Issue 9 – July 17, 2025

# Manitoba Crop Pest Update

Seasonal Reports  Weekly Weather Maps  Insects

## Summary

**Insects:** **Aphids** are being noticed in some crops; generally remining below the economic thresholds, although a pea field in the Central region was treated for aphids. There are still some reports of **armyworms** in fall rye and wheat, but no reports of spraying over the past week, as some fall rye fields are getting close to swathing. Some wheat fields are showing white heads from **wheat stem maggots**.

## Entomology

### Aphid Updates

Aphid levels have remained low and so far generally not an economical concern. Aphids can reproduce quickly, and scouting during the more vulnerable stages of crops is encourages. Here is a report on what we have been seeing so far for aphids in a few field crops, the vulnerable stages, and economic thresholds.

#### Soybeans:

The first soybean aphids were reported over the past week (first report was on July 11), which is right in the middle of when we normally get our first reports (the range being July 5 to 21). So far it has just been trace levels noticed.

Examine plants to look for soybean aphids. Turn over leaves and look for aphids, caste skins, and honeydew. Soybean aphids are often attracted to new growing points of soybeans, including expanding trifoliate leaves. These are good areas to begin your assessments. Soybean aphids are not easily dislodged from plants, so sweep netting is not a recommended sampling technique.

**Most vulnerable Crop Stages**: 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.

**Economic Threshold**: 250 aphids per plant on average, and the population is increasing, and the plants are in the R1 to R5 growth stages.


#### Peas:

Pea aphids are being noticed is some pea fields but generally are remaining below economic threshold levels. There has only been one report so far of spraying for aphids in peas, that being from the Central region.

**Most vulnerable crop stages**: Scout at the beginning of flowering, either with a sweep net or assessing aphids on plant tips. If aphids are above the economic threshold, an insecticide application when 50 percent of plants have produced some young pods is the ideal timing. Once you get beyond the flat pod stage (R3), into full pod stage

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where green seeds already fill the pod cavity, controlling aphids is less likely to be economical. Sometimes the staging and decision making gets tricky as it is often not uniform across a field.
**Economic Threshold**: 9 to 12 aphids per sweep (90 to 120 if doing a 10 sweep sample), or 2 to 3 aphids per 8 inch (20 cm) plant tip on average.

### Small grain cereals (wheat, barley, oats, rye):

Aphids started to be noticed in the small grain cereals around mid-June in some regions. They continue to be at noticeable levels in some areas, but don't seem to be climbing above the economic threshold. There have been no reports of insecticide applications for aphids in small grain cereals.
**Most vulnerable crop stages:** Prior to the soft dough stage.
**Economic threshold**: 12 to 15 aphids per stem prior to the soft dough stage.

## Emergency Registration for Lygus Bug Control in Sunflowers

Carbine Insecticide was recently granted an emergency registration for the control of Lygus bugs on confection sunflowers in Manitoba. This amendment is for a period beginning July 21, 2025 and ending July 20, 2026.

## Sunflower Bud Moth

Sunflower bud moth is being noticed on sunflowers in some areas.



The frass and entrance holes from sunflower bud moth can be highly visible. However, there are no economic thresholds or insecticides registered for sunflower bud moth.

# Forecast

## Diamondback moth

A network of pheromone-baited traps were monitored across Manitoba in May and June to determine how early and in what levels populations of diamondback moth occur. Diamondback moths were found in 81 out of 93 traps that counts were reported from. There were some higher cumulative counts in traps at some locations in the Northwest and central regions, and moderate counts at some locations in the Southwest, Eastern, and Interlake regions. The last week in May and early-June was when some higher levels of moths started to arrive in some regions.

The highest cumulative trap count was 311 from a trap near Horndean in the Central region. It is good to be looking for larvae of diamondback moth when scouting canola fields. Larvae of diamondback moth began to be noticed in early-June, but only low levels of larvae have been noticed so far.

**Table 1**. Highest cumulative counts of diamondback moth (*Plutella xylostella*) in pheromone-baited traps for five agricultural regions in Manitoba in 2025.

Lower Risk: 0-25 Elevated Risk: 26-200 Higher level of moth catch: 200+

| Region | Nearest Town | Trap Count | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Northwest | North Bowsman | 254 | |
| | Togo | 133 | |
| | West Bowsman | 120 | |
| | Bowsman | 116 | |
| Southwest | Melita | 31 | |
| | Pierson | 22 | |
| | Hartney | 19 | |
| | Lyleton | 18 | |
| Central | Horndean | 311 | ← Highest cumulative count |
| | Rosenfeld | 209 | |
| | Carman | 179 | |
| | Brunkild | 111 | |
| Eastern | Ste. Anne | 87 | |
| | Anola | 32 | |
| | Tourond | 20 | |
| | Lorrette, St. Malo | 2 | |
| Interlake | Fisher Branch | 126 | |
| | Faulkner | 57 | |
| | Clandeboye | 54 | |
| | Warren | 42 | |

Highest trap counts of diamondback moth in each region and a monitoring summary are posted on the Insect Page of the Manitoba Agriculture website at: https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/diamondback-moth-trap-results.pdf

## Bertha Armyworm

The population of adult moths of bertha armyworms are being monitored during the flight and egg-laying period in June and July using pheromone-baited traps. Bertha armyworms have been found in 85 out of 86 traps that counts were reported from so far. Cumulative counts remained in the low risk category in most traps, however traps near Makaroff (Northwest), Kenton (Southwest) and Carman (Central) have increased into the uncertain risk category.

The highest cumulative trap count so far is 450 from a trap near Makaroff in the Northwest region.

**Table 2**. Highest cumulative counts of bertha armyworm (*Mamestra configurata*) in pheromone-baited traps for five agricultural regions as of July 17, 2025.

| Region | Nearest Town | Trap Count |
|---|---|---|
| Northwest | Makaroff | 450 |
| | Durban | 232 |
| | Dropmore | 136 |
| | Swan River | 127 |
| | Bield | 81 |
| Southwest | Kenton | 341 |
| | Whitehead | 232 |
| | Metigoshe | 185 |
| | Rapid City | 162 |
| | Lyleton | 159 |
| Central | Carman | 318 |
| | St. Claude | 134 |
| | Emerson | 112 |
| | Baldur | 105 |
| | Brunkild | 91 |
| Eastern | Ste. Anne | 20 |
| | Tourond | 16 |
| Interlake | Lundar | 290 |
| | Pleasant Home | 279 |
| | Broad Valley | 143 |
| | Warren | 116 |
| | Fisher Branch | 99 |

← Highest cumulative count

0-300 = low risk
300-900 = uncertain risk
900-1,200 = moderate risk
1,200+ = high risk

Highest counts in each region of Manitoba and a monitoring summary are updated weekly on the Insect Page of the Manitoba Agriculture website at: https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/bertha-armyworm-monitoring.pdf

Information on the biology of bertha armyworm and monitoring larval levels can be found at:

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https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/bertha-armyworm-factsheet.pdf

## True armyworms

Larvae of armyworms (*Mythimna unipuncta*), sometimes also called true armyworms, can cause significant feeding injury to cereals and forage grasses when levels are abundant. Adult moths of armyworms migrate to Manitoba in the spring from overwintering sites from the southern US. A network of pheromone-baited traps are being monitored from early-May until late-July to determine how early and in what levels populations of armyworms have arrive.

Armyworm moths have been caught in all 32 traps. The highest cumulative counts so far have been in the Interlake region, where there are three traps with cumulative counts between 184 and 281. All three traps in the Eastern region have cumulative counts ranging from 88 – 212. In the Southwest region, there are three traps with cumulative counts above 40.

**Table 3**. Highest cumulative counts of armyworms in pheromone-baited traps for agricultural regions in Manitoba as of July 16, 2025.

| Region | Nearest Town | Trap Count |
|---|---|---|
| Southwest | Brandon | 53 |
| | Pierson | 49 |
| | Lyleton | 44 |
| | Isabella | 21 |
| | Birtle | 12 |
| Central | Arnaud | 33 |
| | Ermerson | 3 |
| Eastern | Kleefeld | 212 |
| | New Bothwell | 163 |
| | Greenland | 88 |
| Interlake | Riverton | 281 |
| | Washow Bay | 215 |
| | Famnes | 184 |
| | Zbaraz | 70 |
| | Fisher Branch | 63 |

← Highest cumulative count

Those scouting cereals and forage grasses may want to check to see what armyworm larval levels are like in their fields. Armyworm larvae have been noticed in some fields, and there has been some control in a few fall rye fields in the Central and Interlake regions.

A map showing armyworm counts from Manitoba, Eastern Canada, and several Northeast U.S. states is available at:
https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/7164d23d488246d198dcf7a07d8c9021/page/Home/?views=Welcome.
Go to the link "TAW". The "Play" button at the bottom can be set so the map automatically advances (click middle arrow), or set to "Stop" and the arrows at either side of the button used to go forward or backward a week at a time.

# Identification Quiz

This caterpillar was found inside a leafy spurge plant like that on the right. What is it?

Photos by Abi Benson

**Answer:**

This is a larva of *Lobesia euphorbiana*, a moth released in Canada to help control leafy spurge. Its native range spans from central and south Europe to the Ukraine. The first release of *L. euphorbiana* in Manitoba was near Shilo where 75 larvae from Hungary were released in 1987. Between 1987 and 1996, 18 more releases were made in Manitoba.

The main way the *L. euphorbiana* affects the plant is by preventing flowering and seed production rather than actual feeding damage. However, repeated heavy attack kills plants. The females lay eggs on the underside of leaves. Five to six days later, the eggs hatch and the larvae roll leaves together forming a tube in which they feed, mainly on the terminal bud. As the larvae develop, they wrap additional leaves and florets into this tube. About 26 days after the eggs are laid, the larvae pupate within the tube. The vacated tied up leaves often receive secondary attack from thrips and aphids.

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
Kim Brown, Weed Specialist (431) 344-0239

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