

CROP REPORT #5 – May 25, 2021

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Weekly Provincial Summary

- Spotty to widespread rain over much of the province this week has allowed a brief respite from very dry conditions, allowing seed stranded in dry soils to germinate, and giving critical moisture to emerged crops and pastures.
- More timely rainfall will be needed soon, to keep soils from drying out again, and push crop and forage development into mid-June and beyond.
- Frost conditions forecasted for later this week have many farmers anxious about canola and soybean crops set to emerge or already up, given lows of -4°C forecasted for Wednesday night.
- Producers and agronomists are reminded that scouting for [frost damage](#) is best done 24 to 72 hours after the event, and looking for new growth from the growing point.
- Long-term damage to pastures is expected by many, given the need to turn cattle out to graze, despite a lack of substantial regrowth.
- See [Current Crop Topics](#) page for resources on managing crops under dry to very dry conditions.

Table 1: Seeding Progression in 2021 Compared to Other Years

Seeding Date (Week:Month)	2021	2020	4-Year Average
<May 1 st	2%	<1%	3%
1:05	18%	9%	21%
2:05	44%	42%	51%
3:05	76%	65%	77%
4:05	91%	88%	93%
1:06	-	96%	98%
2:06	-	97%	99%
3:06	-	100%	100%
at June 30 th	-	100%	100%

Source: Weekly survey data from MB ARD Regional Crop Reporters.

Southwest Region

Most of the Southwest region received rainfall over the past week. Recorded amounts ranged between 25 to 35 mm for the most part, though showers were extremely spotty, with some areas winning the thunderstorm lottery, while weather stations a few miles away recorded only a few millimeters rain.

Glenboro and Ninette received the most at 53 and 73 mm, respectively.

These recent rains are great help for germinating crops in dry soil, and for seeded crops as well. Rain will also help to improve the existing seedbed conditions. Temperature fluctuation is slowing the growth of crops since many overnight lows

last week saw temperatures get close to zero degrees. Daytime highs are improving, but single-digit overnight lows remain common. The threat of frost this week has many farmers anxious over their more sensitive crops, particularly early-emerged canola and soybeans.

Seeding in the Southwest is about 65 to 70% complete with soybeans, canola and silage being the major crops left to plant.

Winter wheat and fall rye growth continues with very slow progress. A few rye fields are at boot stage but most winter wheat is still tillering. Weed control is complete in these fields. Recent moisture will help to accelerate the growth but warm temperature needed to advance jointing.

Cereal crop seeding is 95 to 100% complete. Some early seeded cereals are approaching in-crop weed control timing as most cereals are now at the 1- to 2-leaf stage. There are some reports of leaf discoloration due to sharp changes in temperature and quick growth after getting the much-needed moisture.

Canola is about 55 to 60% complete with few early seeded fields emerged and at cotyledon stage. Recent rains during last week will help to germinate most of canola while some producers seeded in the dust due to lack of moisture. No herbicide application yet. More canola will be in the ground this week after good rains, since many farmers were holding off seeding due to very dry conditions and inability to place seed at an appropriate depth to reach moisture.

Peas are emerging well. Some fields are close to 2nd to 3rd node stage (V2 to V3). Soybeans are about 70% complete, with some early seeded fields starting to emerge in the southern part of region. Not much rolling happening this year due to dry weather conditions. Flax seeding is 70% done. Corn planting is 65% complete with remainder to be planted being silage corn.

Flea beetles are making an appearance on canola already, as well as some early grasshopper nymphs in cereals.

Recent rain will benefit both pasture and forage crops. There was a noticeable increase in growth in forages after rain. Producers have started moving cattle to pasture with the break in seeding. Producers are planning on greenfeed annuals to make up for any losses that may happen from slow early spring growth.

Northwest Region

The first part of the past week saw temperatures hovering in the mid 30°C range, and strong winds throughout the region. These conditions caused further deterioration of soil moisture conditions, area wild fires and municipal burn bans. By Thursday, there were cooler temperatures and welcome precipitation in the form of rain and/or snow throughout the entire region. The moisture helped with wildfires in the area and helped to restore some soil moisture in the region. There was 15 to 30 mm precipitation throughout the region with highs of 50 mm in the Roblin area. Although widespread rains fell in the region, there was very little standing water remaining as it has been well absorbed. Most areas still have adequate moisture in the root zone for cereals and peas and the recent showers have helped to replenish surface moisture, which will help with germination of recently seeded crops.

The warmer conditions at the beginning of the week allowed producers to seed more frost sensitive crops such as canola and soybeans. Snow and/or rain over the weekend has temporarily halted spring operations however, progress was made through the rest

of last week. Seeding is pegged at 75% complete in most of the region.

Wheat acres are near completion and are estimated at 99% complete in the Northwest region. The warmer temperatures and good seeding conditions resulted in good progress this past week. Spring wheat is emerging in good condition. Barley seeding is 40% complete. Crops were seeded into adequate moisture for germination but some areas still require additional moisture for continued growth.

Approximately 99% of the peas are in the ground and rolled in the Roblin, Swan River and Dauphin areas. With timely rains, peas are emerging in good condition.

With warmer weather this past week, there was good progress on seeding of canola. To date, approximately 75% of forecasted acres are in the ground. The welcome moisture at the weekend will aid in fast and uniform germination. There was some progress on soybeans last week with approximately 75% in the ground. There are reports of fewer soybean acres going in this year in the Northwest region.

There has been good winter survival of winter cereals, clovers and alfalfa. Winter cereals came through the winter in good to excellent condition.

Pheromone baited traps for diamondback moth monitoring are out in fields throughout the region. There are no significant numbers showing up as of yet. There are no reports of insect damage.

Forages will benefit from recent rains the area has received. More moisture is still needed for recharge on dugouts and continued forage growth. Dugouts and water sources are low. Corn silage seeding

wrapping up. Alfalfa field growth has been slow with plant heights ranging from 5 to 13 inches (12 to 33 cm). Heat and moisture will further advance hay fields. Cattle are being withheld from pastures due to slow growth and dry conditions.

Central Region

Strong southerly winds and above normal temperatures predominated at the start of the week, causing soil drifting and surface soil drying as moisture was already scarce. Conditions changed mid-week with northerly winds and temperatures cooling to well below normal Thursday into the weekend. Along with this change in weather, welcome rains finally came after weeks of zero precipitation for most of the region. Precipitation varied from 7 mm in Snowflake to 67 mm in St. Claude and many areas receiving 20 to 30 mm. Any rains received combined with the cooler temperatures helped to improve topsoil moisture to the point where germination of recently planted crops should be uniform.

Topsoil moisture is variable, and in areas of higher precipitation, some water ponding was reported for up to a few days after the rains. Excess water infiltrated well given the low subsoil moisture reserves. Forecast this week is starting with sunny, warm, windy and dry conditions that dries topsoil, then shifting to cool conditions with chance of frost mid week in some parts of the region. Growers hope that frost sensitive crops planted recently sometimes in dry soil will not emerge before the forecasted frost.

Field access was good and field operations continued rapidly until the mid-week rains. Soils have warmed which stimulated emergence of early-planted crops, with most cereals now at 2 to 3 leaf stage, and corn emerging this week.

Winter wheat, fall rye and perennial ryegrass fields are growing well as temperatures have warmed and moisture is not as limiting. Development varies with some fall rye fields well into the stem elongation stage.

Spring cereal stages vary from one to three leaves. Field peas range from V3 to V6. Earliest planted canola fields are starting to emerge while some of the canola acreage remains to be seeded with about 85 to 90% is in the ground. Flax seeding is mostly done in the region, as is sunflower. Corn planting is estimated at >95% done with some emergence reported but somewhat uneven due to previously poor topsoil moisture. Some of the later planted crops put into dry soil should germinate well with the recent rainfall. Soybeans seeding is nearly finished with some early-planted fields cracking ground. Land rolling of soybeans is occurring. Dry bean planting is now 55 to 65% done. Overall seeding in the region is around 95% complete, with the majority of growers already finished.

Weed growth is evident with warmer temperatures. Minimal pre-seed burnoff has occurred to date, given the poor weed growth, but more is expected as conditions change. In-crop herbicide applications are expected to begin this week as crops are progressing well into the proper development stages. Winds and risk of frost will make spraying operations more challenging.

Potato planting is considered done with some of the earlier planted fields emerging. Recent rains helped with topsoil moisture recharge. No emergence issues so far. Good sprouts are developing as warmer temperatures stimulate emergence.

Flea beetle activity on canola is evident with control measures applied reported in the Altona area.

Since groundwater and wells did not recharge this spring, a few yard wells are going dry forcing producers to haul water or move livestock. With dugouts lower than normal to start the grazing season there is concern how long the water will last. Producers should consider alternative watering systems to improve water quality and conserve limited water supplies. Cattle moved onto pasture may require supplementation before grazing can fully begin. Ranchers are cautioned to avoid grazing too early, as it will reduce overall grazing days. Hay and pasture forage growth will improve with the rain but more is required where amount was less.

Eastern Region

Much needed rain finally fell this past week across the Eastern region. Precipitation accumulation ranging from 25 to 75 mm was recorded over the last week in the region with some localized areas getting over 100 mm. Rainfall events started last Wednesday with thunderstorms with showers persisting through Sunday. Water is still standing in fields in areas that got >50 mm. Overall, most producers are pleased with the rain because crop establishment and seed germination will be really helped along by this timely rainfall. Daytime and nighttime temperatures started the reporting period with being well above normal but decrease to normal or slightly below normal during the rainfall period. On Monday, temperatures again moved above the seasonal norms. During the reporting period, producers noticed rapid, if sometimes uneven, emergence of recently seeded crop, particularly canola. Producer concerns are now focused on the upcoming forecasts of possible freezing temperatures,

particularly for the emerged canola crops and the few soybean fields that have some plants poking above ground. A little pre-emergent spraying was done before the rain. Post-emergent spraying on cereal crops will begin either late this week or early next week depending on how much rain areas received and wind conditions.

The winter cereals have put on a growth spurt in the recent warm weather. Fall rye was at 4-leaf stage, and multiple tillers. Condition was good. Herbicide applications completed where needed.

Good seeding progress was reported across the Eastern region. Canola and soybeans were again the main seeding focus this past week. Spring cereals are estimated at 100% complete for the region. Spring wheat is at the 2- to 3-leaf stage. Oat planting is complete and stands are tillering. Corn planting is estimated at 98% complete with 30% emergence. Field pea are growing rapidly. Sunflower acres are estimated at 100% complete and 50% emerging. Flax seeding is complete with 100% emerging. Canola is estimated at 95% complete with 40% emerging. Soybean planting is estimated at 95% complete and 5% emerging. Corn, canola and soybeans planting is expected to wrap up this week, weather dependent.

Hay and pasture condition is rated good to fair. Much needed moisture came this weekend ranging from 20 to 50 mm with more in localized thunderstorms. Dry conditions have been alleviated in the interim and more moisture will be needed very soon to keep pastures and hayfields producing. Dugout capacity in the area is as low as 40% in areas and areas that had runoff are at 100% capacity.

Interlake Region

Rain has been most welcome. Amounts have been variable with thundershowers. Accumulations for most in the range of 10 to 25 mm. Highest amounts of 32 mm at Woodlands, and >40 mm reported in East Selkirk area. Stations at Gimli, Moosehorn, and Fisher Branch report less than 10 mm. Moosehorn has had the least amount of precipitation this growing season, at 15% of normal.

Dry conditions continue, and timely rains will be needed through the growing season to support crop growth. Temperatures continue to be extremely variable, with highs ranging from 27 to 31.8°C, and overnight lows down to 0.6°C. Daily averages now range from 12.2 to 14.4°C. Lows of -4°C in the forecast are very concerning. Some producers have seeded deeper into moisture; those crops have been slower to emerge. Trace amounts of precipitation are a concern if there is enough moisture to germinate seeds, but not enough for growth, especially where small seeded crops have been stranded in dry soils. Topsoil moisture is adequate on many acres, for the time being. Significant precipitation will be necessary for recharge.

Strong winds have caused problems, with some crop injury from blowing soil, particularly on last year's canola and soybean fields, and on this year's soybeans that have been rolled. Drift soil has filled some ditches, as well as seed furrows in some fields.

Seeding progress was excellent last week, in advance of the forecast rains. Progress is more advanced in the south Interlake. Overall, seeding completed for the region ranges up to 75 to 85% and higher. Areas further south report >90% complete. Quite a number of producers have completed seeding.

Winter survival has been good for annual crops. Hay and grass seed fields are very slowly greening up, but with minimal new growth.

Most estimate 90 to >95% of the cereals are in. Wheat is emerging up to two leaves, with a few reports of early 3-leaf stage. There is little difference in stage between the earliest seeded wheat and that seeded two weeks later. Emergence is fairly even, with some patchiness in the very earliest seed fields. Peas are in, and are growing well. Barley and oats are emerging, up to early 2-leaf.

There has been a lot of switching around of seeding order of crops, due to the dry conditions. Canola has been slower to go in, due to concerns about frost and flea beetle damage. Some are choosing to seed soybeans first, as they are able to go in deeper, while others are splitting up the canola and soybeans. Canola is estimated at 70 to 85% complete, and soybeans at 75 to 90% done. Canola is germinating to cotyledon stage, and continues to emerge. Soybeans are germinating, to the hook stage pushing through the soil surface. A couple of reports of emerged fields. Corn and sunflowers are complete, flax continues to be seeded. Some changes have been made due to dry conditions, or market prices, with some forage seed acres are going to canola.

Canola that sat in cold dry soils for up to three weeks before emerging is being sprayed for flea beetle control as necessary. With the added risk of frost in the forecast, some retailers are ordering seed in anticipation of [re-seeding canola](#) some fields. Farmers are encouraged to use the [reseed calculator](#) should a severe frost arrive.

More pre-seed and pre-emergence burnoff applications were undertaken as weed growth



increased. Dandelions are blooming. Wild oat patches are growing well. Volunteer cereal and canola growth is significant in places, a result of last fall's strong winds shelling out mature standing crop, prior to harvest. Winter annuals are also using up valuable moisture. There is not a big rush to start post-emergent spraying, due to lower weed pressure, and windy conditions. Rains will encourage weed growth.

Although forages are greening up, dry conditions continue to limit pasture and hay regrowth. Some alfalfa and grasses look ready to bloom or head out, at 15 cm or less in height. Significant stresses from previous seasons are accumulating. Stands that are 5 years old and more have been affected the most, with brown spots where no growth is evident. At present, winter feed supplies are adequate for most, but more concern is being raised about delays to cattle going on to pasture. Some producers are buying feed. Winter forage supplies were improved this past winter as compared to the previous year. Producers switched from annual cash crops to feed crops to make up anticipated shortfalls. Silage and greenfeed acres have again increased.

Livestock water supplies are currently adequate for most, but concern about lack of supply continues to increase. Dugout levels are low for this time of year, with more reports of being completely dry. More reports of well drilling to secure water supply and some producers have started hauling water.