

MB Sunflower Crop Report

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Monday, June 10, 2013

Intro

The Surveillance Survey is underway for the 2013 season! Planting conditions have been variable across the province with fluctuating rainfall amounts. It is predicted that 75-80% of sunflower acres are planted to date, with acreage expected to be similar to last year.

This year's surveillance survey will be of a slightly reduced format. This summer, the NSAC along with MAFRI have hired a summer student, Danitra Warkentin who will focus 60% of her time on sunflowers. Danitra will focus on surveying the sunflower crop throughout Manitoba with reports prepared twice a month. Growers interested in signing up their fields for the surveillance survey, please email (info@canadasunflower.com) or call (204) 745-6776 with field legal land descriptions.

Insects

There has been reporting's of cutworm damage in sunflower fields. Cutworm damage can be observed by walking along a row and looking for missing plants or plants. Cutworm damage can vary among species (there are 3 species of cutworms in MB) from defoliation to cut off plants. Scouting should begin as soon as plants emerge, and should be checked at least twice per week.

If you suspect cutworm activity, dig around the plant to see if you can find any larvae. The larvae are nocturnal, and can often they can be found within the top 1 to 2 to inches of soil around the plant. Cutworms can likely be found in every field, however the economic threshold is 25-30% stand reduction.

If spraying, it should be done as late in the day as possible (cutworms are night feeders) and efficacy should be assessed 4-5 days following application.

Weeds

Sunflower are not very competitive in the early stages of growth, and weed control should be conducted early. Flushes of emerging weeds can be expected with the passing rain showers being experienced in areas of the province. The most common weed seedlings emerging in sunflower fields which escaped pre-emerge herbicide applications include volunteer cereals, volunteer canola, wild mustard and Canada thistle.

Disease

None observed. Diseases to look out for as crop stage advances: Downy Mildew (particularly in cool, wet conditions) and early signs of rust infection.



Figure 1. Cutworm defoliation on a sunflower cotyledon.



Figure 2. Redbacked and darksided cutworms can defoliate and cut off plants.



Figure 3. Many fields are just starting to emerge across the province.