

# Pest & Crop Newsletter

Purdue Cooperative Extension Service  
and USDA-NIFA Extension IPM Grant



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## VIDEO: Scouting Western Bean Cutworm Post-Whorl, Possible But Tedious

(Christian Krupke) & (John Obermeyer)

The vast majority of cornfields in the northwestern counties of Indiana have reached or have passed pollination. However, we know from past year's data that western bean cutworm moths are still flying and laying eggs. In the last week or so, scouting emphasis should shift from sampling for egg masses in pre-tassel corn to finding early instar (VERY tiny and elusive) larvae in the ear zone of pollinated corn. The following video will hopefully assist you in scouting for and understanding this pest while it attempts to establish in developing corn ears. Remember, this is a pest that requires scouting to manage properly. The vast majority of Bt corn hybrids planted currently will **not** offer control of these larvae. Insecticides (i.e. pyrethroids) work well, but timing is the key. The eggs and emerging larvae have to be contacted with sprays, either directly at the time of spraying, or by exposure via walking on residues on the leaves. These tiny larvae are the most vulnerable stage, and if/when they survive the initial walk from the egg mass to leaf axils and eventually the developing ear, control is difficult if not impossible. Bottom line: [scouting](#) and timely insecticide treatments at a 5% threshold are your only reliable option.

[Youtube video: Scouting Western Bean Cutworm Post-Whorl Corn](#)



Finger pointing to young western bean cutworm larva crawling through the silks and soon down to the kernels. (Photo Credit: John Obermeyer)



Newly hatched western bean cutworm larva feeding on pollen in the leaf axil before the journey to the ear. (Photo Credit: John Obermeyer)

## 2024 Corn Earworm Trap Report

(Laura Ingwell)

## 2024 Corn Earworm Trap Report

**Click here for  
recent catch  
information**



A late-maturing orchardgrass is the best choice when alfalfa or red clover are part of a mixture and the intentions are hay or silage. (Photo Credit: Purdue University Diagnostic Training and Research Center)

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## Episode 68: Tissue Sampling, Scouting, & Progress

(Shaun Casteel) & (Dan Quinn)

The Purdue Crop Chat is a regular podcast from Hoosier Ag Today and the Purdue University Extension Service, featuring Purdue Extension soybean specialist Dr. Shaun Casteel and Extension Corn Specialist Dr. Dan Quinn. On this episode, Shaun and Dan welcome Dr. Bill Johnson, professor of weed science at Purdue and new Extension Weed Scientist Dr. Tommy Butts, who discuss weed strategies to kick off the season. This podcast is made possible by the Indiana Corn Marketing Council and Indiana Soybean Alliance. Your Indiana corn and soybean checkoff investments yesterday are paying off today. New research, new uses, demand creation — bringing dollars back to the farm. Check it out at [YourCheckoff.org](http://YourCheckoff.org).

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## Why Some Producers Complain About Stemmy Orchardgrass Hay

(Keith Johnson)

Every year I hear complaints from producers about orchardgrass being stemmy when in a mixture with alfalfa or red clover and harvested as first-cutting hay. Orchardgrass became the prevalent cool-season grass to include in a mixture with alfalfa more than three decades ago; it replaced smooth brome grass as the grass species of choice because smooth brome grass cannot survive the rigor of four cuttings in a growing season. As we learned more about forage quality-animal performance relationships, many producers desired four alfalfa or alfalfa-orchardgrass harvests in a season to obtain higher quality hay for their livestock.

What producers must realize is that there is a vast difference in maturity among orchardgrass varieties on a given date in the spring. Orchardgrass maturity stage notes for nine varieties were taken in late May many years ago at the Agronomy Center for Research and Education, West Lafayette. Maturity stage ranged from an average of 3.75 nodes able to be felt by touch (preheading) to pollen shed.

Early maturing varieties do not match up well when grown in a mixture with alfalfa or red clover. Alfalfa and red clover may be in early- to mid-bud when an early-maturing orchardgrass is shedding pollen. As forages progress from vegetative to seed producing stages, they increase in fiber content and leaf-to-stem ratio decreases; thus, they do become “stemmy” and of lower nutritional value. *Ideally, a grass-legume mixture when harvested as hay or silage would be at similar growth stage and not have a week or more difference in maturity.*

A late-maturing orchardgrass is the best choice when alfalfa or red clover are part of a mixture and the intentions are hay or silage. An early-maturing orchardgrass is best utilized when grown singly or used as pasture with the intentions of beginning the grazing season at an earlier date than what can be accomplished with other forage species or later maturing orchardgrass varieties.

Many producers will be selecting alfalfa and orchardgrass varieties soon for an August seeding. Make sure to ask the seed personnel about the maturity of the orchardgrass varieties they have on hand to meet your objectives.

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## This Sunday Is National Ice Cream Day!!

(Keith Johnson)

Why bring up that Sunday is National Ice Cream Day? Because dairy cows are fed forage, corn and soybean feedstuffs (and more) to produce the milk that is turned into a delicacy that especially is satisfying on a hot July day.

Our colleagues at Cornell University shared these facts as we all “scream for ice cream”!

- In 1984, President Ronald Reagan designated July as National Ice Cream Month and the third Sunday of the month as National Ice Cream Day. In the proclamation, President Reagan called for all people of the United States to observe these events with

“appropriate ceremonies and activities.”

- Vanilla is the number one flavor. Most of the vanilla that is used to make ice cream comes from Madagascar and Indonesia
- California produces the most ice cream in America.
- It takes about 50 licks to finish a single scoop of ice cream.
- “Brain Freeze” occurs when ice cream touches the roof of your mouth.
- Ice cream is a frozen blend of a sweetened cream mixture and air, with added flavorings. It must contain at least 10% milk fat, 20% total milk solids, and may contain safe and suitable sweeteners, emulsifiers and stabilizers, and other flavoring materials.
- A cow gives enough milk to make approximately 2 gallons of ice cream per day. That’s 730 gallons of ice cream per year!
- It takes 3 gallons of milk to make 1 gallon of ice cream.
- Almost 9% of all milk produced in the U.S is used to make ice cream.

Share a photo on the Indiana Forage Council’s Facebook page of how you will celebrate this great holiday!



## Recent Rain Improves Drought Across Indiana

(Beth Hall)

Since the start of July, most of Indiana has received at least 2 inches with up to 8 inches of precipitation (Figure 1). Except for southeastern and east-central Indiana, this precipitation has been well above normal (Figure 2). As a result, most locations have seen an improvement in the U.S. Drought Monitor (Figure 3). There are only a few counties categorized as *Abnormally Dry (D0)* with the rest of the state considered to be in *No Drought* status. The recent storms, however, brought a wide range of impacts from power outages and flooding, to downed trees and structural damage, to even a preliminarily designated tornado or two (still under official assessment). We hope that everyone made it through the events safely and any impacts to agricultural production were minimal.

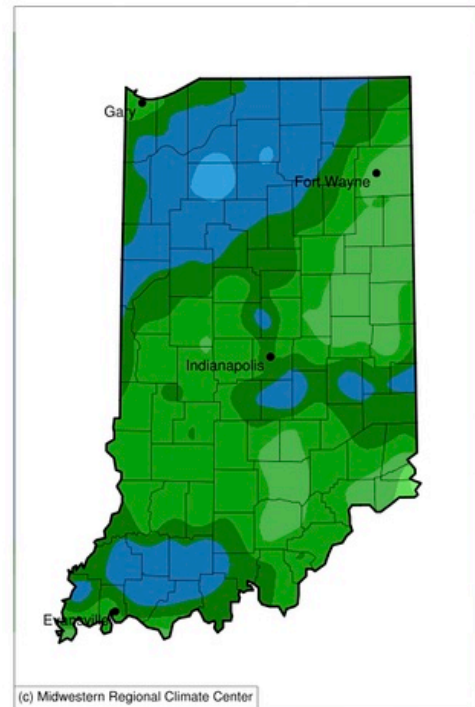


Figure 1. Total precipitation from July 1-17, 2024 in inches.

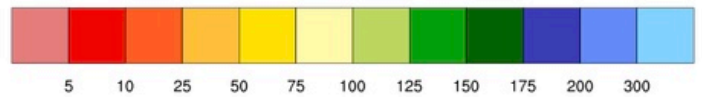
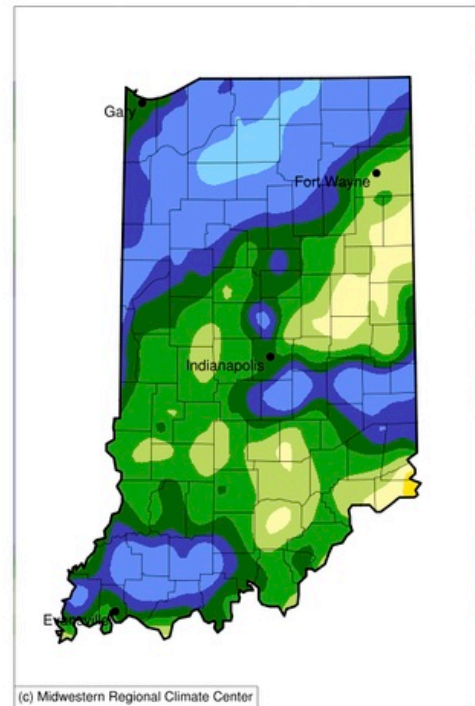
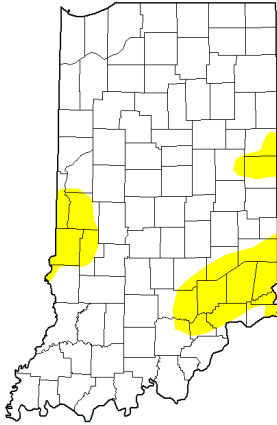


Figure 2. Percent of the 1991-2020 climate normal period for rainfall that fell from July 1-17, 2024.

**U.S. Drought Monitor  
Indiana**



**July 16, 2024**  
(Released Thursday, Jul. 18, 2024)  
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	87.93	12.97	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week 07-09-2024	35.17	64.83	12.84	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 04-18-2024	93.59	6.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-01-2024	10.70	89.30	81.12	12.88	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-30-2023	1.38	98.62	85.30	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 07-18-2023	23.40	76.60	23.98	0.00	0.00	0.00

**Intensity:**  
 None (white)      D2 Severe Drought (orange)  
 D0 Abnormally Dry (yellow)      D3 Extreme Drought (red)  
 D1 Moderate Drought (light orange)      D4 Exceptional Drought (dark red)

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

**Author:**  
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National Drought Mitigation Center



[droughtmonitor.unl.edu](http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu)

Figure 3. U.S. Drought Monitor for data through Tuesday, July 16, 2024.

Looking ahead, things should stay dry throughout the weekend with a chance of rainfall returning the first half of next week. Southern and eastern Indiana should benefit the most from those upcoming events (Figure 4). Over the next few weeks, temperatures are expected to stay near normal with a slight probability of above-normal precipitation.



Figure 4. Forecasted precipitation total (inches) for July 18-25, 2024.

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