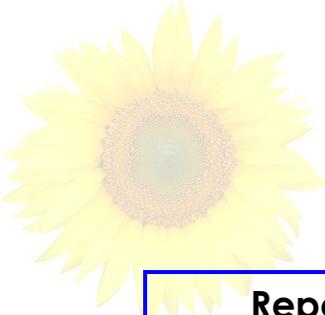




MB Sunflower Crop Report



"Sunflower acres are increasing in Alberta with approximately 4500 acres planted this season. A cool, wet spring hindered seeding in Alberta, but plants are growing well in the recent arrival of heat."

Report 4

Thursday, June 30 2011

Staging

Seeding was also hindered in many regions of Alberta due to wet conditions. Planting dates ranged from May 6 to May 25, and staging currently is between V6 and V14. Plant populations are between 14000-18000 plants/acre. The crop is slightly more advanced in the Northern Sunflower growing region around Brooks. Most acres are seeded to 6946 and some to 6950. The crop is ahead of last year by a week to ten days. Last years crop was 3 weeks late in many areas due to a wet spring.

Insects

There was evidence of cutworm damage, however damage was minimal and contained within a small area. Cutworms are reaching the end of their larval stages and feeding is slowing down. No evidence of sunflower beetle damage.

Weeds

Weed control included fall or spring Edge or pre-seed Authority. In-crop herbicide applications have been made on most fields, primarily consisting of Assert and Centurion. In crop tillage is being performed in many fields this week to kill any weeds that escaped the herbicide application and to aerate the plant roots. Tillage regimes include zero-tillage, strip tillage, ridge tillage, and conventional tillage. Most problematic weeds include volunteer canola, false ragweed, wild buckwheat and wild sunflowers. Weed control is generally excellent.

Disease

No downy mildew or rust pustules were found in the fields to date. Scouting for rust continues as weather conditions are conducive.

Irrigation

Some pivots were turned on for a minimal amount after applying Edge or Authority to ensure activation. Many of the pivots have not been turned on yet over the crop. It is expected that irrigation may start soon once soil moisture is below 60% in the top two feet.



Assert symptoms on volunteer canola. Symptoms start as yellowing of the newest leaves in 3 to 10 days and discoloration of the plant in 1 to 3 weeks.



Strip-till in sunflowers. Tillage of the seed bed helped increase soil temperature for seed emergence, whereas the trash minimized weeds.



Wild sunflower is characterized by slightly wavy leaf margins, are very dark green, and stems covered with short hairs.