

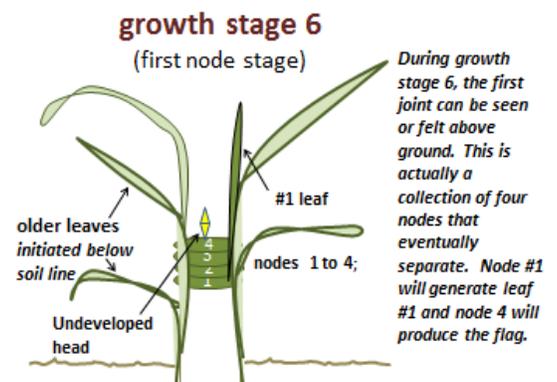
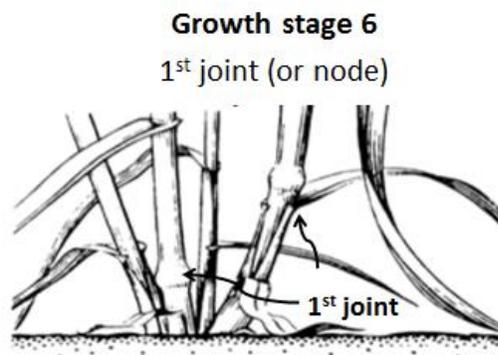
Wheat crop is developing nicely

Mn deficiency? Photo by Phil Kaatz

Wheat has finally begun to grow in earnest thanks to last week's warmer temperatures and relief from heavy rains. Most of the purpling and yellowing should now be masked by the green of new growth. There are few concerns about wheat's current look based on phone calls from growers. However, there are lingering questions about a few isolated fields where poor growth, and even plant mortality, is being reported. A few of these may be due to manganese (Mn) deficiency, though this is yet to be confirmed. The injury occurred last fall, weakening the plants to the point that some were not able to survive winter. Mn deficiency tends to occur where the field has a relatively high pH or where the organic level is high. Normally it is seen in the spring once the plants have well developed tillers. However, this level of development was reached last fall in many MI fields.

Growth stage 6 (aka first node & first joint)

Managing wheat requires that one is mindful of some of the key growth stages. Growth stage 6 is certainly one worth identifying. It usually occurs during the last week of April or the first week of May in central MI (presumably, many fields are currently at this stage in southern MI).



During g.s. 5, the plants have fully tillered and begins to stand more erect and the first node can be detected at or just below the soil surface. At g.s. 6, the node is pushed above the surface This first node can usually be both seen and felt. This swelling actually represents the immature head and four nodes (see my attempt to illustrate cross-section). As the plant grows, the second, third and fourth nodes collectively separate from the first node (g.s.7).

It is at g.s.6 that the reproductive stages begin and its "game on" for achieving high yields of grain. At g.s.6, all plant growth regulator herbicides like 2,4-D and dicamba must be strictly avoided (see Christy Sprague's [article](#)). The N should have been applied by this time where single applications are made. Where fertilizer N is split applied , the second application should be applied now or at least by g.s. 7.

Be cautious with herbicides under cool temperatures

Be careful using herbicides during the current cool weather. See Dr. Christy Spragues article in [MSUE NEWS](#). She says that growers should be cautious when applying herbicides to wheat wheat the day time temperature does not reach 50 degrees. I also think there may be a risk of injury when, under a cold weather system, night time temperatures dip into the 30's. Check for precautionary statements in your product's label.

Please complete a wheat variety survey

In cooperation with the U.S. Scab Initiative, we would like to get an update on which varieties MI growers are currently using. You can participate in the survey [electronically](#) or simply email me (nagelkir@msu.edu) a list of the varieties you seeded last fall and their approximate acreage. Or if you prefer, contact me and I will email you a simple form.

Thanks!!

Newsletter sign-up: by email: [click here](#); **by text:** type **22828** as address, and **miwheat** as message (you will receive a text asking for your email address)

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