Issue 15 – August 27, 2026

Manitoba Crop Pest Update

Seasonal Reports Weekly Weather Maps Insects

Summary

Insects: **Soybean aphids** continue to be a concern in some soybean fields, although in some fields levels are dropping and natural enemies are noticeable. Some soybean fields are also now beyond the susceptible stages for soybean aphid. **Lygus bugs** are also still of concern in some later seeded canola fields, although many fields are also beyond the susceptible stages. **Flea beetles** are noticeable in canola fields, with heavier concentrations along headlands in some fields. Some spraying for flea beetles in canola was reported from the Eastern region. Counts from the **grasshopper survey** have generally been light so far.

Diseases: **Sclerotinia, verticillium** and **blackleg** are now more prevalent, and very easy to find in some canola fields, sprayed or unsprayed. **Fusarium head blight** (FHB) and **ergot** continue to be reported in some wheat fields. Typical symptoms and signs of **white mold** (Sclerotinia) are starting to show in some soybean fields. **Crown rust** has been observed in wild oat in canola and faba bean fields.

Weeds: Fields continue to be sprayed or swathed due to green weeds that would cause problems at harvest. Make sure to follow all pre-harvest intervals (PHI) before cutting the crop, and if a tank-mix was applied use the PHI for the most restrictive product. Waterhemp continues to become visible above crops. In areas of the province where this is a Tier 1 weed it must be destroyed without exception. In areas where it is a Tier 2 weed, infestations under 20 acres must be destroyed while larger infestations need to be controlled so they don't spread.

Entomology

Crop Staging and Insect Susceptibility

A lot of the soybean and canola crops are now advanced to the stages where some insects become less of a concern. The top two that people have been asking about recently are soybean aphids on soybeans, and Lygus bugs on canola.

Soybean Aphids on soybeans: The action threshold for soybean aphids is: 250 aphids per plant on average, and the population is increasing, and the plants are in the R1 (beginning bloom) to R5 (beginning seed) growth stages. Once soybeans reach full seed set (R6), research has not shown a reliable yield gain from an insecticide treatment.

Lygus bugs in Canola: The most vulnerable crop stage for Lygus feeding is after flowering and when seeds are enlarging on lower pods. When most lower pods become leathery and when seeds inside are firm, Lygus bugs can no longer penetrate the pods or seeds with their mouthparts and are no longer an economic threat.

Report compiled by John Gavloski, Entomologist; Simon Huang, Field Crop Pathologist; Kim Brown, Weeds Specialist, Manitoba Agriculture. Subscribe to the weekly Crop Pest Update

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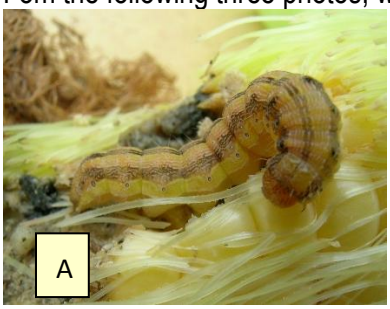
Caterpillars in Corn – An Identification Quiz

Fom the following three photos, which is European corn borer, and what are the other two?



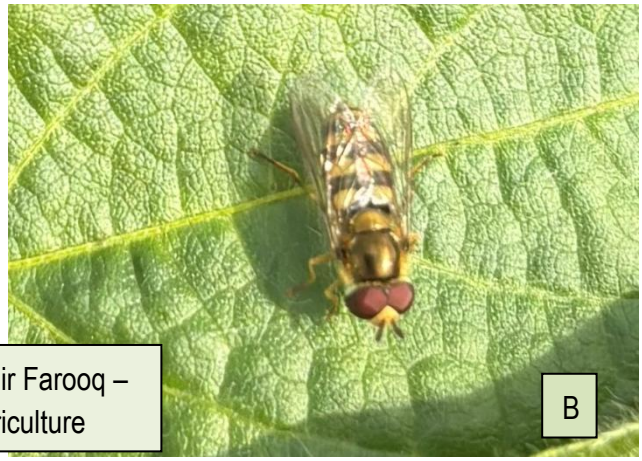
Photos A and B are both corn earworm, *Helicoverpa zea*, and photo C is European corn borer,*Ostrinia nubilalis*. Later instar larvae of corn earworm can vary in colour from yellow, brown, and red, to green with prominent bands that can be cream, pink, green or yellow. This can make identification of corn earworm tricky.
Corn earworm do not overwinter in Manitoba, but adults are strong flyers that migrate from crops in Northern Mexico and the southern U.S. This year, some are noticing them in their corn. They are not economical on field corn, but can be a major problem on sweet corn.

European corn borer does overwinter in Manitoba, as mature larvae. They have been a concern in some millet fields this year, but so far there have been no reports of high populations in corn. If anyone does find high populations of European corn borer, please notify John Gavloski, as I annually collect a sample of larvae to send to the University of Guelph to determine the level of susceptibility to toxins in Bt corn.

Beneficial Insects

Aphid predators are quite noticeable in some soybean fields. Below are a couple of submitted photos from this past week; see if you can identify what they are.

Photos by Amir Farooq – Manitoba Agriculture



A – Lady beetle pupa.

B – Hover fly adults. Larvae of many species of hover flies are aphid predators.

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Diseases

Verticillium stripe in canola

As the crop progresses, Verticillium stripe symptoms and signs such as one vertical side (unilateral) of the canola stem turning discolored and drying down prematurely, while the other side stays green and healthy. Premature ripening, drying and dying off, and presence of microsclerotia are becoming very visible. Photos by Simon Huang. Manitoba Agriculture.

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White mold in soybean

In some soybean fields, fluffy, white fungal growth (mycelium) is covering part of the stems and lesions as shown in the left photo (Photo Courtesy: Amir Farooq. Manitoba Agriculture). Small, dark survival structures called sclerotia can be seen on or inside the infected sites, see the right photo (Photo Courtesy: Simon Huang).

Crown rust in wild oat

Crown rust (bright orange-to-yellow raised pustules) has been found on leaf surfaces in wild oat inside a canola field (left) and a faba bean field (right). Photo Courtesy: Simon Huang.

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Weeds

Waterhemp and other Pigweeds

Make sure you know which pigweed species are in your fields. We are familiar with redroot pigweed, and we may also see green pigweed (sometimes called Powell's pigweed) and unfortunately waterhemp. Here are some pictures to help with identification, courtesy of OMAFRA:

Redroot pigweed has a very hairy stem that can be seen with the naked eye.

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Pigweed Species
Green pigweed

Green pigweed has a hairless, smooth stem.

Pigweed Species
Waterhemp

- Waterhemp and Palmer amaranth are dioecious which means they have male and female plants.
- The stem is hairless like green pigweed.

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Forecast

Grasshopper survey

A reminder for those participating in the grasshopper survey that counts are done during August, when the majority of grasshoppers are in the adult stage.

Agronomists and farmers who would also be interested in estimating grasshopper numbers in or around any of the fields they are in, and having this information included in the survey, are encouraged to see the survey protocol (at the link below) for more details of the survey and where to send data. Your counts would be welcomed.

Estimates of grasshopper levels can be collected during regular farm visits. "Estimates" of grasshopper populations is stressed as it is often not possible to accurately count grasshoppers along a field edge or ditch area as they will be moving around as you get near the area of the count. However, estimates of what is present gives us some idea of the relative numbers that are present in different areas.

Data from the survey, along with weather data during the egg laying period of the grasshoppers, will be used to produce a grasshopper forecast for 2027.

The protocol and data sheet for the grasshopper survey is at:
https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/grasshopper-survey-protocol.pdf

Identification Quiz

Question: These colourful insects can often be seen on milkweed; in this photo they are on swamp milkweed. What are they? Hint – look closely, the yellow things are insects, not flowers.

Answer: These are oleander aphids, *Aphis nerii*. Aside from monarch butterfly larvae, there is an interesting insect fauna that likes milkweed. Oleander aphids are yellow, with black legs and antennae. These aphids grow through five nymphal stages, and adults range in size from 1.5 to 2.6 mm. Predation and parasitism from lady beetles, hover fly larvae, lacewings, and parasitic wasps can at times cause significant control of populations.

Although most people assume oleander aphids have a negative impact on monarch larvae development, this is not necessarily the case. One study showed that monarch larvae grew to be 37.7% larger on common milkweed plants where aphids were present; this is because aphid sap-feeding can reduce the levels of toxins in milkweed plants. Monarch larvae are commonly thought to be immune to milkweed toxins, but

they are only tolerant of them, and lower levels lessen negative impacts. Additionally, a high population of aphids can provide a preferred food source for multicoloured Asian lady beetles, which may also feed on eggs or early instar monarch larvae.

This is the final Manitoba Crop Pest Update for 2026. Many thanks to those who provided updates on pest situations on their farms or in their regions. It is your co-operation that enables us to compile information weekly and produce this report.

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
Simon Huang, Field Crop Pathologist (204) 750-4248
Kim Brown, Weeds Specialist (431) 344-0239

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