

CROP REPORT #14 – August 4, 2020

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Weekly Provincial Summary

- Harvest has started in fall rye in all areas except the Northwest; with some winter wheat and pea fields combined in the Interlake region
- Rapid growth and development of all crops over the past two weeks, encouraged by warm, sunny weather. Many parts of the province would benefit from a gentle rain to help with grain formation in corn, sunflowers, and soybeans.
- Grasshoppers are a concern in all areas and in all crops, forages and pasture included. With higher grasshopper populations and other insect population building, it's recommended to monitor your fields closely and communicate with your pesticide retailer to ensure availability, when and if they are required.

Southwest Region

Another good growing week without major weather events. Most late seeded crops are catching up rapidly with favourable weather. Growing degree-days are normal to above normal across most of the region. Soil moisture conditions are generally adequate, but soybeans, corn, and sunflowers could use a decent rain in coming days as fields are at pod filling to grain formation stages especially in southwest parts of the region.

Fall rye is changing colour as it is ripening fast. There are some reports of rye harvest in the southern parts of the region and around Glenboro with average yield and good quality. Winter wheat is receiving pre-harvest treatment.

Spring wheat, barley and oats are maturing nicely and rated as good to excellent condition. Crops are standing up well and maturing evenly. Fusarium head blight symptoms are starting to show up in barley and wheat but mostly in unsprayed fields. No major issues at this time. Lodging is also minimal depending on the area and crop.

Canola staging is variable according to the seeding date. It ranges from full flower to podded with flowering complete. There is sunscald visible in fields due to high UV index days. Sclerotinia spray applications are complete. Flax crops are finishing bloom and maturing well. Fungicide protectants against pasmo are complete. Sunflowers advancing well into the flowering and fields are at R5.1 to R5.5 stage. Crop potential looks great and producers are planning a fungicide if needed.

Majority of cornfields are tasseling while some are still progressing to that stage. More advanced fields are pollinating (R1). Corn crops are growing well with the favourable moisture and higher temperatures

Field peas are growing well; Most of fields are at pod stage (R6). Hot weather conditions are turning this crop quickly. Producers are planning for pre-harvest applications soon. Drowned out spots will be negatively impact the yield this year.

Soybean fields are flowering and pod formation in the R3 to R5 stage. Most of fields are looking great with no major issues. Plant height is very good this year as crop took the full benefit of the July moisture. Leaf diseases are also minor.

Bertha armyworm traps is near the end of the monitoring period. Accumulated trap counts for this canola pest remain in the lower to uncertain risk range at this point. Grasshoppers are visible in many different fields and in the ditches as well. No reports of spraying. No other major insect report yet but some fields are getting closer to threshold levels.

Weather over the past week has been favourable for getting hay up. First cut hay is 60% done with yields average to above average. Some producers have started second and more will be done in the next couple of weeks. Cereal silage has started and yields are above average. More will be done in the next couple of weeks. Corn silage looks to be average to above average. Pasture conditions are looking good. Only

over grazed pasture are showing some problems. Weeds starting to come on.

Northwest Region

High temperatures throughout the week continued to advance the crops, with some areas in the region reaching 31°C. A strong thunderstorm through parts of the region at week's end brought some precipitation with varying amounts. Areas receiving highest rainfall amounts this week included Swan River, Ethelbert, Fork River 27 to 28mm while the rest of the region received lower amounts. Soil moisture is adequate for the most part, although there are some areas throughout the region that are very dry and seem to be missing the rains. Recent rain in The Pas brought another 33mm of rain and added to the already wet conditions.

Spring wheat and cereals are mostly in the soft dough stage. Winter wheat and fall rye are in the hard dough stage and continuing to maturity. The most advanced canola is nearing completion of flowering and podded; while the remainder of the crop continues flowering and in some cases catch up. Staginess in some canola fields remains an issue. Soybeans are continuing to flower and develop pods and in the R3 to R4 stage with the southern part of the region more towards the R4 stage. Field peas are podded and continuing to maturity and mostly in the R5-R6 stage. Flax is also nearing completion of flowering and continues boll development. Fungicide applications virtually complete across the region.

Bertha Armyworm monitoring has wrapped up with several traps in the Swan Valley reaching "uncertain" levels. These include Swan Valley (461), Durban (477) and Bowsman NW (476). Grasshoppers seem to be abundant in the Parkland region

and growers and agronomists should continue to monitor crops for economic damage.

Good progress was made this week in putting up hay with the majority of first cut now completed. Yields are variable but below normal for the most part. Early seeded greenfeed crops have been cut and cereal silage harvest has begun. Pasture growth has slowed down and would benefit from additional rain. Corn silage fields could use some moisture as well. Grasshoppers continue to be a significant problem. Dugout levels remain adequate.

Central Region

Sunny, warm and dry conditions prevailed this week. Daytime temperatures were in the mid to high 20's. Nighttime temperatures cooled down to the mid-teens combined with heavy dews. A storm system brought isolated showers to the western side of the region Friday. Precipitation was highest in the Baldur area with 15mm received. Winds were moderate to calm on some days. The eastern and northern portion of the region, below the escarpment would benefit from some precipitation. Soil moisture conditions are rated as fair for most of the region to moist in areas that received higher precipitation recently.

Fall rye is ripe and drying down ahead of harvest. Swathing has started or pre-harvest aid products are being applied to select crops. Some harvest done in the Altona to Carman areas with yields reported in the 100 bu/ac range and good quality. Winter wheat fields are few and in the hard dough stage to ripe.

Wheat, barley and oats are maturing rapidly. Some wheat fields in the Portage area appear ripe and ready to be harvested having received below normal precipitation to date. Many barley fields are in

the firm to hard dough stage and getting close to be swathed ahead of harvest. Those cereals are rated as good to excellent condition, standing up well and maturing evenly. Fusarium head blight symptoms are showing up in barley and wheat but the severity appears low. Most corn fields are silking (R1) while more advanced fields are in the blister (R2) to milk (R3) stage. Corn crops are looking well with the favourable moisture and higher temperatures.

Canola staging varies according to the seeding date and ranges from late flower for late planted or reseeded fields to podded in most cases in the region. Swathing has started near Morden. Flax fields are few and finishing flowering as bolls develop. Sunflowers are flowering in the R.1 to R5.9 stage.

Field peas are progressing well with some still showing a few flowers (R4) but many are more mature into the mid-maturity stage (R6). Most advanced fields are reported ripe in the Gladstone area, with some ready to be harvested. In the eastern Red River Valley, field peas are quite variable and negatively affected from earlier rains drowning out parts of fields.

Soybean fields are in the R4 to R5 or beginning seed stage. Soybeans could use some rain during this sensitive seed development stage. No reports of soybean aphids at economic control levels.

Edible beans and also growing well, flowering and would benefit from some rain. Some reports of bacterial blight present. Some white mold being spotted in the Portage area on dry beans.

Early blight has been seen in central potato areas. Fungicide protectants being applied by plane and ground. Irrigation continues to maintain soil moisture at optimum levels.

Pheromone baited traps for bertha armyworm moth emergence is done for the season. Accumulated trap counts for this canola pest remain in the lower to uncertain risk range. Canola fields in the areas with uncertain risk are being checked but no reports of control measures required to date. Grasshoppers are noticeable in many different fields and crops. Some fields are being treated to prevent economic damage to crops.

Water and grass is plentiful for cattle on pasture. Yields on newer, well-managed hayfields are close to average while older hay fields are below average. Beef producers are making a good progress on haying and putting up round bale haylage. Greenfeed and corn silage yields look promising. Areas north that received heavy rains earlier have standing water on pasture and lower lying native hay ground. There is increasing grasshopper pressure on hay and pasture where populations were high last year.

Eastern Region

Since last Tuesday, rainfall accumulations in the Eastern region ranged from zero to 15mm, occurring most often as isolated thunderstorms in some northern districts over the past long weekend. For the most part, temperatures remained hot and humid over the last week. There continues to be areas in southern districts where excess soil moisture has made haying and spraying difficult reducing forage and annual crop yields. At the same time, there are northern and central districts that were experiencing dry soil moisture conditions. Areas of wilting soybeans and corn were noted. Overall, current soil moisture conditions on cropland, pastures and hayland were rated as adequate with the exception of previously flooded areas in the south and increasingly dry central

and northern areas. A continued absence of significant rainfall is a growing concern amongst grain producers in central and northern districts with the impacts expected to be most severe for warm season crops that are now in the midst of reproductive growth stages.

Winter cereals harvesting is expected to start by the coming weekend. Some harvesting of grass forage seed crops has occurred. Pre-harvest herbicide applications on spring cereals has started on some of the earliest seeded crop and is expected to become more general by the end of the week. Some barley and oats fields were noted as maturing rapidly because of the warm temperatures and a relative lack of soil moisture. Barley harvest is expected to begin by the end of the week, with swathing ongoing near Arnaud and Emerson. Canola was pod filling with the exception of late seeded or re-seeded fields that were still finishing flowering.

Soybeans growth stage ranged from late R3 to early R5. Corn was at the R1 growth stage (silking) with cobs forming. Sunflowers ranged from very late R4 (inflorescence opening) to the mid R5 (flowering) growth stages. Field peas had been desiccated over the weekend and applications continue this week as crops reach the correct staging.

Grasshoppers remained a concern in soybean last week with field scouting continuing but have faded as concern in cereals given rapidly advancing crop maturity. Diamondback moth larvae in canola remained a concern for growers and agronomists last week with lots of scouting and some limited insecticide applications occurring. Crop damage from sunflower midge and the presence of sunflower midge larvae in some sunflower fields was noted. Scouting for insects in sunflower crops has

increased over the last week as the crop has moved into flowering.

Overall, haying made good progress with beef producers finishing first cut and some starting second cut. Yields were variable depending on moisture conditions. In areas of the Eastern region where flooding occurred, hay yield was reduced and quality was poorer because of a delayed harvest. The quality of first cut silage and baled hay was rated as good on average but yields remained at about 60% of normal. Second cut of pure stand alfalfa by dairy producers was almost complete. Reports indicated good quality with yields equal to or slightly better than normal second cut yields. Single cut hay was at least 70% complete but yields were often less than 50% of normal. Pastureland continued to hold on to previous improvements. Stands that were not put under intense grazing pressure were still being rated as good although overgrazed stands were rated as fair. Beef producers continued to work with grain producers to purchase forage seed and cereal straw. Livestock water supply was adequate but it was noted that dugouts were getting low in areas that have received the least amounts of rain.

Interlake Region

Rapid change continues to be the norm, with temperatures in the mid to high 20°C range, high humidity, and minimal rainfall. Precipitation continues to be extremely variable with scattered thundershowers. A small area around Ashern received enough rain to fill ditches.

Although there is a bit of crop damage from excess moisture in isolated areas, the three-year trend of dry conditions continues for most, and much of the region continues to register significantly lower than normal. It is expected that yields will be impacted. Rain is needed in the



next week to 10 days to improve fill in the later maturing crops.

Crops have looked good in recent weeks, but premature ripening is evident, especially on lighter textured soils. Drought stress symptoms are becoming more evident in soybean and cornfields, throughout the region.

Cereals are turning colour. The few fields of winter wheat have been harvested. Winter wheat yields appear to be disappointing, with significant stresses last fall and this spring. Cutting will start on barley this coming week; swathings of oats may start by the weekend. Fall rye harvest continues, with yields to date ranging from 85 to 100 bu/ac. Forage seed harvest is ongoing. Yields have been affected by the late spring frost, along with other stresses, including armyworm feeding.

The first of the peas have been taken off; harvest continues, earlier than anticipated due to dry conditions. Most sunflowers are at R5.5, nearing full bloom.

The earliest seeded canola fields are fully podded and seed colour change and pod colour change are evident. The last seeded canola is still flowering, crop looks good.

Full boll and start of pod colour change is seen in flax; the last fields flowering will be complete soon. Soybeans have seen tremendous growth with heat and moisture. Flowering continues; most fields are R4. Short season varieties may be as advanced as early R5.

Grain and silage corn have grown significantly in the last month. Most fields are fully tasseled, and some are as advanced as late silk (R1). Fill will likely be impacted by lack of precipitation.

All crops are generally shorter than normal, but there has been quite a change in recent weeks.

Pre-harvest applications are continuing. There is some evidence of fusarium head blight in wheat and barley, but severity and incidence are low.

There have been reports of armyworms in a number of fields including perennial ryegrass, fescue, timothy, crested wheat grass, spring cereals and hay fields requiring insecticide treatment. Regular scouting continues for insect pest problems. Grasshoppers continue to be a problem throughout the region, particularly in the northern part. All crops have been affected, including newly established alfalfa and forage grass seed fields. Head clipping is evident in some wheat fields. Insecticide applications have tapered off, as crops get closer to maturity. Scouting will continue for second-generation diamondback moth larvae. Bertha armyworm moth trap counts wrap up this week, numbers remain at the lower end of the range.

Insecticide costs are a much larger proportion of crop input costs for many this year. Products that protect beneficial insects are being used; producers hope this approach will reduce numbers for next season.

Pastures continue to decline due to lack of precipitation. Without rain soon, some producers may have to take cattle off pasture, especially to avoid further damage. Native hay yields will be poor in most areas due to lack of rainfall. First cut hay is essentially complete, although some beef hay has not been cut. Although better than last year in many cases, yields will be below average for most. Well-fertilized fields have fared better. Fields cut in the last three weeks are seeing little to no regrowth in many areas due to

lack of rain. Forage shortages are anticipated.