

Issue 12 – August 6, 2026

Manitoba Crop Pest Update



[Seasonal Reports](#)

[Weekly Weather Maps](#)

[Insects](#)

Summary

Insects: Grasshoppers continue to advance to the adult stage. Crop damage remains minimal so far, although some damage to soybeans was reported from the Eastern region. Some populations of **bertha armyworm** larvae close to threshold have been reported, however there have been no reports of insecticide applications. Diseased bertha armyworms have become noticeable in some fields. **Root maggots** are being noticed on or around the roots in some canola fields.

Diseases: No major disease outbreaks were reported this week. Fusarium head blight (FHB) risk remains high in some cereal fields, and bacterial leaf streak and ergot continue to be observed across cereal crops. Verticillium stripe symptoms are becoming more evident in canola, with some fields showing relatively high disease incidence at the crown cross section assessment. White mold (Sclerotinia stem rot) is also beginning to develop, with symptoms and signs appearing on stems and leaves in some canola fields. Disease pressure from Sclerotinia is expected to be high in certain canola-growing areas where environmental conditions have favored infection. Suspected Aster yellows has been observed in flax.

Weeds: Waterhemp is becoming more noticeable now as it's starting to stick up above the crop. If you suspect you have this plant, talk to your retail, agronomist or industry rep to help you identify it. Waterhemp can produce hundreds of thousands of seeds per plant and is resistant to several herbicide groups, making it extremely difficult to control. Remove waterhemp plants before they set seed, and mow weedy areas to stop all weeds from maturing and adding more seed to the weed seedbank in the soil.

Entomology

Bertha Armyworm – Biological Control Being Noticed

Bertha armyworm larvae that have been killed by pathogens are quite noticeable in some canola fields.



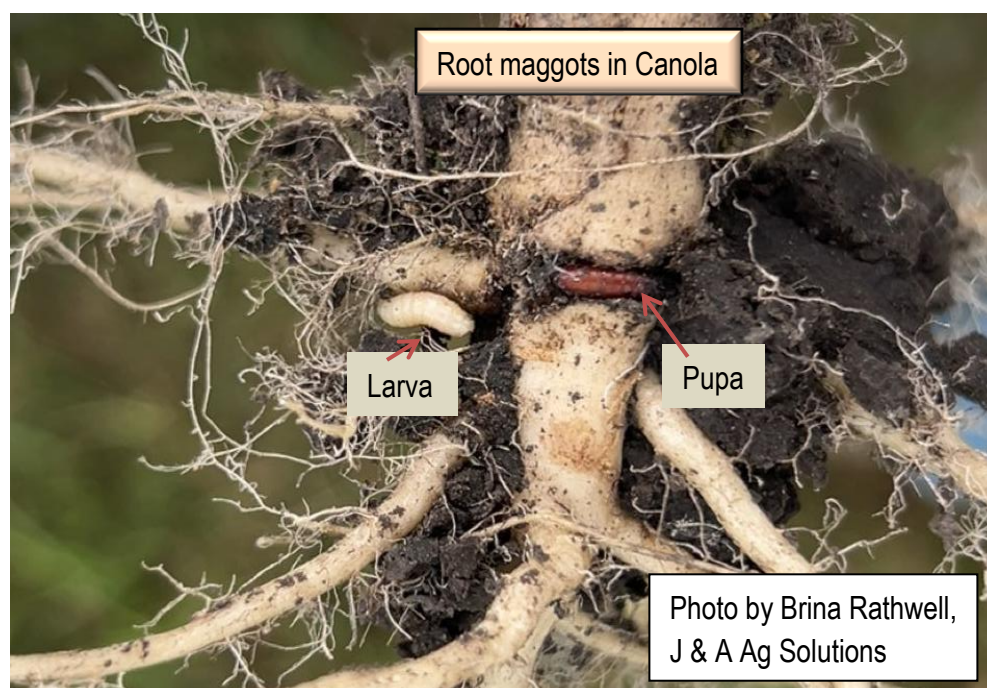
Photos by
Anastasia Kubinec –
Paterson Grain

Report compiled by John Gavloski, Entomologist; Simon Huang, Plant Pathologist; Kim Brown, Weeds Specialist, Manitoba Agriculture [Subscribe](#) to the weekly Crop Pest Update

Dead larvae of bertha armyworm are quite noticeable high in the canopy in some fields in the western part of the Central region. Some of the larvae appear to be drooping from the plants. This is a viral pathogen that is killing the larvae. In some fields, the viral pathogen has dropped the levels from close to threshold to well below.

Root Maggots

Some are noticing root maggots on or around the roots of canola while pulling plants. There are different species of flies (about 5) in the genus *Delia* that collectively get called root maggots. In Manitoba, the most common species in canola seems to be *Delia radicum*, the cabbage maggot.



The levels of root maggots in canola, and subsequent yield losses, are very dependent on environmental conditions. Levels are often higher following cool wet spring conditions.

There are no chemical control options for root maggots in canola. There are some cultural controls that will help minimize damage from root maggots, but even when these are used you will still have some feeding by root maggots.

There has been research on using seeding rates and row spacing to minimize root maggot damage. Increased seeding rates and increased row spacings (to about 25 to 30 cm) can reduce damage to the roots by root maggots (Canadian Journal of Plant Science. 1998. 671-681). Increased seeding rates result in plants with thinner stems. Root maggots seem to like to lay their eggs on plants with thicker stems.

Row spacings, in trials conducted under significant root maggot infestation, reduced root maggot damage and increased seed yield at wider row spacings. This was probably related to there being fewer plants per row at the narrow row spacings, resulting in larger basal stem diameters. However, other studies, conducted under conditions free from economic infestations of pests, found greater yields occurred at narrower row spacings (such as 7.5 cm or 15 cm), rather than wider row spacings.

Additionally, tighter crop rotations may lead to increased root maggot feeding (Journal of Economic Entomology. 2012. 1261-1267). Staying away from tighter canola rotation may help reduce damage from root maggots.

For more information on root maggots, see the Manitoba Agriculture factsheet on cabbage maggot: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/cabbage-maggot.html>

Turnip Aphids on Canola

In some instances in the Southwest region, people have been noticing aphids clustered near the top of canola stems. So far the aphid clusters have been on relatively few plants, and it has not been an economical issue. This is the turnip aphid, *Lipaphis pseudobrassicae*. As a nominal threshold for turnip aphid in canola, control may be justified when at least 10 to 20% of the stems are infested with a cluster of aphids in flowering to early pod stages.



This aphid moves up from southern U.S. each year and colonizes cruciferous plants. Several generations can be produced before fall frosts kill them off. In Manitoba, it is often later in the growing season before they become noticeable, which can limit injury to plants. Plants under moisture stress suffer greater damage.

Diseases

Sclerotinia in canola

As the conditions are very favorable in some canola fields, signs of white mold (fungal mycelium) in stem (left) and leaf (right) are becoming more prevalent. Photo Courtesy: Lindsey Brooks. Manitoba Canola Growers Association.



Verticillium stripe in canola

Verticillium stripe symptoms are becoming more evident in canola, with some plants starting to show a bit of grey discoloration on the stem. In some cases, the disease incidence is relatively high based on the assessment on random cross sections about 0.5-1.0 cm below the crown (Photo courtesy: Simon Huang, Manitoba Agriculture).



Ergot in cereals

Ergot continues to be seen in some cereal fields, where normal kernels are replaced by hard, dark purple to black fungal masses (Sclerotia stage).

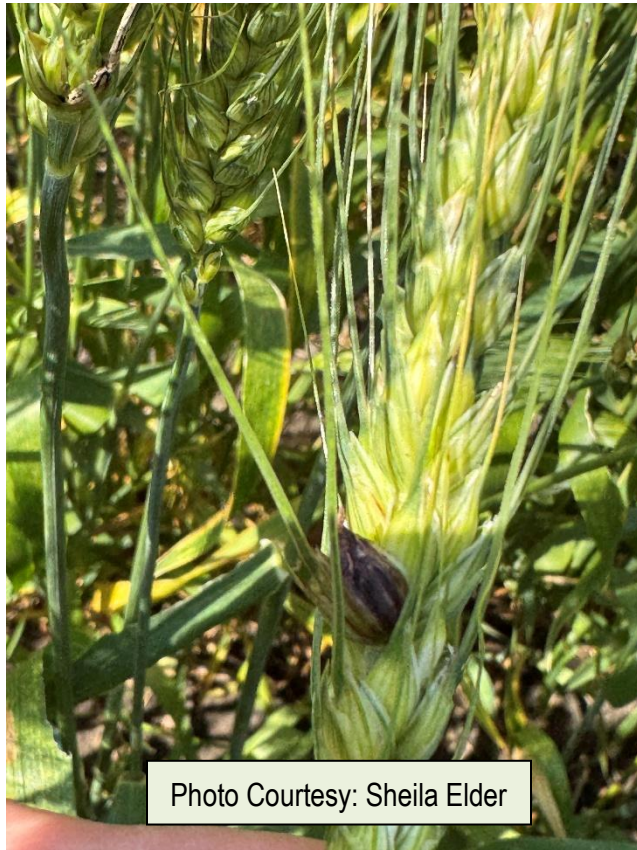


Photo Courtesy: Sheila Elder



Photo Courtesy: Griffin Carnelley

Aster yellows in flax

Symptoms of Aster yellows have been seen in flax crops, where abnormal yellowing discoloration of the upper plant parts and distorted or unproductive bolls are observed.



Photo Courtesy: Morgan Cott,
Manitoba Crop Alliance.

Weeds

Waterhemp

When scouting for waterhemp look for tall plants that will now be noticeably taller than crops like soys, dry beans, cereals or canola. In taller crops like corn and sunflowers look at field edges to see if suspicious plants are present. Waterhemp germinates all summer long and you will see everything from seedlings to plants over six feet tall now. Waterhemp is hairless and smooth while redroot pigweed has hairs and feels rough to the touch. Waterhemp leaves tend to be longer and narrower than other pigweeds and can be darker green and glossy. Here are some pictures of waterhemp from the last couple of days:



Forecast

True Armyworm

Larvae of true armyworms, *Mythimna unipuncta*, can cause significant feeding injury to cereals and forage grasses when levels are abundant. Pheromone-baited traps, which attract the male moths, were established for a 12-week period from early-May until late-July to detect the arrival and levels of populations of armyworms. Traps were set up at 28 locations in Manitoba. Armyworms were caught in all 28 traps. The highest cumulative counts were in the Interlake region. Nine traps in the Interlake region had counts over 148, with a trap near Jaroslaw having a cumulative count of 594. Another four traps in the Interlake region had cumulative counts in the 99-147 moth range.

In July, there were some fields in the Northwest, Interlake and Eastern regions where high larval populations were noted and control was applied.

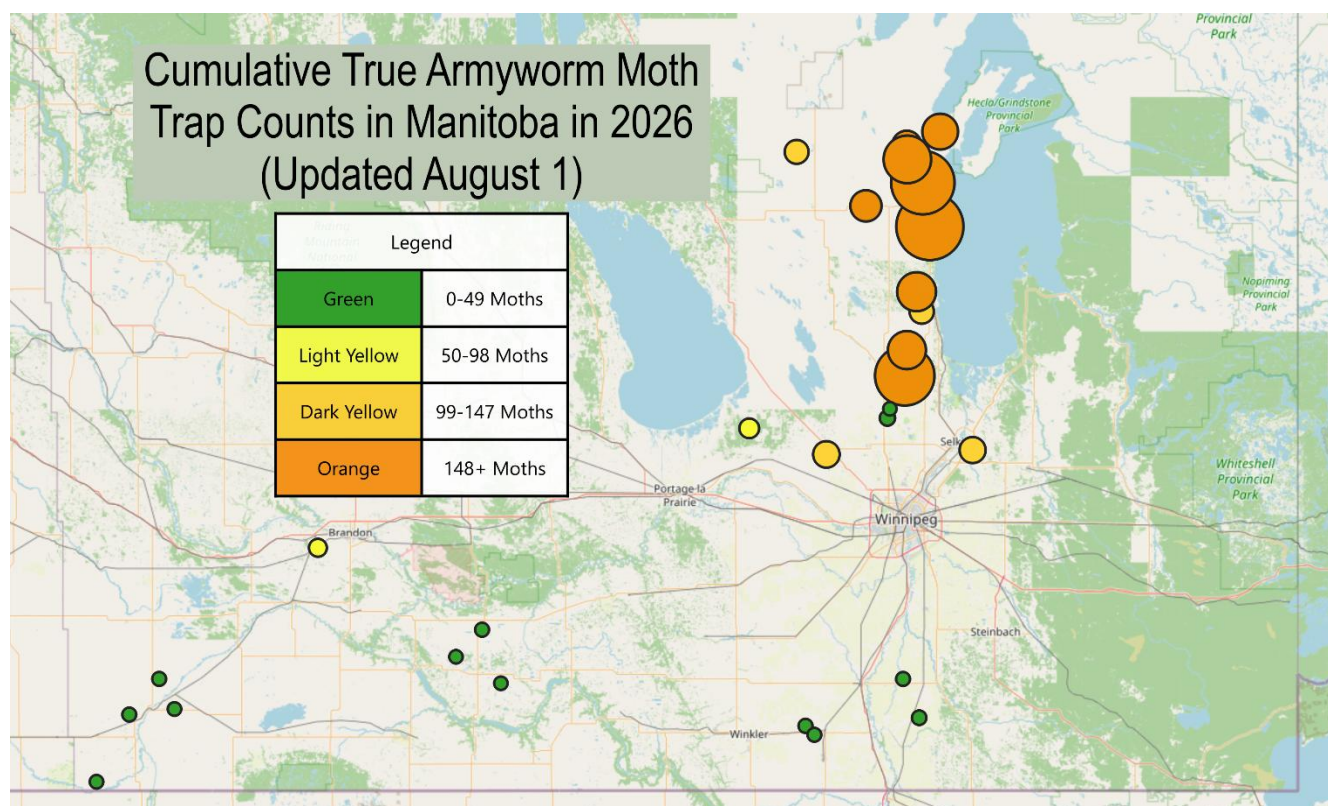


Table 1. Highest cumulative counts of true armyworm moths (*Mythimna unipuncta*) in pheromone-baited traps in Manitoba, as of August 1, 2026

Nearest Town	Region	Cumulative Count
Jaroslaw	Interlake	594
Riverton	Interlake	553
Teulon	Interlake	510
Shorncliffe	Interlake	378
Aspen Park	Interlake	283
Pleasant Home	Interlake	274
Washow Bay	Interlake	248

Framnes	Interlake	198
Shorncliffe	Interlake	179
Warren	Interlake	146

Bertha Armyworm

The population of adult moths of bertha armyworms were monitored using pheromone-baited traps during the flight and egg-laying period, from early-June through July. Bertha armyworm were found in 62 of the 64 traps. Cumulative counts remained in the low risk category in most traps, although eight traps had cumulative counts in the uncertain risk category. These include traps near Durban, Swan River and Birch River in the Northwest region, Wawanesa and Brandon in the Southwest region, Morweena and Teulon in the Interlake region, and St. Joseph in the Central region. The highest cumulative trap count is 646 from a trap near Wawanesa in the Southwest region.

So far there have been no reports of insecticide applications for larvae of bertha armyworm, although some populations close to threshold have been reported. Diseased bertha armyworms have started to become noticeable in some fields. Scouting for larvae is encouraged. The later instar larvae are the most damaging stages.

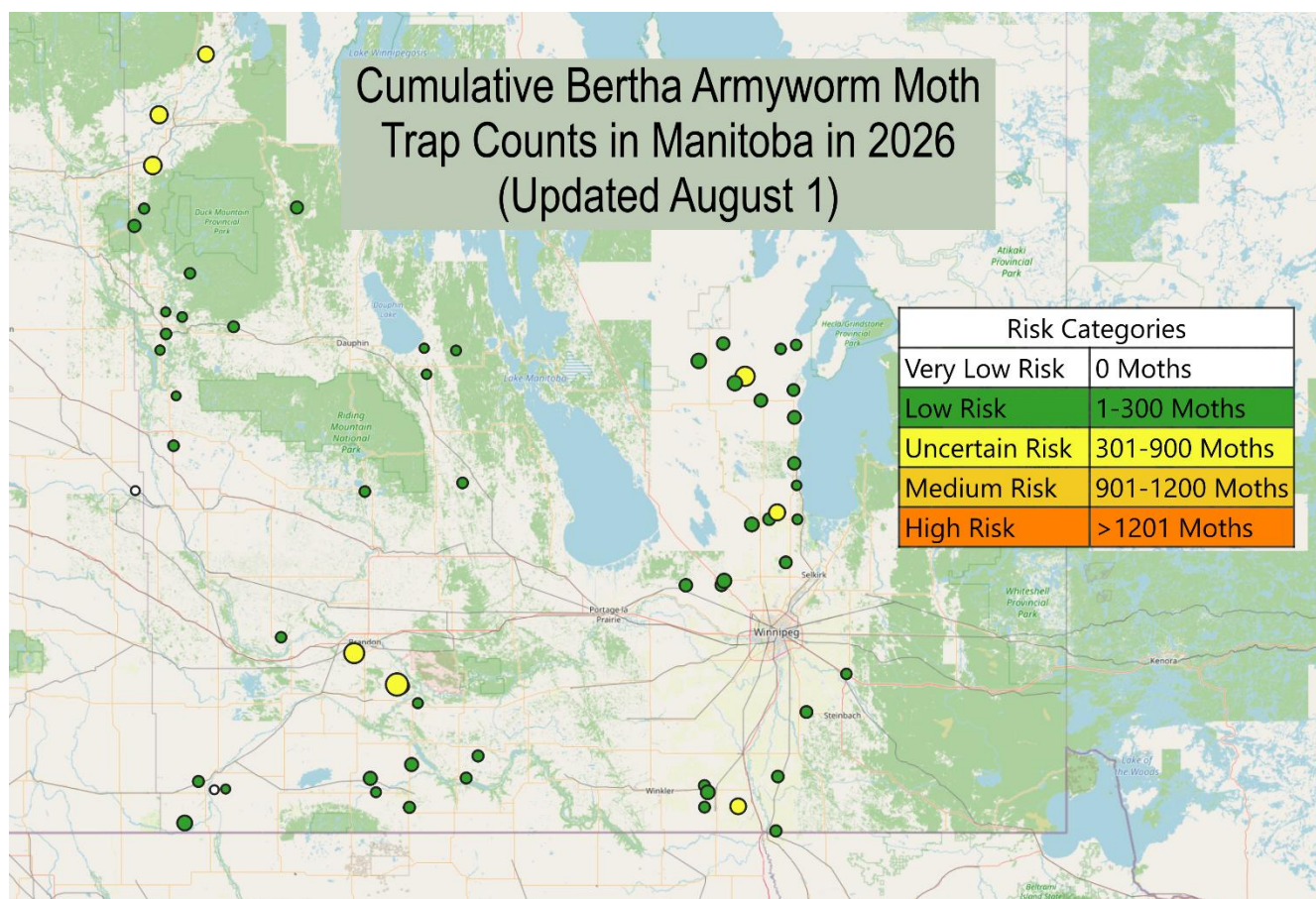


Table 2. Highest cumulative counts of bertha armyworm moths (*Mamestra configurata*) in pheromone-baited traps in Manitoba, as of August 1, 2026

Nearest Town	Region	Cumulative Count
Wawanesa	Southwest	646
Brandon	Southwest	537
Morweena	North Interlake	502
Durban	Northwest	421
Swan River	Northwest	404
Teulon	North Interlake	351
St. Joseph	Central	331
Birch River	Northwest	331
Lyleton	Southwest	289
Morweena	North Interlake	274

Identification Quiz

Question: Which of the caterpillars in the photo below are bertha armyworm?



Answer: These are all bertha armyworm larvae in the photo. Young larvae of bertha armyworm are pale green with a pale yellowish stripe along each side. Larvae of bertha armyworm moult five times and pass through six growth stages. As they mature, their color becomes variable. Some remain green, but many become brown or velvety black. At maturity, the larvae are about 4 cm (1.5 inch) long, with a light brown head and a broad, yellowish-orange stripe along each side. The velvety black colour form of the larvae has three narrow, broken white lines on its back.

To **report observations** on insects, plant pathogens, or weeds that may be of interest or importance to farmers and agronomists in Manitoba, please send messages to one of the following Manitoba Agriculture Pest Management Specialists.

John Gavloski, Entomologist (204) 750-0594
Kim Brown, Weed Specialist (431) 344-0239

Simon Huang, Plant Pathologist (204) 750-4248