

# MB Sunflower Crop Report



*"Pop up thundershowers with the high humidity are keeping soils wet and significantly increasing the risk for Sclerotinia outbreak in sunflower".*

## Report 11

Monday, August 9, 2010

### Staging

R-3 to R-7. Highlights from the Manitoba Crop Weather Report (May 1st to August 1st) include;

Region	% Normal GDD	% Normal Rainfall	Actual Rainfall (mm)
Dugald	105	150	329
Morden	89	144	311
Treherne	100	132	280
Melita	95	148	289
Souris	100	180	359
Overall	Normal	Above Normal	

### Weeds

Biennial Wormwood (Fig 1) has become a bigger problem in sunflower in 2010. This weed thrives in high moisture conditions and has been found in a higher percentage of sunflower fields in 2010 compared to 2009. Season long emergence, adaptation to all tillage systems and natural tolerance to common herbicides make this a difficult to manage weed in sunflower. It should not be mistaken for Common Ragweed.

### Insects

While the majority of sunflower crops across the province are in the middle of flowering, it is still important to monitor the level of seed damaging insects. When neighboring canola and alfalfa fields are being swathed, Lygus bugs will be moving into sunflower fields. If fields were sprayed at early flower (R-5.1), a second application 7-10 days later may be required if levels become economical again.

### Disease

Sunflower rust has been observed and reported on the upper leaves. Fungicide applications have been taking place at early flower in some fields while others are choosing not to treat due to below threshold levels. Disease progression has been slow despite favorable conditions.

Symptoms of Sclerotinia Wilt, Mid Stalk and Head Rot (Fig 2 and 3) are being observed at relatively low levels but are expected to increase. Sporadic rain showers and thunderstorms continue to pop up across the province keeping soil moisture high and significantly increasing disease risk. The only registered product for control of Sclerotinia in sunflower is the bio-fungicide Contans®. This is a long term, preventative product that reduces levels of sclerotia in the soil. *It must be applied at least 3 months prior to disease outbreak therefore planning for next year should be done this fall.* For more information visit; <http://www.uap.ca/products/documents/0820-10019UAPContansBrochureFinal5.pdf>

### Limiting Factors High Disease Risk (Sclerotinia)



**Fig 1.** Biennial Wormwood infestation in a sunflower field.



**Fig 2.** Sclerotinia Wilt. Infection of roots occurs through soil.



**Fig 3.** Sclerotinia Head Rot (L) and Mid Stalk (R). Both initiated by air borne ascospores.