

CROP REPORT #10 – July 2, 2019

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[Seasonal Report](#)

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Weekly Provincial Summary

- Insect pressures have dramatically reduced, but concerns remain about pending grasshopper, bertha armyworm and diamondback moth larvae populations.
- Non-conducive weather and rainfall in some areas has reduced fungicide applications on the earliest emerged crops.
- Eastern Manitoba, the Red River Valley and the Interlake have experienced the lack of widespread adequate rainfall, while other areas further west have benefitted, with some exceptions.
- Poor first cut hay and alfalfa yields reported across the province. Concerns shifted to short annual crop growth as a potential livestock feed source.

Southwest

Severe weather systems brought timely rain to the southwest over the past week and weekend. Most areas reporting good amount of rain. Russell, Mountainside, and Boissevain got 40-50mm rain, while the majority of the region received 15 to 25 mm, with the exception of Minnedosa (4mm) and Neepawa, receiving very little. Brandon area and south has received enough rain over the last few weeks that it is 70 to 100% of normal. The northern part of the region is still dry with average precipitation in the 50% range. Crop growth is benefitting from warm temperatures throughout the week.

Winter wheat and fall rye are both in the grain filling stage and are shorter than normal, looking to be average to below average yields. Peas are in the early flowering stage and range in height from 10 to 12 inches. Crop looks to be good with no major disease issues to date. Pea growing areas are taking up all available moisture when given.

Spring cereal crops are starting to head in 25% of fields and producers have begun fungicide applications. Later seeded cereals are in the flag leaf stage. Recent rainfall will help cereals tiller and fill in some of the gaps left from spotty germination and cutworm issues. Herbicide spray is complete but there are some reports of second flush of weeds after rains. Producers are debating for spraying any herbicide due to reproductive stage of the crop and the crop canopy is covering majority of the fields.

Canola is in several stages. Early seeded canola that did not have major issues with cutworms and flea beetles are bolting and producers are preparing to apply fungicide. Canola fields that had issues with flea beetles and cutworms are patchy and is several growth stages from cabbaging to bolting. Reseeded canola is just nicely covering the ground and starting to cabbage out. Fungicide application timing is

going to be difficult and some producers are questioning the economic benefit.

Soybean crop is looking very promising and responding well to high temperatures. Majority of the crop is V4 to V5 trifoliolate stage. There are no reports of any flowering yet. Leaf disease pressure is also low. Most of producers have completed the herbicide spray.

Flax is about 8 to 10 inches tall and in most cases looks good. Sunflowers are doing well and need heat to get them caught up. Most are in the V5 to V6 range.

Corn in the V3 to V5 depending on when it was planted. It also needs heat to help it catch up to normal staging for this time of year.

Flea beetle pressure in canola is low at this time. Cutworm issues are also reducing. Bertha armyworm numbers in traps are increasing in the area but still well below threshold level.

Haying has begun with yields ranging from poor to average. Some producers are haying poor stands in hopes for better regrowth for the second cut. Alfalfa weevil damage has shown up, and has halted blooming in many stands. Hay growers are recommended to cut before too much damage occurs. Dugouts levels range from to low to adequate.

Northwest

Good growing conditions prevailed in the Northwest region last week with daytime temperatures over 25°C and welcome rain showers through most of the region. There have been reports of hail over the weekend in an area north of Swan River; damage is being assessed at this point. Rainfall amounts ranged from 9 to 17 mm. These showers have helped crops to advance after a long delay due to dry conditions. Unfortunately, the driest parts of the region received the least amount of rain and crops in those areas are showing the effects of lack of moisture. Soil moisture conditions around Dauphin/Ste. Rose area are short; Swan River area is 90% adequate, 10% short; soils at The Pas and Roblin are 100% adequate.

Most crops are catching up after a long dry spell early in the growing season. There was noticeable growth in the canola this week with 70 to 80% of the crop in the rosette stage and some of the earlier seeded canola starting to flower. Approximately 50 to 60% of spring cereals are heading out. Winter wheat and fall rye are heading out. The field peas in the region are well into flowering.

Herbicide applications are nearing completion in most areas with good weed control. Monitoring traps for diamondback moths were removed from fields this week as

the moths mature into the larval stage. Diamondback moth larvae have been observed in canola around Swan River and producers are encouraged to scout their fields. Thistle caterpillars have been observed in soybeans. 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 pre-existing issues have become more noticeable in regards to germination, emergence, frost, insects, etc. as the crop advances.

Haying has started but yields look to be about a third of normal. Alfalfa weevil has been reported in the Rorketon area, north of Ste. Rose. Hay crops north of Dauphin, into the Ethelbert area are also very thin and poor growth was reported due to lack of rain. Dugouts have been reported to be 50% of normal to dry in the Rorketon area. Producers are digging wells to supplement water sources for cattle on pasture. Pastures health will decline rapidly with limited precipitation.

Central

Seasonal temperatures prevailed for the week benefitting crop growth and development. Saturday, a rain shower system brought moderate precipitation to the region with amounts varying from a low of 1 mm in Lakeland to a high of 29 mm in Snowflake. The south and western part of the region again received the highest amounts. The eastern side of the Red River Valley received lower precipitation levels generally and could use more rain. Soil moisture conditions have improved from those recent rainfall events but soils have been able to absorb all

the moisture received so far. Overall, rainfall received since May 1st remains below the long-term average across the region.

Wheat, oats and barley are growing well with those crops heading to fully headed out stage. Disease pressure has been low to date but starting to be noticed with the recent moisture conditions favourable for disease development especially on the western side of the region. Foliar fungicide applications continued at the flag leaf stage to protect against leaf disease development. Fusarium head blight sprays are being applied to wheat and barley as they reach the correct stage. Corn growth is accelerating with the recent warmer temperatures. Staging varies from the V6 to V8.

A number of canola fields above the escarpment have been partially reseeded due to the variability of the damage caused by cutworm and flea beetles will have different stages of development as the season progresses. Canola is most advanced in the Red River Valley with most fields bolting or flowering, while just bolting above the escarpment. Flax fields are in the stem elongation stage above the escarpment and some starting to flower in the Red River Valley. Sunflower is in the V8 to V10 stages.

Bertha armyworm traps are set up across the region to monitor the emergence of this pest over the next few weeks. Grasshoppers are a threat in the eastern part of the Red River Valley given the dryer conditions still prevailing in that area. Grasshopper spraying has taken place on fields where threshold have been reached in the eastern side of the region.

Potato fields are showing good growth with the recent rains and warmer conditions. Irrigation of

fields is occurring to maintain soil moisture and support growth. Potato beetles are active now with the warmer temperatures and control measures are necessary in some fields.

Field peas are growing well and flowering. Soybeans are at the V3 to V4 stage (third to fourth trifoliate). Soybeans and edible beans are in need of water in the Red River Valley but doing well above the escarpment. Iron deficiency chlorosis (IDC) symptoms are noticeable in most soybean fields. Second pass herbicide application are progressing well to late maturing crops like corn and soybeans and should be finished within the week. Fall rye fields are finished flowering. Winter wheat is headed out and flowering or nearly done. Fungicide applications against fusarium head blight are being applied to fields considered at risk of the disease.

Older hay fields with a higher percentage of grass are shorter, thinner and well below average for growth this time of year. Grasses are headed out and alfalfa is flowering. Hay production is expected to be well below average due to persistent dry conditions since last fall. The pasture and hay growth is best in the southwest parts of the region due to the recent rainfall events. Most pastures may now have sufficient grass but it will not last long without adequate timely rains.

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. Some growers are actively looking to purchase cereal crops from neighbours to make green feed for their cattle herd. Livestock water supplies are adequate in the western side of the

region but more of an issue on the southeastern parts.

Eastern

Rainfall accumulations across the Eastern Region ranged from trace amounts to 20 mm with most districts receiving less than 5 mm. Rainfall tended to occur as isolated showers or thunderstorms across the region, with uneven distribution. Soil moisture conditions on cropland across the region were rated as adequate on 85% of acres with the balance being short to very short. Soil moisture conditions of hay and pasture lands were rated as adequate on 40% of acres with 30% short and 30% very short.

Herbicide applications are estimated at 90% complete for all crops across the region. Given the dry conditions, a limited amount of flag leaf fungicide applications were done with oats being the most frequent recipient. Fusarium head blight (FHB) fungicide applications on spring wheat started last week. Crop staging is uneven making the timing of FHB fungicide applications difficult. Some farmers are also evaluating costs related to fungicide application when the weather has not been conducive to disease development. Fungicide applications in canola for sclerotinia began last week. Producers and agronomists are carefully monitoring crop stage given the unevenness of many canola crops. Second pass herbicide applications in soybean were about 75% complete with rapid progress made last week. If rainfall occurs, further weed growth in soybeans may trigger continued herbicide applications during flowering. Herbicide applications in corn are complete with most of the crop now out of stage for further applications.

Fall rye is headed and filling out. Winter wheat is heading and past FHB fungicide application timing. In spring cereals, the majority of crop ranged from flag leaf to head emergence and flowering. Corn growth stage ranged from V6 to V8 and soybeans ranged from third trifoliate to very early flower (R1). Sunflower growth stage ranged from V6 to R1. Canola fields are bolting and flowering. Annual crop condition in the Eastern region was generally good but early signs of moisture stress were noted. Most areas are in need of significant rainfall in the near future to maintain crop condition and yield potential.

Iron Deficiency Chlorosis (IDC) continued to develop in all soybean fields last week but an alleviation of symptoms was noted in some fields. The warm temperatures and rapid growth of the crop likely played a role. Cutworm concerns in soybeans, sunflowers and cereals and flea beetle concerns in canola reduced dramatically last week. Grasshoppers now have the attention of many producers with field monitoring ongoing. A very limited number of acres have been sprayed. Aphids in cereals and Diamondback moth larvae in canola were noted at below threshold levels.

Hayfield condition was rated as good (20%) to fair (40%), remainder as poor to very poor. Pasture conditions were rated as good (10%) to fair (50%), with the balance as poor to very poor. Beef producers have started first cut with most saying yield was about the same as last year (50 to 60% of normal yield) or slightly better. Livestock were being rotated through pastures as rains have helped improve growth on pastures. Grass hay fields were still 1 to 2 weeks away from cutting as they were still growing. Hay

fields fertilized with hog manure were looking good with average to above average yields. Half of the 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. Dugouts were thankful for the showers and rain that came down last week. Availability of livestock water was rated as 100% adequate.

Interlake

Summer has finally arrived with daytime temperatures ranging from 28 to 31°C. Minimum overnight temperatures in most areas were 6 to 11°C. Average temperatures increased to 19 to 21°C. Crop growth has improved significantly with warmer temperatures. Trace rainfall only for most of the region, although thundershower accumulations were higher. Small isolated areas in the north Interlake received as much as 40 mm. Some hail reported, small areas affected. Any precipitation is welcome and all areas, particularly the north and east part of the region, remain short for moisture. Growing degree-days and corn heat units are creeping closer to normal; precipitation is well below normal with the majority of the region at 50% or less.

Reseeding is complete. Some greenfeed may still go in, and a few acres will remain unseeded due to extremely dry conditions. Timely rains are needed as crops hang on from shower to shower. Topsoil moisture is currently adequate for 50% of the crops and short to very short for the remaining acres.

All crops are shorter than normal, and majority of crops have suffered from dry and cold conditions, sometimes frost and in many cases, insect

pressure. Patchy germination is evident in all crops; most crops are stagey. Peas and flax have fairly even stands and are progressing well. Flax looks very good, most fields are even, but short. Peas also shorter than normal, and flowering; fungicide applications have begun. Sunflowers are growing well. Canola is starting to fill in, flowering has begun. Stands are on the thin side. Fungicide applications are being considered, but at this point, spraying will not be general due to dry conditions. Most soybeans are at third trifoliolate or higher; majority of fields are very short. As with all crops, stands are stagey due to dry and cold conditions. A bit of interveinal chlorosis has been noted. Second pass herbicide applications will soon wrap up in soybeans. Applications have been delayed due to slow canopy closure and low weed pressure. Nodulation is occurring, and flowering will start soon. Most corn – both grain and silage – has improved in both growth and colour. Cereals have rapidly advanced, and most are heading. Fungicide applications for fusarium head blight continue; as much as 50% of the barley acres are done; spring wheat is close behind. Applications will not be made in the driest areas, where crop potential does not warrant treatment. Premature heading due to dry conditions has been seen in the northwest. Later seeded cereals are growing well. Fall rye and winter wheat are past fungicide timing for fusarium head blight. Timing due to crop staginess is a challenge.

Greenfeed acres are reported to be up significantly. Some oat and barley acres will remain flexible, going as grain or feed as necessary. Millet was seeded due to concern about hay and pasture. New hay acres have been seeded, older stands have been renovated. Alfalfa is

flowering, and leafcutter bees are going out.

Flea beetle pressure has tapered off; canola is finally beyond the susceptible stage. High numbers in some reseeded canola required treatment. Treatment for cutworms in corn, canola, soybeans and cereals has also tapered off. Grasshoppers are being monitored closely. Diamondback moth numbers have increased since the beginning of June; monitoring for larval feeding is starting. Traps will be removed this week. Bertha armyworm counts are low.

Forage availability is a big concern for the region, especially as many producers have exhausted their surplus feed supplies. Without rain, some producers predict they will be short of pasture by mid-July, and feed shortages will be an issue. 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 hay continues, and yields are disappointing. Yield estimates are pegged at less than half of average production. Some is going as silage. Some hay has been cut early due to poor pasture conditions and lack of feed supplies. North Interlake reports cutting to get ahead of alfalfa weevil and grasshopper injury. Wild hay is very short, highland grasses are headed and dried out. Very few acres will be cut. As crops are short, availability of cereal straw will be limited. 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; all are declining, some are dry. Water supply is rated as 90% adequate, but significant rain is needed for replenishment. Water hauling has not yet been reported.