THE
EARFULL

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RENK • SEED

Crop Progress

Corn Development Accelerates Through Reproductive Stages

Corn across the Upper Midwest is advancing quickly through pollination and into early grain fill. While development is generally ahead of average, Michigan and Wisconsin fields remain slightly behind due to cool spring weather and later planting.

State	Silking (%)	Dough (%)	Condition (% G+E)
IA	63%	18%	86%
IL	76%	13%	70%
NE	64%	31%	78%
MN	54%	2%	77%
SD	36%	2%	77%
ND	24%	—	89%
WI	31%	2%	61%
MI	36%	9%	59%

- Iowa and Nebraska lead in both progress and condition.
- North Dakota shows excellent crop health but is behind in development.
- Michigan and Wisconsin continue to lag with lower maturity and condition ratings.

Soybeans Progressing with Strong Bloom and Pod Set

Soybean bloom and pod set are advancing across the region, with nearly one-third podded in NE, IA, and MN. Southern states are gaining momentum, while Dakotas remain slower to advance.

State	Blooming (%)	Setting Pods (%)	Condition (% G+E)
IA	71%	28%	80%
NE	73%	31%	73%
MN	70%	27%	75%
IL	64%	26%	60%
SD	50%	15%	73%
ND	54%	14%	69%
WI	59%	21%	75%
MI	56%	19%	65%

- Minnesota and Iowa lead with strong early pod set and crop condition.
- Wisconsin and Michigan show solid health but slightly delayed development.
- The Dakotas may benefit from additional heat and moisture in coming weeks.

The 2025 crop is in strong shape across the Upper Midwest. Corn is progressing on or ahead of schedule in many areas, and soybeans are moving steadily through bloom and pod fill. If weather conditions hold, the region is positioned for a strong finish. Growers should monitor high-risk areas for stress symptoms and disease as reproductive stages continue.

Armyworm Pressure Rising in VT–R1 Corn: Time to Scout and Act

Armyworms in Tasseling Corn — A Growing Threat

Armyworm activity is intensifying across parts of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and scattered areas throughout the Corn Belt. While usually a threat in early vegetative stages or small grains, this late flush is now feeding on VT to R1 corn, putting critical leaf area and pollination at risk. Favorable weather patterns—cool, wet June conditions followed by warmups and consistent morning fog—have fueled a surge in egg hatch and larval survival. Fields following cereal rye or near grassy waterways, hay fields, or small grains are especially vulnerable.

Larva
Photo by J. Obermeyer

Scouting and Identification

Begin scouting immediately in at-risk fields:

- **Feeding Signs:** Ragged or skeletonized leaves, often starting on lower foliage and working up toward the ear leaf.
- **Larvae Appearance:** Smooth-bodied, green to brown caterpillars with faint stripes and a small, inverted "Y" marking on the head.
- **Where to Look:** Field edges, areas near grassy cover, and whorls or leaf axils. Larvae often hide in plant debris during the day.

Scouting Procedure:

Check 20 consecutive plants in at least five areas of the field. Record percent defoliation and larval presence. Shake plants and examine ground-level residue for hidden larvae.

Treatment Thresholds

- **Pre-Tassel to VT:** Treat when 25% or more of plants show feeding and larvae are under 1.25 inches in length.
- **VT to R1:** Treat if 50% of leaf area on upper canopy is defoliated and active larvae are still present.

Insecticide control drops significantly once larvae exceed 1.25 inches, as they near pupation.

Insecticide Options

- **Pyrethroids:** Effective on small to medium larvae, cost-effective with fast knockdown.
- **Diamides:** Longer residual, excellent control in high-pressure or forecasted rain scenarios.

Always follow label guidelines for application timing, rate, and pre-harvest intervals. Avoid unnecessary tank mixes that may interfere with efficacy, especially under drought stress.

Takeaway

Late-season armyworm outbreaks are uncommon but can be damaging during tasseling and pollination. Early detection is essential. Prioritize fields with grassy borders or history of cover crops, and act promptly to preserve yield potential.

References:

- USDA NASS Crop Progress Report – Week Ending July 21, 2025 https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/Todays_Reports/reports/prog2925.pdf
- University of Minnesota Extension: Armyworms in Corn
- Purdue University Extension: Armyworm Management in Field Crops