

## CROP REPORT #9 – June 25, 2019

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[Seasonal Report](#)

[Crop Weather Report](#)

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### Weekly Provincial Summary

- Reseeded crops have emerged and generally past severe early-season insect feeding pressures, particularly in canola.
- Low overall disease pressure to date has producers questioning economic payoff of fungicide applications.
- More widespread rainfall across the province this past week, but inconsistent amounts in some areas still have not alleviated concerns.
- Persistent concerns remain for forage availability, with poor first-cut alfalfa and hay yields. Some producers have begun to sell cattle in anticipation of low summer forage yields and feed supply shortages.

### Southwest Region

Recent rainfall has helped crops and forages over the entire Southwest region. Crops have responded and now some warm days and evenings will help in crop development. Quantity of moisture generally adequate for crop growth throughout the region but the Melita, Ninette, Sinclair, Pierson, and Rivers areas received more than 45 mm over the course of this past week. Most fields were able to absorb this moisture but some pockets near Killarney and Brandon have some standing water in the fields that should dissipate within a day or two.

Peas are looking promising and most fields will be flowering at the end of this next week. No major disease or insect issues to report of so far, following earlier flea beetle and cutworm outbreaks.

The majority of cereal crops are approaching flag leaf stage with early seeded wheat and oats at flag leaf and some fields are starting to head out. Most producers have completed weed

control and are looking at fungicide application if the crop conditions warrant. Some leaf disease (tan spot and septoria) is starting to show up after recent rain events.

Canola has started to cabbage and close the crop canopy. Most fields have progressed to the point of outgrowing insect issues. Most producers have started their second pass of weed control.

Soybeans are in the second to third trifoliolate, with some of the later sown beans in the first trifoliolate. Most producers have completed the first pass of weed control on soybeans and some have started the second pass. Some iron deficiency chlorosis (IDC) symptoms showing up in some fields – early symptoms appear to be variety dependent.

Corn and sunflowers are progressing but development is delayed due to below average heat unit accumulation. Sunflower staging is often variable within the same field, ranging from cotyledon to V6. Cutworm feeding activity has decreased.

Pastures growing but are past satisfactory regrowth potential. Some producers have sown greenfeed crops to supplement feed supplies.

Alfalfa growth has been slow, but shows promise for a decent second cut later this summer if recent rainfall patterns continue.

### Northwest

There were good growing conditions in the Northwest region last week with daytime temperatures over 25°C and welcome rain showers through most of the region. Rainfall amounts varied with Swan River, Roblin, and The Pas receiving 10 to 17 mm; Grandview/Pipe Lake area received the most rain at 25mm. Unfortunately, the driest parts of the region, around Dauphin/Ste. Rose, received the least amount at only 10 mm. These showers have helped crops to advance after a long delay due to dry conditions. Soil moisture conditions around Dauphin are short; Swan River area is 40% adequate, 50% short and 10%

very short; soils in The Pas and Roblin are 100% adequate.

There was noticeable growth in the canola this week with 75% of the crop in the rosette stage while the later seeded crops are still in the cotyledon stage. Spring cereals are moving into stem elongation stage, while winter wheat is at flag leaf stage and fall rye heading out. Field peas in the region have begun flowering. Weeds are actively growing and herbicide applications continue as crops develop and weeds become an issue. Diamondback moth larvae have been observed in canola around Swan River and producers are encouraged to scout their fields. Bertha Armyworm moths are showing up in traps throughout the region. While still at “low risk”, numbers are nearing the “uncertain” range in the Ste. Rose area. Generally, crops in the Northwest region are rated as good, however areas with issues have become more noticeable in regards to germination, emergence, frost, insects, etc. as the crop advances.

Continued dry conditions for the Ste. Rose and Westlake areas have depleted pastures reserves and dugouts. Some dugouts have been reported to have dried up. Hay crops are poor with limited yields expected and is first cut being delayed. Some cattle have been sold as limited pasture growth will not support summer feed requirements. Other areas of the Northwest have had some spotty showers. Pastures are holding out in those areas but do require more moisture as well. Silage corn crops are improving but require additional moisture as well.

## Central

Last week's rain soaked in rapidly to allow field operations to

progress until mid-week, when another rain system crossed the region. Precipitation was highest in the south and western side of the region with as much as 41 mm accumulated in the Cartwright and Snowflake areas. The eastern side of the Red River Valley received less precipitation with around 10 mm in many places. Topsoil and subsoil moisture conditions have improved greatly with recent rainfall events to the point of having some water standing in fields. In most fields, there has been no runoff and was completely absorbed.

Wheat, oats and barley are growing well with those crops in the 5-leaf to flag leaf stage with some early fields or moisture stressed areas starting to head out. Cereal fields are most advanced in the Red River Valley. Disease pressure has been low to date but with the recent moisture, conditions will be more favourable for disease development. Foliar fungicide applications are underway at the flag leaf timing to protect against leaf diseases. Corn is growing at a moderate pace with delayed development. Warmer temperatures are needed to stimulate growth of this crop. Some canola fields above the escarpment have been partially reseeded due to the variability of the damage and will have different stages of development as the season progresses. Canola is most advanced in the Red River Valley with many fields bolting and some starting to flower. Flax crops are about 12 to 25 cm tall (5 to 10 inches). Field peas are moving past the 7<sup>th</sup> node stage and growing well. Soybeans are at the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> trifoliate stage, but many fields are showing iron deficiency chlorosis (IDC) symptoms. Herbicide application is continuing with a first pass mostly done. Fall rye fields are headed out and some fields have suffered floret

sterilization with the frost event two weeks ago. Winter wheat is also headed out and starting to flower. Fungicide applications for fusarium head blight are being applied to winter wheat fields considered at risk of the disease.

Diamondback moth traps set up to capture early arrivals of this pest have none above the escarpment but have showed up in the Red River Valley in increasing numbers. Bertha armyworm traps are now set up across the region to monitor presence over the next few weeks. Grasshoppers are becoming a new threat in the eastern part of the Red River Valley prevailing dry conditions. A number of field perimeters have been sprayed to control grasshopper nymphs.

Potato fields emerged slowly this spring and range widely in plant size. Irrigation of fields is occurring to maintain soil moisture and support growth. Colorado potato beetles are becoming more active now with warmer temperatures and control measures will soon be necessary in some fields.

The newer fertilized alfalfa hay fields in Green-Gold monitoring program are growing well exceeding 76 cm (30 inches) and now in early flower. First cuts of hay to date are primarily for dairy cattle rations. The older hay fields with a higher percentage of grass are shorter, thinner and well below average for growth at only 12 to 18 inches tall. Grasses are headed out and alfalfa is flowering earlier due to moisture deficit. Hay production is expected to be well below average due to dry conditions since last fall. The pasture and hay growth is best in the southwest part of the Central region. Most pastures have sufficient forage growth, but will not support heavy grazing without additional moisture.

Producers are expressing concern with the poor hay crop and possible feed shortages. Some hay fields may not be worth cutting and yields may only be half to one bale per acre.

Livestock water supplies are adequate at this time but evaporation and little recharge will draw them down. There is very limited to no feed carryover. There are a few fields of greenfeed still being seeded.

## Eastern

Rainfall accumulations across the Eastern region ranged from 2 mm to 25 mm. Soil moisture conditions on cropland across the region were rated as adequate on 90% of acres with the balance being short to very short. Daytime temperatures varied from normal to above normal but nighttime temperatures remained cool. However, the pace of plant growth, particularly for warm season crops, did benefit.

Herbicide applications were estimated at 70% complete across the region. Fusarium Head Blight spray applications on winter wheat were ongoing, while applications to spring wheat are estimated about 10 days away. Second pass herbicide applications in soybean were about 40% complete with rapid progress this week if weather allows. However, producers were carefully evaluating weed pressure in soybeans and some crops will not receive a second pass. Second pass herbicide applications in corn was ongoing and almost complete in some areas. Some cornfields will soon be too advanced to receive further herbicide applications.

Fall rye crops are heading and past fusarium spray stages. Winter wheat is heading and flowering. Spring cereals range from boot stage to the earlier seeded in flag

with head emergence not far off. Some early seeded cereals received applications of plant growth regulator. Corn stages ranged from V4 to V8 and soybeans ranged from V1 to early V3. Sunflower growth stage ranged from V6 to V8. Some canola fields have just started to bolt.

Soil moisture conditions are adequate for annual crop development in most areas of the Eastern region for the immediate future, but more rain is needed if annual crops are to avoid moisture stress and minimize yield losses.

Soil moisture conditions on hay and pasture lands were rated as adequate on 40% of acres with 30% short and 30% very short. Hay and pasture conditions were rated as 20% good, 40% fair, 40% poor to very poor. Beef producers have started first cut and most reported yields were about the same as last year (50 to 60% of normal yield). Livestock were being rotated through pastures as the past couple of rains have helped improve growth on pastures. Grass hay fields were still 2 to 3 weeks away from cutting. Hay fields fertilized with hog manure were looking good with average to above average yields. Half of first cut hay was standing with 10% cut and 40% baled or silaged. Quality was rated as good. Alfalfa hay yield was one tonne per acre on average. Haying season is just getting into full swing with most beef producers waiting until after the long weekend. Livestock water availability was rated as 100% adequate.

## Interlake

Temperatures are becoming more seasonal, ranging from 20 to 28°C, during the day, with overnight temperatures in most areas of 6 to

15°C. Crop growth has improved with warmer temperatures, particularly overnight temperatures. Arborg, Eriksdale and Woodlands received 11 to 15 mm rain; Lake Francis had the most at 18mm. Any precipitation is welcome and all areas, particularly the north and east part of the region, are short for moisture. Growing degree days and corn heat units are below normal for this time of year; precipitation is well below normal.

Most reseeding is complete. Canola has been most impacted by multiple stresses, including extended cool and dry conditions, along with several frosts and high flea beetle pressure, and sometimes cutworm damage.

Strong winds finished off some fields. Some soybean fields were re-seeded due to wind and hail damage. Some have chosen to re-seed to oats and barley for greenfeed, as there will be high demand. Some acres will remain unseeded due to extremely dry conditions. Timely rains are needed to support all crops.

Topsoil moisture is currently adequate for 50% of the crops and short to very short for the remaining acres. Crops are generally shorter than normal, and majority of crops have suffered from dry and cold conditions, sometimes frost and in many cases, insect pressure. Peas and flax are bright spots with fairly even stands and are progressing well. Flax looks very good, most fields are even, 12 to 15 cm in height. Peas are shorter than normal and have reached 12<sup>th</sup> node stage. Flowering will begin soon. Canola is starting to fill in, and the first bolts are showing. Stands are on the thin side. Re-seeded acres are emerging to one leaf. Soybeans are unifoliate to first trifoliate, and up to second



trifoliate in the most advanced fields. As with all crops, stands are stacey due to dry and cold conditions. Colour is improving with warmer temperatures. A bit of interveinal chlorosis has been noted. Sunflowers are advancing, stands are somewhat uneven and thin. Most corn – both grain and silage – has improved in both growth and colour. Cereal crops are entering flag leaf stage to as advanced as starting to head. Premature heading due to dry conditions has been seen in the northwest. Later seeded cereals are in the three to four leaf; most of those acres are designated as greenfeed.

Greenfeed acres are reported to be up significantly. Some oat and barley acres will remain flexible, going as grain or feed as necessary. Millet is going in due to concern about hay and pasture. New hay acres have been seeded, older stands are being renovated. Fall rye and winter wheat has headed. Some fungicide is being applied to winter wheat for fusarium head blight suppression. Timing of application is difficult due to staginess of crops. Alfalfa has been slow to grow, flowering has started, and leafcutter bees will soon be placed in fields.

Herbicide spraying continues; and most fields have seen a first pass, excepting reseeded acres. Second pass applications continue in canola, soybeans and corn.

Flea beetle pressure, particularly striped flea beetles, is starting to taper off. Canola is finally growing beyond the susceptible stage, and the last of the fields have been or are being sprayed. Reseeded canola is growing more quickly with warmer temperatures and some timely showers. Insecticide seed treatments are sufficient to keep flea beetle feeding in check

on reseeded acres. Cutworm damage is starting to slow, but there are still some smaller cutworm larvae feeding in some fields. Treatment has occurred in corn, canola, soybeans and cereals. Diamondback moth numbers have started to increase since the beginning of June, but are still relatively low. Bertha armyworm counts are low.

Forage availability is a concern for the region, especially as many producers have exhausted their surplus feed supplies. Forage yields are expected to be well below normal. Pastures were generally overgrazed last fall due to dry conditions, compounding concerns. Growth of hay and pasture has been slow with cold, dry conditions; without rain, some producers predict they will be short of pasture by mid-July, and feed shortages will be an issue. There is little regrowth on grazed pasture due to lack of moisture. Small showers have managed to sustain pastures to this point, but significant rain is necessary to replenish. Grasses have headed prematurely; some forages have quit growing due to lack of moisture. Topsoil moisture for hay and pasture is rated as 70% short and 30% very short. First cut dairy hay has started, yields are disappointing. Some hay has been cut early due to poor pasture conditions and lack of feed supplies. Wild hay is very short, highland grasses are headed and dried out. Very few acres will be cut. Poor conditions including lack of moisture and frost means that yields of lowland hay will be drastically reduced. Shallow rooted grasses are doing poorly. Pure grass hay doesn't have enough growth to warrant cutting. Pastures are rated as fair (30%), poor (40%) to very poor (30%). Hay fields rated as fair (50%), poor (30%) to very poor (20%).

Dugout levels are quite variable, as some are full, but waters levels are generally below normal, and sometimes dry. Water supply is rated as 90% adequate, but significant rain is needed for longer-term replenishment. Concern over adequate supply is increasing with continued dry conditions.