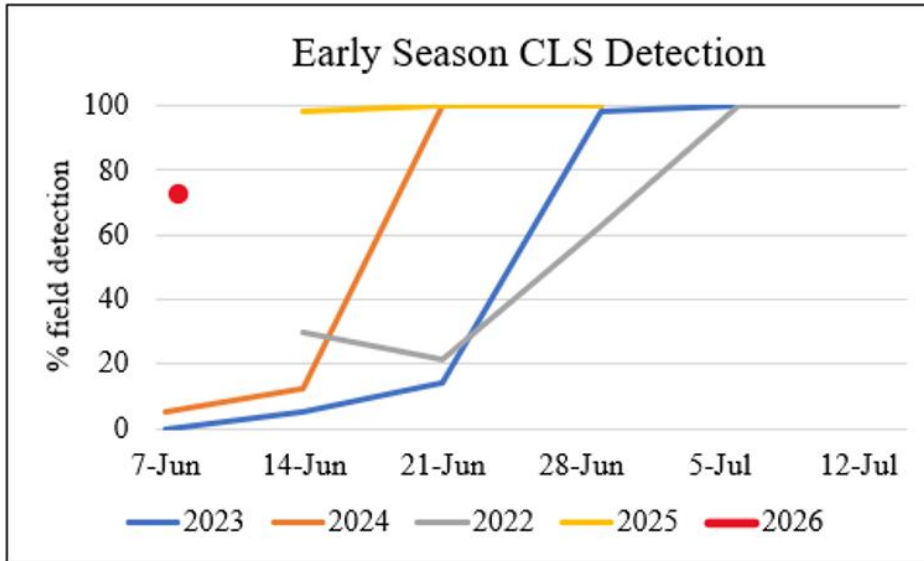


2026 CLS UPDATE

6.17.2026

This season, SMBSC is collaborating again with Dr. Nathan Wyatt at the USDA-ARS in Fargo to detect early Cercospora leaf spot infection. Starting the week of June 8, SMBSC Agriculturists are collecting leaf samples from 56 fields with a common line to a 2025 sugar beet field and submitting these samples to Dr. Wyatt's lab. Dr. Wyatt is using DNA analysis to detect whether CLS has infected the leaves before symptoms develop.



The first set of leaf samples taken the week of June 8, showed that 78.6% (44 of 56 fields submitted) tested positive for CLS. This is a higher level of infection than what has been seen in the recent past with the exception of 2025. This highlights the importance of a timely start to the fungicide program to control this initial infection.

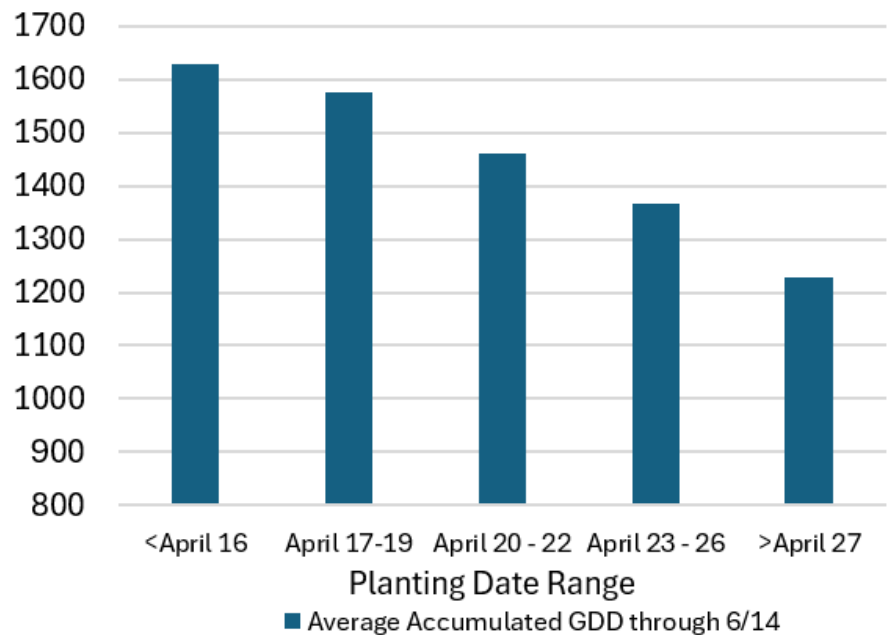
These higher infection levels are no surprise given that our GDD accumulation has already exceeded the 1500 threshold on all early planted fields. Fields planted on or shortly after our average planting date of April 21, are hitting this threshold as we speak.

Recent rain showers, and the back and forth warm to cooler weather, have set up the ideal environment for CLS infection in SMBSC fields.

Seeing the early elevated levels both in latent testing and growing degree days places us in the same risk category of the burn down years of 2016, 2018, and 2025. This is the week to begin spraying with the goal of achieving 75 days of spot free control. With this approach we can arrive at the end of August with enough cushion to avoid economic loss potential. SMBSC's spray program also allows the option for extra applications for later harvested fields if warranted.

The weather forecast will not drastically alter GDD accumulation over the next week, and it is likely that we will see most, if not all fields hit the 1500 threshold by June 24. **IT IS TIME TO SPRAY!!**

GDD Accumulation by Planting Date



Agricultural Department
Southern Minnesota Beet
Sugar Cooperative