

Field Crop Report



Corn: Greg Stewart

Cold fronts moved through the province last week and caused some isolated ground frost but damage to the corn crop was negligible. Some areas experienced low temperatures that dipped below 4 C for at least three consecutive nights. Even without frost, these cold temperatures will disrupt photosynthesis and grain filling. However, the expectation is that this cold spell was not long or severe enough, in most areas, to cause any permanent disconnect in the grain filling process. Later planted corn still needs 15 to 20 days to reach maturity.

Soybeans: Horst Bohner

Soybean harvest has now started in the province. Most fields still need at least another week or two to dry down but leaf drop is progressing quickly. Yield reports so far have been variable ranging from 25 bu/ac to 55 bu/ac. Moisture has ranged from 10 – 13% and no seed quality issues have been reported. Harvest losses and mechanical damage may be high when moisture drops below 12%. A loss of just 4 beans per square foot represents a loss of 1 bu/ac. The vast majority of fields are now mature enough that a frost will not impact yield.

Cereals: Peter Johnson

Winter Cereals: Early seeding is well underway. Some extremely dry regions have had trouble with germination. In isolated areas, spotty showers have caused seed to germinate and then desiccate from lack of soil moisture. These fields will need to be replanted. The early seeding window has passed. Shift seeding target to 22 seeds/foot of row (26 seeds/foot on heavy clay) until mid October, when seeding rates should increase further. Recent research shows no benefit to Micro Essential Sulphur Zinc (MESZ) as a wheat starter fertilizer over straight Mono Ammonium Phosphate (MAP). Fall sulphur applications have not been widely tested, but limited data has not shown positive results. For winter cereals, spring applied sulphate sulphur is preferred. 2011 provincial yields (bu/ac): Soft Red Winter 75.8, Soft White Winter 77.6, Hard Red Winter 72.9. The overall yield was 75.6 bushels/acre, the lowest average yield since 2005.

Spring Cereals: Harvest is virtually complete. Yields on some late planted fields have been surprisingly good, although the crop was exceedingly short. Late planted fields experienced continued regrowth in many areas, with late tillers causing harvesting issues.

Forages: Joel Bagg

With the right September weather, it can be very tempting to cut some forage for haylage or baleage. It is generally recommended that alfalfa not be cut during the Critical Fall Harvest Period, the 6 week period before the average date of killing frost. This allows a harvested alfalfa plant to regrow and store sufficient root reserves to survive the winter. Early in the period the alfalfa will use the existing root reserves for regrowth, "emptying the tank". Later in the period, the alfalfa stores photosynthesis produced carbohydrates as root reserves, "refilling the tank". Cutting in the middle of the Critical Period is usually higher risk than cutting at the beginning or end. Yield gained by harvesting during the Critical Period is typically sacrificed in first-cut yield the following year. The decision to cut should be weighed against the immediate need for forage. Winterkill risk can be reduced, but not eliminated, by cutting towards the end of alfalfa growth, close to a killing frost. After a killing frost, alfalfa feed value will decline, as leaf loss occurs and rain leaches nutrients quickly. Leaving at least 6 inches of stubble will help trap snow to insulate the alfalfa crowns during cold weather. Heavy stands of grasses or red clover left unharvested can sometimes smother over the winter because the top growth forms a dense mat. In contrast, alfalfa loses most of its leaves as soon as there is a hard frost, and the remaining stems seldom pose any risk of smothering.

Diseases: Albert Tenuta

Over the past few weeks corn diseases such as northern leaf blight, gray leaf spot, ear moulds and anthracnose top dieback have become more noticeable in some fields. Keep these diseases as well as stalk rots in mind when doing your preharvest scouting. There are two methods that will help you in scouting for stalk rots. They are the "Push Test" and the "Pinch or Squeeze Test". Of the two the "Pinch Test" is more accurate than the "Push Test". By pushing the corn, some plants may be infected but the structural integrity of the stalk has not been compromised to the point that it will lodge. By pinching these same plants at the base, the stalk will often crack or "feel" hollow.

Therefore, begin scouting for Stalk Rots by:

1. Randomly select 100 plants in the field
2. Remove lower leaves, pinch the stalk above the base roots
3. Then Record the number
4. Minimize stalk breakage or lodging by harvesting fields with 10-15% stalk rot early.



Typical northern leaf blight lesions.

Weather Summary



Location	Sep 13 - Sep 19 2011	Temperature (°C)		Rainfall (mm)	Heat Units CHU	Total Since May 1	
		Max	Min			Rain	CHU
Outdoor	2011	18	7.6	35	82.7	426.9	2935
Farm Show	30 Yr. Avg.	21.1	10.2	21.5	129.2	388.4	3008.8
Windsor	2011	19.6	11	54.6	122.1	632	3540.9
	30 Yr. Avg.	22.5	11.9	20.7	146.6	363.2	3266.8
Trenton	2011	18.9	6.2	12.4	90.1	283.1	3136.3
	30 Yr. Avg.	20.3	9.5	17.7	120.8	361.4	2884.9
Mount Forest	2011	16.2	5.5	22.8	69.8	283.2	2831.9
	30 Yr. Avg.	19.8	9.2	23.8	116	395.1	2788.3
London	2011	18.4	8.4	33.6	99.2	438.7	3148.5
	30 Yr. Avg.	21.2	10.5	22.2	131.5	390.4	3034.9
Hamilton	2011	19.8	6.5	17.9	96.1	300.2	3094.2
	30 Yr. Avg.	21.1	10.5	19.5	131.4	362.8	3052.3
Ottawa	2011	19.3	6.3	10.4	95.9	301.9	3118.5
	30 Yr. Avg.	20.1	9.2	16.9	117.4	398.6	2972.2
Elora	2011	16.5	5.3	19	68.6	432	2801.7
	30 Yr. Avg.	20	9.3	21.7	117.6	387	2859.2
Peterborough	2011	17.8	3.2	12.1	78.5	320.7	2920.2
	30 Yr. Avg.	20.1	8.8	18.8	115	365.9	2835.1

For more information please contact the CropLine at 1-888-449-0937 or visit www.omafra.gov.on.ca/croppest

