

MB Sunflower Crop Report

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Thursday, August 14, 2014

STAGING

The sunflower crop continues to soak up the hot temperatures over the past two weeks and development is in the R6 stage for early planted crop and in the R4-R5 stage for later planted sunflowers.

INSECTS

Lygus bug (Fig. 1) nymphs and adults continues to be found, as counts in some areas are at or above economic threshold. (1 adult per 9 heads) Damage can occur until the seed shells have hardened sufficiently for the insect to no longer penetrate the shell, which starts at the R6-R7 stage.

In some fields, a second application may be warranted.

DISEASE

Sunflower Rust (Fig. 2) in the economical stage (uredia) has been observed and reported on the bottom four leaves. This stage appears as cinnamon red/brown pustules which protrude from the leaf surface and rub off. The pustules will generally appear first on the lower leaves and move up that plant as new spores are produced. The upper three to four leaves of sunflower plants are responsible for the majority of photosynthesis and contribute the most to yield. You want to protect the upper leaves from rust infection during flowering to minimize yield impact.

Sclerotinia (Fig. 3) is increasing across the province; however is still low in incidence. Most fields have had or will have at least one application of fungicide for control of Sclerotinia. Incidences of sclerotinia may increase depending on favourable weather which can include morning dew that remains on the back of the head for more than 3 hours. A second fungicide application may be warranted to control the disease. Consult your local retailer and the product label for details.

As the crop continues to progress, now is the time to consider whether to **Desiccate** your sunflower crop. Desiccation is used to quicken dry-down of sunflower heads. Desiccation is effective before a killing frost in enhancing head dry-down but should not be applied before the back of the head turns yellow.

Photos



Figure 1. The economic threshold for lygus bug in sunflower is 1 adult lygus bug (above) per 9 sunflower heads.



Figure 2. Sunflower rust continues to develop at low levels in the low canopy of the sunflower crop.



Figure 3. Scout for developing head rot to determine incidence and if desiccation will be required to prevent significant losses.