lunches included, register online.

MSU Extension Digest Briefs

Field Crop Virtual Breakfast on May 30 will discuss prevented planting crop insurance considerations

PUBLISHED ON MAY 23, 2019

MSU Extension's Field Crop Virtual Breakfast continues May 30 with a discussion on factors to consider if wet conditions continue and fields remain too wet to plant by the crop insurance coverage deadlines.

Southwest Michigan field crop update – May 23, 2019

PUBLISHED ON MAY 23, 2019

Southwest Michigan planting progress continues to crawl.

Late-planted soybean recommendations

PUBLISHED ON MAY 23, 2019

Soybean producers can use this information to help adjust their management practices and make informed decisions for late-planted soybeans.

MSU Cover Crop Team Webinar Series: Interseeding cover crops in corn in Michigan

PUBLISHED ON MAY 21, 2019

The second webinar in this series highlights research at MSU on interseeding cover crops into standing corn.

Black cutworms are here

PUBLISHED ON MAY 20, 2019

However, do not spray fields for cutworm unless you find them in your fields! Trap numbers in Indiana indicate we won't have a lot of colonization.

When alfalfa winterkills, what can you do?
PUBLISHED ON MAY 17, 2019
The long cold winter took a toll on Michigan alfalfa stands.

Monarch butterfly research update – May 2019
PUBLISHED ON MAY 17, 2019
Michigan is an important state for supporting the summer breeding population of monarchs. Here is an update on what we do and don't know about increasing egg laying and survival.

Organic grain crop enterprise budgets are available
PUBLISHED ON MAY 17, 2019
Tools for growers looking to establish or expand an organic grain farm.

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