

## Mid-Season Crop Condition Report

August 8, 2019

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On Thursday August 8, 2019, we began a crop tour at the Saginaw Valley Research and Extension Center (SVREC) in Richville, MI. The purpose of this crop tour was to assess the condition and progress of the 2019 dry bean crop. From Richville we travelled North East towards the Unionville and then to the Collings area of Tuscola County. From here we continued East to the McGregor area between Sandusky and Deckerville in Sanilac County. After visiting Sanilac County we headed North into the Eastern side of Huron County near Ruth. From the Ruth area we continued into Northern Huron County and then West to the Pigeon area of Western Huron County. From Pigeon we traveled back South near Caro and eventually returning to the SVREC. Trips to Bay, Gratiot and Montcalm County have been made in the days prior to and after the August 8<sup>th</sup> tour to assess the crop and trials in these areas.

### Tuscola County Crop Condition- Average

Tuscola County's dry bean crop is in **average condition**. In Tuscola County we visited both a strip trial planted on Ackerman Road in Northern Tuscola County and the county variety trial near Collings. The strip trial planted on July 1 had not yet flowered yet (39 days after planting) and was used as an indicator for planting date as we travelled around the Thumb. However, excellent stands and good growth were observed at this late planted strip trial. While the county variety trial was planted earlier (June 9), 1.6 inches of rainfall occurred on June 10 and emergence was not as consistent as the later planted strip trial. Trials planted at SVREC are in average condition in Tuscola County, while planting conditions here were not ideal, good emergence did occur and rains have continued to move the crop along.

### Sanilac County Crop Condition- Average

Sanilac County's dry bean crop is in **average condition**. Areas visited in Sanilac County have seen timely rains facilitating good vegetative bean growth. In comparison to the other rain-fed county variety trials the Sanilac County variety trial is in the best condition for a non-irrigated trial as pictured in Image 1.

### Huron County Crop Condition- Average to Above Average

Huron County's dry bean crop is in average, to **above average** condition. It was notable that a considerable number of fields appeared to be planted in the third and fourth week of June. Generally, most of Huron County has received timely rains although not excessive. The driest area in Huron County appears to be within in 4-5 miles of Pigeon area, in this area, moisture is limiting bean growth. Crop condition appears



**Image 1.** Dry Beans in McGregor, MI growing very well with adequate moisture

to improve as you travel closer to Sebewaing and the Owendale-Gagetown area, we believe this is a product of better rainfall through this region. On this tour of Huron County, we did not travel in the South-Central region of the County (Ubyly- Bad Axe). In previous trips though this South-Central region we have observed good stands of dry beans. Root Rots have been documented in trials in this county as well and will be discussed in greater detail in the General Comments (Image 2).

### Bay, Gratiot and Montcalm County

While our travels into the dry bean growing areas of these counties has been limited and limits us from making county wide comments on crop condition, we will comment on the condition of the trials located in these counties. The variety trial in Bay County near Kawkawlin is the driest trial we have in the state. Moisture is limiting vegetative growth greatly at this location. Moisture is needed in this location for us to better assess varietal differences.

The variety trial located in Gratiot county is in **average condition**. While Potato Leaf Hopper (PLH) has not been wide spread across the state in great numbers, this trial did require two application of insecticide for control of PLH (Image 3). The high level of PLH in this trial and surrounding field can be attributed to a large alfalfa field in close proximity. Farther to the West the Montcalm County variety trial is in **above average condition**. This trial is the only irrigated county variety trial, all others are rain-fed.

### General Comments

As expected, given the planting condition in 2019, Michigan's dry bean crop is planted later than normal. For some of these late plantings to reach full maturity and optimum yield, we will require frost free conditions until between October 5<sup>th</sup> and October 10<sup>th</sup>. On earlier planted dry beans we have observed Root Rots setting in and causing plant death in cases. While this Root Rot does not generally impact yield on a large scale, small areas in a field can be severely



*Image 2.* Root Rot causing plant death and subsequent stand loss near Ruth, MI



*Image 3.* Potato leaf hoppers visible on the underside of an injured leaf in Gratiot County

impacted if late season stand loss is great enough. We infer that this Root Rot is a combination of both Rhizoctonia and Pythium, Post Emergence fungicide applications do not aid in management of these diseases (Image 2 and 4). Trials planted in Bay, Tuscola and SVREC have stand loss attributed to Root Rot in 2019.

It is also noted that a large number of Michigan's dry bean acres currently have had fungicide or will have a fungicide applied for the management of White Mold in 2019. This indicated that Growers are optimistic about the potential of the 2019 dry bean crop and that overall dry bean growth is good. The USDA report released on August 12, 2019 estimated Michigan's dry bean crop at 22 CWT/A. While predictions on yield are difficult at this point in the season with a late planted crop, that in some cases has not set pods yet, we believe that the USDA estimate is optimistic. A combination of factors causes concern for a 22 CWT/A state average yield, including: poor soil conditions at planting (excessive moisture in areas of planted fields), compaction still visible in bean growth from equipment (tillage and planting), onset of Root Rot in early planted dry beans, and the late planting date of many acres. For Michigan's dry bean crop to reach this bench mark of 22 CWT/A both mild fall conditions, and timely rains are needed to facilitate a dry bean crop of this quantity.



*Image 4.* Plant death and stand loss from Root Rot at SVREC