

## CROP PRODUCTION UPDATE

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<http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/seasonalreports.html>

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### Edible Beans

Harvest for edible beans is now complete. Edible bean acres saw a dramatic decrease in the 2011 growing season. This was due to an increase in competing commodity prices and a decrease in average bean yields the last two years. Acres in 2011 were pegged at 51,182 which were down from 2010's 145,825 acres based on MASC reported acres. There was also a reduction in acres due to the wet spring. Growing conditions during the rest of the summer were warm and dry which seemed to keep most disease issues at bay. There were isolated reports of anthracnose this year which were linked to poor rotations (beans on beans). Bacterial blight was not a big concern this year. There were no economic losses reported due to bacterial blight. The quality of the early harvested beans was very good. There were reports of frost damage ranging from 2 to 8 % which was dependent on bean variety and planting date. Yields in Manitoba were as expected based on the growing conditions for the season. Edible bean yields ranged from 1500 to 2100 lbs/acre for pintos, 1400 to 2000 lbs/acre for navy beans, and 1400 to 2000 lbs/acre. Overall Manitoba saw a better than average edible bean year.

### Fruit Crops

Strawberry harvest period was near normal starting last week of June until mid-July. Yields were average to above average, with good berry size overall. Application of fungicides for prevention of fruit rot was more common in the spring due to the early wet conditions. All farms experienced good volume of u-pick/pre-pick customers throughout the picking season. Loss of several strawberry fields due to flooding resulted in shortage of supply in those regions.

In saskatoon orchards, a wet spring and early summer resulted in leaf and berry spot disease occurring in many orchards that did not have fungicide applied or were unable to apply fungicide in a timely manner. Yields were average to below average. Normal harvest time occurred from mid to late July.

Most raspberries farms experienced a normal picking season, starting in mid July and continuing until early August. Yields were above average again this season, although not as large as 2010. Few insect or disease issues other than sap beetles in over-ripe berries and cane blight in high cane density raspberry rows with little air flow.

### Hay/Winter Feed

Tame hay harvesting continues but is winding down. Producers not

grazing the final cut of the year are harvesting previously inaccessible fields to build winter feed reserves. Yields range from below average to above depending on the area. Tame hay yields were strong on the first cut with average quality; however without summer rains the majority of the second cut was low in yield and higher in quality. The extended fall growing season may provide an additional cut for some, although yields will be low due to the extended dry conditions. Native hay yields were surprisingly high for many producers, with well below average quality. Straw will be in short supply this feeding season. Corn silage harvest continues with average to above average yields. Greenfeed yields were below average given that much of it was seeded late followed by below average precipitation; some of these were harvested as grain. Greenfeed quality will vary as much of the late seeded crop was affected to a degree by a mid-September frost. Some of it is recovering, the remainder may contain concerning levels of nitrates – all annual forages should be tested before feeding.

### Pastures

Below seasonal rainfall levels has left many pastures across the province very dry; producers are feeding on pasture to delay the trip home – in some cases a quarter of



the producers are feeding earlier than usual. Alternatively, low lying pastures along water bodies are still flooded or saturated and inaccessible. Where available, cattle are grazing grain stubble to delay feeding.

## Potatoes

The harvest of the 2011 potato crop is nearing completion. The 2011 growing season provided a number of challenges to potato growers. A cool spring combined with wet conditions meant later planting dates for many producers. Flooding along some of Manitoba's rivers and lakes resulted in some producers having to make last minute changes to where they would grow potatoes in 2011. High water levels from the 2011 Manitoba flood caused problems for some producers in accessing their irrigation water sources. The potato crop in Manitoba will yield close to the long term average this year. The yield for the past 5 years has been above the long term average, so producing a crop closer to the long term average is a lower yield than what Manitoba growers were targeting in the spring.

## Soybeans

Soybean harvest is mostly completed except for a few fields which had some issues with green seed. To summarize, the year covers a number of issues with the biggest going from too wet in spring

and turning too dry in the summer. Both of these affected overall yields and the amount of yield reduction varied from field to field. Root rot was connected to the excess moisture issue and plants affected did not handle the dry-hot weather as well as the healthy plants. The wet spring did not allow for proper timing of rolling. A number of growers inquired about rolling after the crop emerged and some did roll at the unifoliate to first trifoliate stage with good results.

Weeds which thrive under wet conditions needed more attention this past season than those which prefer dry soil. The majority of soybeans grown are *Roundup Ready* varieties so growers were able to control weeds with an extra spray or using another combination of chemical with the glyphosate.

Soybean aphid numbers exceeded the threshold for spraying in some fields. Some fields not sprayed had aphid numbers close to threshold and with help of beneficial insects did not require any insecticide applications.

Yields varied throughout the province, from 15 to 47 bu/acre with an overall average of 30 to 35 bu/acre. The early maturing varieties had no issues with quality however frost damage was noticeable on fields that were planted late or where longer season varieties were grown. These beans had a greenish tinge to them at harvest but should turn yellow overtime in storage. The amount of

green seeds depends on seeding date, days to maturity, and how many low spots in field.

## Vegetable Crops

The unseasonably warm weather last week slowed the harvest of some crops that were being put into storage, such as carrots, which require cool air temperatures for optimum storage conditions. A rapid cooling of carrots after harvest is very important for reducing storage rots. Therefore some carrot producers were only able to harvest until noon to ensure good storage quality. The fewer hours harvesting each day will add more days to the carrot harvesting season. For additional detail please see the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs factsheet entitled "Long-Term Storage of Carrots", which can be found at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/engineer/facts/98-073.htm>

Sampling for aster leafhoppers last week showed all the conventional fields were below the economic threshold for control. The one organic field sampled was above the economic threshold. Transmission of the aster yellows virus will not be likely if the carrots are to be harvested within the next two weeks. If harvest is to take place after two weeks, then control measures should be considered.