

Issue 13 – August 13, 2026

Manitoba Crop Pest Update



[Seasonal Reports](#)

[Weekly Weather Maps](#)

[Insects](#)

Summary

Insects: **Soybean aphids** have reached threshold levels in some soybean fields in the Central region, and some insecticide applications have occurred. Soybean aphid levels have also increased to noticeable levels in some soybean fields in the Southwest, Eastern and Interlake regions, although there are no reports of spraying from these regions. Some high **Lygus bug** levels have been found in canola in the Interlake region. **Grasshoppers** are noticeable along field edges in some areas, although populations and feeding damage have so far been light; an exception being a soybean field in the Eastern region where grasshoppers were controlled.

Diseases: No major disease concerns were reported this week. **Fusarium head blight** (FHB) and **ergot** are being observed in some spring wheat fields; however, disease levels remain generally low, and grower concerns regarding FHB have been minimal. **Crown rust** was reported in one oat field in the Southwest region. Some canola fields are beginning to show above-ground stem striping symptoms associated with **Verticillium stripe**. This development is expected, as early infections have been detected in crown cross-sections during recent field assessments. **Sclerotinia stem rot** was also observed in one canola field in the Southwest region. In addition, **bacterial blight** was reported in one pea field. Overall, disease pressure remains low across the province, with only isolated reports of disease issues this week.

Weeds: **Waterhemp** is rearing its ugly head – literally – as we start to see it sticking up above the crop canopies. Investigate any tall weed you see in your fields, and if it's waterhemp then remove it. Waterhemp has been positively identified near Arborg in the RM of Bifrost-Riverton. This is an entirely new area and as much as 2,500 acres could be affected. Waterhemp is believed to have moved into the area through equipment coming up from south-central Manitoba.

Entomology

Soybean Aphids – Monitoring Tips, Threshold and Susceptible Stages

Monitoring Tips:

- When soybean aphid levels are high, exact counts are not possible and would consume too much time. Estimates after a quick examination of the plant will be sufficient. If aphid populations are high, it may be helpful to estimate aphids in categories, with increments of 50 or 100 aphids.
- Randomly select plants to do estimates on. If you look for plants with lots of aphids on them to do your estimates on, your estimates will not reflect the average population in the field. Soybean aphid populations can occur in pockets of higher levels, with many of the surrounding plants having very little or no soybean aphids on them. Finding a few pockets of higher levels in the field may not necessarily be a cause for alarm, but do keep watching the overall levels and how well things seem to be regulated.

Report compiled by John Gavloski, Entomologist; Simon Huang, Field Crop Pathologist; Kim Brown, Weeds Specialist, Manitoba Agriculture. [Subscribe](#) to the weekly Crop Pest Update



Action Threshold (where insecticide application is recommended to prevent economic loss) is:

- 250 aphids per plant on average, the population is increasing, and the plants are in the 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.

This threshold provides about a 7-day lead time before aphid populations are expected to exceed the economic injury level (670 aphids per plant), where cost of control is equal to yield loss.

Estimating yield loss from soybean aphids: The studies that were the basis for the action threshold for soybean aphid provide information on the amount of yield loss to expect from high populations of soybean aphids. The unit used to measure aphid feeding in the study is called aphid-days; an aphid-day being one aphid feeding for one day. Ten aphid-days could be 10 aphids feeding for one day, or one aphid feeding for 10 days.

The studies found that yield was reduced by 6.88% for every 10,000 aphid-days accumulated (Ragsdale et al. 2007. Journal of Economic Entomology. Vol. 100: 1258-1267). Thus, if there were 500 aphids per plant on average, feeding for 20 days, a yield loss of roughly 7% could be expected.



Soybean aphids

The white specks on the leaf are shed skins from aphids that have molted. Don't count these as aphids.

Emergency Registration for Avian Control in Sunflowers

Avian control, a bird repellent, has again received an emergency registration in sunflowers. The emergency registration is for the reduction in damage by blackbirds to sunflowers in Manitoba from August 18, 2026 until August 17, 2027. Avian Control can be applied up to the day of harvest, and is registered for ground or aerial application. Do not apply if rain is expected.

Note that the active ingredient, methyl anthranilate, may result in plant damage, such as leaf discoloration or leaf burn. It is recommended that a small group of plants be treated at the use rate and observed for 5-7 days to determine if damage occurs before treating a large number of plants.

We are looking for use information or observations on Avian Control. For example: how effective was it, was coverage an issue with aerial application, any challenges, any crop injury issues, etc. If anyone does use Avian Control on sunflowers, and is interested in providing feedback, that would be appreciated.

Diseases

FHB and ergot in spring wheat



Heads infected with FHB and ergot.
Photo Courtesy: Amir Farooq. Manitoba Agriculture.

Canola Diseases



Verticillium stripe in canola
Canola stem striping symptoms.
Photo Courtesy: Sheila Elder.



Sclerotinia stem rot in canola
Fruiting bodies Sclerotia found inside a canola stem.
Agronomist Team, A1 Agronomy.

Bacterial blight in field peas



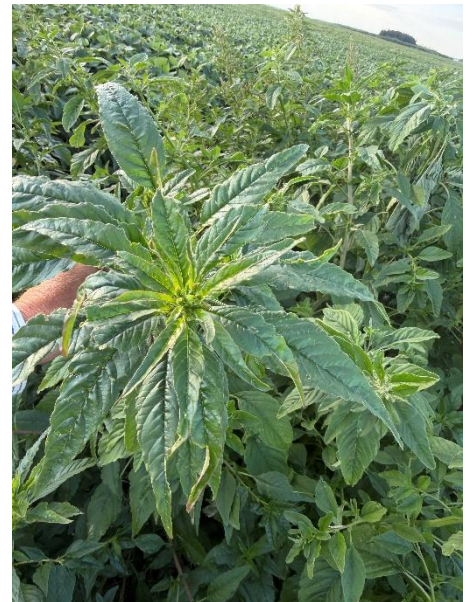
Bacterial blight observed in pea pods.
Photo Courtesy: Lionel Kaskiw. Manitoba Agriculture.

Weeds

Waterhemp

Waterhemp is a prolific seed producer. On average they produce 300,000 seeds and bigger plants can have a million or more viable seeds. Even one plant that is allowed to set seed will drastically alter the future of a field and your weed control program from now on. Remove plants now before it adds to the weed seedbank.

Look for tall pigweed plants that are hairless and the stems will feel very smooth. Leaves can be long and narrow and a brighter green than redroot pigweed, and appear pointsettia-like when looking down at the top of the plant.



Seedheads are long and snaky, very different from redroot pigweed which are short and compact like a bottle brush. Coloring can be different from plant to plant – some have very red stems while others are green. As seedheads become visible they can also be red or green. Here are some pictures of some of our recent finds:

Forecast

Grasshopper survey

A reminder for those participating in the grasshopper survey that counts are done during August, when the majority of grasshoppers are in the adult stage.

Agronomists and farmers who would also be interested in estimating grasshopper numbers in or around any of the fields they are in, and having this information included in the survey, are encouraged to see the survey protocol (at the link below) for more details of the survey and where to send data. Your counts would be welcomed.

Estimates of grasshopper levels can be collected during regular farm visits. "Estimates" of grasshopper populations is stressed as it is often not possible to accurately count grasshoppers along a field edge or ditch area as they will be moving around as you get near the area of the count. However, estimates of what is present gives us some idea of the relative numbers that are present in different areas.

Data from the survey, along with weather data during the egg laying period of the grasshoppers, will be used to produce a grasshopper forecast for 2027.

The protocol and data sheet for the grasshopper survey is at:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/insects/pubs/grasshopper-survey-protocol.pdf>

Identification Quiz

Question: This was inside a canola stem. What are the orange insect larvae, and what is the white stuff they are on.



Photo by Courtney Misko

Answer: The insects in this photo are larvae of a species of gall midge (Cecidomyiidae) called white-mold gall midge (*Karshomyia caulicola*). Gall midges are a fairly big family of flies, with 19 species occurring in Manitoba and 198 species in Canada. Some crop pests in this family include wheat midge, Hessian fly, sunflower midge and canola flower midge. There are also some predaceous species, and some species feed on decaying organic matter and fungi (which is what you are seeing here). White-mold gall midge occurs after the onset of white mold, or sclerotinia as it is known in canola.

In soybean fields in some parts of the United States, the white-mold gall midge can be confused with the soybean gall midge, *Resseliella maxima*, which can be a pest. Luckily, soybean gall midge has never been found in Manitoba. The following has some information on identifying white-mold gall midge from soybean gall midge:

[How to distinguish soybean gall midge from white mold gall midge \(umn.edu\)](http://www.umn.edu/extension/soybean_gall_midge/)

Anyone suspecting they have soybean gall midge in Manitoba, please contact me (John Gavloski).

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

Simon Huang, Field Crop Pathologist (204) 750-4248