

CROP REPORT #2 – May 4, 2021

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Weekly Provincial Summary

- Cool, dry soils have slowed seeding and crop emergence, where some farms have caught up to their intended seeding goals to date, waiting for warmer temperatures to plant crops that are more sensitive.
- Provincial seeding progress sits at 18%, on par for the 4-year average.
- Conserving existing soil moisture remains top of mind for many farmers. Many farms are using limited-disturbance openers for fertilizer and seeding, where possible.
- Rain over the weekend helped keep dust down, and provide a little seedbed moisture, but will quickly dissipate.
- [Flea beetles](#) are out and looking for food sources. Some canola growers in the southern Interlake have delayed canola seeding until forecasts look more favourable for rapid germination and emergence.
- The Prairie Pest Monitoring Network has highlighted [cutworms](#) as a pest to keep an eye out when scouting pre-emergent or early-emerged crops.
- To find interactive soil temperature/moisture, air temperature see Agri-Maps Current Weather [viewer](#).
- For questions about seeding into dry seedbeds – see [Current Crop Topics](#) for resources.

Table 1: Seeding Progression in 2021 Compared to Other Years

Seeding Date (Week:Month)	2021	2020	4-Year Average
<May 1 st	2%	<1%	3%
1:05	18%	9%	21%
2:05	-	42%	51%
3:05	-	65%	77%
4:05	-	88%	93%
1:06	-	96%	98%
2:06	-	97%	99%
3:06	-	100%	100%
at June 30 th	-	100%	100%

Source: Weekly survey data from MB ARD Regional Crop Reporters.

Southwest Region

A welcome rain in most parts of the region gave some much needed seedbed moisture, though quantity and the spread of rain was not as good as expected. Areas north of Brandon received less than 3 mm. Alexander, Souris, and Wawanesa areas had 5 to 8 mm rain. Most areas have optimal seeding moisture conditions at this time, but

will soon need rain to spur germination and growth. Soil temperature is cool over much of the region while air temperatures fluctuate. Nighttime lows were below zero most of last week. Drier than normal conditions in the Southwest region persist.

There was a good seeding progress last week except some delays over the weekend due to rainfall. Overall seeding is 10 to 15% done. Majority of the crops are cereals and peas. Some individual farmers have 70 to 80% of their cereals done at this stage while others have not started any seeding yet and waiting for

increased soil temperatures and moisture.

Field peas are 70 to 80% planted. Cereals – wheat, barley and oats – are about 25 to 30% complete. Some producers have slowed down because of cool and dry conditions. However, most producers are reporting good seeding conditions. Some early seeded cereals have germinated but very few fields have emerged. No reports of any canola being planted as producers are concerned about germination under present soil conditions.

Soybean seeding is 5 to 10% done as farmers who finished cereals are starting slowly, mostly in southern parts of the region.

Corn has been planted more in the southwestern part of the region but planted area is still less than 10% of total intended acres.

Winter wheat and fall rye are coming along well but slowly. Fall rye condition is better. Producers are putting some fertilizer down after this weekend's rain.

Some weed growth has started, including foxtail barley in low spots and downy brome in some patches. Overall, less weed growth than normal due to dry conditions. Moisture and warm weather conditions will be very beneficial for upcoming seeding crops and the already seeded one as well.

Pasture and forage growth is slow because of the cool conditions and producers continue to feed cattle in yards. Some cattle have been put on spring pasture and most of those would be stockpile grazing from last fall. Spring runoff was below normal and some producers are concerned about water for pastures. Dugout levels vary from area to area with levels from 30% to 70% full. Reports of well water tables down 10 feet from normal.

Northwest Region

Seeding operations were limited in the Northwest region last week due to the cooler weather. With the exception of rains in Birch River and Minitonas, there was minimal precipitation over the rest of the region. Daytime temperatures were highest around the southern part of the region reaching 21°C but cooler overnight temperatures continued with lows around -5°C. Two days of strong winds kept soil temperatures cool, and have not warmed significantly. Soil moisture is currently adequate with many areas needing additional moisture for germination of annual crops and growth of pastures and hayfields.

Spring operations have begun on sandier soils but fieldwork is not widespread throughout the region. Producers around Roblin, Ste Rose and Swan River are beginning with a start to harrowing, fertilizing, spraying and seeding peas and wheat. Soil temperatures need to warm for good germination and widespread operations to take place. There has been good winter survival of winter cereals, clovers and alfalfa. Weed and volunteer growth has been slow.

Pastures and hay fields slowly starting to green up but growth has been limited. Warmer temperatures and precipitation needed. Fertilizer is being applied to forage stands.

Central Region

Field access was very conducive to field work and seeding activities given the dry topsoil conditions prior to the weekend. Near normal daytime to freezing nighttime temperatures prevailed during the week. Strong winds on Friday caused some soil drifting on isolated fields already seeded with reduced crop residue cover remaining. Saturday daytime temperature rose

to 24°C and sunny, but conditions changed to cool, cloudy and light rain that brought from 1 to 9 mm to much of the region.

Seeding operations picked up rapidly this week and is now in full swing across the region. Field access is very good with dryer topsoil conditions prevailing until the rain on Sunday. Field operations will be delayed a few days, but should continue with a return to forecasted sunny conditions for most of the week. Soil temperatures at seeding depth currently range between 5 to 8°C, remaining cool and emergence is slow. For some farmers, cold soil temperatures have them holding off planting anything further right now.

Winter wheat, fall rye and perennial ryegrass fields have de-hardened and growing slowly. Winter survival of those crops is good but establishment delayed due to the dry conditions of the fall. Recovery and growth is evident with minimum reseeding expected. Some reports of winter damage and possible reseeding to fields with poor establishment combined with poor snow trapping stubble conditions. Field preparation has been limited to date. Seeding has been done with the least amount of seedbed preparation to preserve topsoil moisture. Wheat, oats and barley seeding is progressing rapidly with some growers reporting being done their wheat acreage already. Some early seeded cereals are starting to show through at least where there was more moisture.

Field pea seeding has progressed well and canola seeding has started in the region. Corn planting is also progressing. Overall seeding is considered to be in the 25 to 30% completion range.

Indications are that cereal acres will be reduced this year compared to last year while oilseeds expected to increase given the favourable price

and soybeans should be similar to higher than last year. Potato planting is underway. Some growers are up to 30% done planting. Other growers are waiting for warmer soil temperatures to start planting.

Pheromone baited traps for the monitoring of diamondback moth are being set up this week along with [armyworm traps](#) to monitor the arrival of these potential pest from southern latitudes.

Weed growth is slow given the prevailing cool temperatures. Winter annuals and perennial weeds are also growing slowly.

Little to no spring runoff has not recharged dugouts and groundwater. Water reserves will be lower than normal to start the grazing season. Well below normal precipitation since November 1 means the growing season is starting the year very dry. Frost and cool, dry conditions have delayed forage growth but hay and pastures are slowly starting to green up. Cattle will still require several weeks of feeding before pastures are ready for grazing. Lowland and wild hay that rely on spring runoff will be impacted by the lack of spring moisture.

Eastern Region

Precipitation over the last week ranged from 1 to 5 mm. Ambient temperatures were variable with daytime highs ranging from below 10°C to high mid-teens and nighttime temps ranging from just above freezing to as low as -4°C. Overall, it has been cooler than producers would like. Daily soil temperatures at seeding depth ranged from 6 to 10°C once warmed and cooled to 1 to 2°C overnight. Soil moisture conditions on cropland across the region were rated as adequate. Producers are satisfied with the soil moisture at

planting depth but continue to hope for rain in May. In northern parts of the region good field drying over the last week are opening up any fields that were still wet. Some producers are being judicious with spring tillage to preserve seedbed moisture, particularly if putting in shallow seeded crops into light texture fields. Some land rolling is happening to pack light texture fields to promote wicking up of moisture in the soil profile. Pre-seed herbicide applications were also ongoing.

Across the region, less than 5% of winter wheat or fall rye acres appear to have winterkilled. Overall, stand condition was assessed as good. Most winter cereal producers have completed nitrogen applications wherever field access is possible.

Spring wheat planting was the main task on most producer's minds this past week and have reported excellent progress. On average spring wheat seeding is estimated at 50% complete for the Eastern region with a few producers reporting that all their spring wheat is now planted. Oats is also being planted with an estimated 25% complete. It is expected that the majority of spring cereal acres will be planted by the end of the week. Some early corn acres were also planted this past week, corn planting is expected to become more general this coming week. Field peas are also being planted with an estimated 50% complete. Flax and sunflower planting has started and will increase as the week progresses. A few fields of canola and soybeans have been planted with more general seeding not far off.

Soil moisture conditions on hay and pasturelands are rated as adequate. Hay and pasture condition of stands and soil moisture have not deteriorated from last week. Producers are

disappointed with the slow growth of stands due to cool temperatures and would like to see it warm up.

Fertilizing of pasture and hay fields continues in the cattle producing areas of the region. Livestock feeding on pasture is beginning to get cows out of corrals. Forage inventories running low in some areas. Dugouts that did not receive any runoff are at less than 50% capacity in some areas. Dugouts that received runoff are full. Availability of livestock water was reported as adequate for the region.

Interlake Region

Dry conditions continue, with trace precipitation only in the past week. Temperatures have continued to be extremely variable, with highs ranging from 20 to 24°C, and overnight lows down to -9.5°C.

Although good progress has been made with seeding, cold temperatures and dry conditions have slowed the acres being put in. Most producers have started, or will be starting this week. Significant fertilizer applications and tillage operations last fall have allowed for the slower pace. Frost is coming out of the ground, and soils are very slowly warming. Field conditions are much improved as compared to spring 2020. Wet areas that limited field traffic are minimal for most. Progress is more advanced in the south Interlake. Overall, seeding completed for the region ranges from 20 to 25%.

Fertilizer applications continue, on annual cropland and perennial crops, forages and pasture. Winter survival has been good; reports of winterkill across the region have been less than 5%. Hay and grass seed fields are slowly greening up.

The majority of crop seeded today is spring wheat and peas, and many report their wheat acres are

complete. A few reports of wheat seeded the first week of April requiring re-seeding, particularly those fields without seed treatment. Pea acres range up to 80% complete. Both crops are being seeded into moisture. Some barley and oats are starting.

Some canola has gone in, others are waiting until soils warm, to encourage rapid emergence. [Flea beetle pressure](#) is expected to be significant, and producers are including that concern in their decisions. Many are concerned about seeding into soft, dry soil. The same holds for corn – some is seeded, while some producers are waiting for soils to warm. Topsoil moisture for the majority of acres is currently reported as adequate.

Concern regarding lack of moisture lower in the soil profile continues. Field operations are drying out the topsoil. More producers have moved to low disturbance seeding equipment. Many intend to go straight in, forgoing pre-seed tillage in order to preserve moisture. Others are moving to minimal tillage with harrows, rather than pre-seed cultivation.

There seems to be few if any changes to seeding intentions, with different areas reporting slightly more sunflowers and flax, or a modest increase in canola or soybeans. Some areas will see slightly lower soybean acres, due to concern about dry conditions in lighter textured soil. Acres are generally holding, and producers are optimistic with good market prices. Most are in a good position with field preparations, and enough moisture to get the crop going. Pre-seed soil applied herbicides applications continue. Some changes have been made due to dry conditions. Minimal pre-seed burnoff applications have been made, as weed growth has been limited with cool and the earlier dry

conditions. Some pre-emergent applications are planned. Starting to see some green up of winter annuals.

Pheromone baited traps have been set up for [diamondback moth](#) monitoring. Nothing found in traps this week – unsurprising, as moths move in on south winds.

Cold and dry conditions continue to limit pasture and hay regrowth. Combined with late summer and fall grazing, plants have low carbohydrate root reserves for from which to regrow. At present, winter feed supplies are adequate, but shortages may arise if significant delays to cattle going on to pasture arise. Some producers are buying feed. Winter forage supplies were improved this past winter as compared to the previous year. Producers switched from annual crop to feed crops to make up anticipated shortfalls. Silage and [greenfeed](#) acres are expected to increase again this year. Some herds were culled, to match feed supplies to number of animals.

Livestock water supplies are currently adequate. Dugout levels are low for this time of year, and water tables are down. Rains are much needed for recharge.