

AHDB HARVEST REPORT

Report 6 – Week 12

Week ending 24 September 2025



OVERVIEW

The cereal harvest is now complete for those reporting in this survey. Anecdotally, there are some small areas of spring barley crops and some pulses left to be cut, particularly in Northern Ireland and North Scotland, although these are anticipated to be completed soon.

This harvest has been extremely challenging for many growers. Even where yields have been above expectations from earlier in the year, price declines throughout the course of the year will have had a significant impact on the profitability of arable farms.

Overall, the 2025 harvest progressed quickly with little need to dry crops, though rainfall slowed the pace of harvest towards the end. But the overriding message from this harvest is variability, with considerable variations in yield both within and between regions.

	Harvest 2025 (week 12)*		Historical UK average yield, t/ha		
	% complete	Estimated UK average yield to date, t/ha	Last year (2024)	10-year average	10-year range
Wheat	100%	7.6	7.3	8.1	7.0 – 9.0
Winter barley	100%	6.7	6.4	6.9	6.2 – 7.8
Spring barley	100%	5.8	5.7	5.8	5.2 – 6.3
Winter oilseed rape**	100%	3.7	2.8	3.3	2.7 – 3.9
Oats	100%	5.2	5.4	5.5	4.9 – 6.1

Source: Defra, AHDB

*up to 24 September 2025 (week 12).

** historical yields include both winter and spring oilseed rape.

As with the previous reports there is a split in the quality challenges for spring malting barley. In the South of England, high nitrogen levels will impact the ability of the crop to trade into some markets. In the North, Scotland and Northern Ireland, high screenings continue to be the overriding challenge for the crop. Reports of screening levels of up to 30% are not uncommon with loads being downgraded to feed. This split in quality also hampers inter-UK trade, with English spring barley nitrogen levels too high for the areas where screenings have been the main challenge.

While the quality of spring barley is poorer, [demand for malting barley](#) is weaker than in recent years and marketing the crop is proving challenging.

With harvest all but complete, attention turns to establishing next year's crops. Many farmers have been out this week spraying off weeds in advance of establishing winter cereals. The rainfall that slowed progress in the latter weeks of this harvest also improved conditions for cultivations and for the development of earlier-sown oilseed rape crops in many areas. However, this is not enough to offset the dryness of the last six months.

WINTER BARLEY

Harvest update

The winter barley harvest was completed in the week ending 6 August, in line with 2024 but ahead of the five-year average.

Yields

As with all crops in all regions, there is significant farm-to-farm variability in winter barley yields. The many different drivers include soil type and local rainfall levels, grass weed pressures and varietal choice, to name a few.

The average UK yield is estimated 4% below the ten-year (2015-2024) average at 6.7 t/ha.

Quality

Quality of winter barley has generally been good, with high specific weights and low levels of screenings. However, nitrogen levels have been higher than normal, which could impact on end-market usability.

Specific weight – Specific weights ranged from 61 – 73 kg/hl, with an average of 65 kg/hl.

Screenings – Grain size is good, with screening retentions (on a 2.25 mm sieve) for winter barley averaging 99%.

Grain nitrogen (for malting varieties) – Nitrogen levels for winter malting barley range from 1.4% to 2.0%, averaging 1.7%.

Moisture – Moisture levels of winter barley crops averaged 14.3%.

Germination – There are no reported problems with germination in the winter malting crop, with the crop averaging 99%.

WINTER OILSEED RAPE

Harvest update

The winter oilseed rape (WOSR) harvest was complete by 6 August, slightly ahead of 2024 and the five-year average of 82% at that point.

Yields

Yields for WOSR crops harvested before storm Floris were generally good, but those harvested after experienced yield losses owing to seeds being knocked out of pods.

The national average yield for WOSR is calculated to be 3.7 t/ha based on the results from farms in this survey. This is up 20% on the five-year (2020-2024) average and the joint highest since 2017, in line with 2022.

As with all other crops in this report there is significant variation in the yields reported in the survey. These yields range from 9% below the five-year average to 42% above the five-year average. The large increases against the five-year average are reported in regions that have struggled with oilseed rape in recent years. For those farms, “normal” yields are reported against some really challenging five-year averages.

Quality

Oil content – Oil content is averaging around 45%, with a range of 42%-46%.

Moisture – Average moisture of oilseed rape is reported to be 8.6%, with a range from 8% to 10%.

OATS

Harvest update

The UK oat harvest is now complete, with the final fields harvested by 24 September.

Yields

Based on the sample of farms in this survey, the average UK oat yield is estimated at 5.2 t/ha. This represents a slight increase from our previous report (5.1t/ha) but is still 5% below the 10-year average. There has also been significant variation in oat yields this year.

The challenges of weather conditions through this spring markedly limited oat yields for many. But alongside the weather challenges, the [Sustainable Farming Incentive](#) (SFI) in England could have also impacted spring cereal yields. According to data from [Defra](#) 14,700 hectares of land has been entered into the low input harvested cereal option, which limits use of certain active ingredients and restricts seed rate.

Quality

While winter oat quality has generally been good, spring oats have struggled more, with both lower yields and specific weights reported.

Specific weight – Specific weights for winter oats have averaged 53 kg/hl, but spring oats have reportedly been light, with lower yields and specific weights reported. This brings the average specific weight of all oats analysed so far down to 50kg/hl, with a significant range of 42–54 kg/hl.

Moisture – The average moisture of oats is reported as 13.9%.

WHEAT

Harvest update

The UK wheat harvest was completed by Wednesday 10 September.

Yields

The wheat harvest has had arguably the greatest level of variation. There is significant variation in yield between and within farms, regions and across the UK, which means this survey is unlikely to reflect all individual farm circumstances. It also meant increased challenges in drawing national and regional pictures this season.

Based on the sample of farms in this survey, the average UK wheat yield is estimated at 7.6 t/ha. This is 6.1% below the ten-year average.

However, it's important to note that some farms within this survey experienced yields as much as 21% below their on-farm five-year average. Furthermore, there are anecdotal reports of farms where yields have been lower still, and the financial challenge this presents can't be overstated.

There were some better reports, including from Scotland, where crops were sown into good conditions which remained throughout the growing season. But a wetter start for crops last autumn, and dry conditions through spring and into summer were a significant challenge for most.

The weight of grain relative to the volume is also an important consideration. Specific weights this year are good so far, which is leading to smaller, heavier grain heaps in some cases.

Quality

Wheat quality, as reported by trade, remains largely positive, with high protein levels and specific weights in UK Flour Millers Group 1 samples. For some, Hagberg Falling Number (HFN) levels did decline slightly after heavy rain in early August.

There have been few reports of ad mix challenges. While some localised cases of higher ergot levels have been noted, these are not as severe as last season.

Specific weight – Specific weights are good, with a high of 84 kg/hl reported in one case, and an average to date of 79-80kg/hl in England.

Hagberg Falling Number (HFN) – HFNs have generally been good and in excess of 300s for Group 1 samples. However, there have been some limited reports of HFNs as low as the 220s after the rain in early August.

Protein – Protein contents are often 13.5% or higher for Group 1 samples.

Moisture – The average moisture observed across the UK so far is 14.4%, though with a range of 12.2% – 17.0%.

SPRING BARLEY

Harvest update

The spring barley harvest is now complete for those taking part in the survey, although some fields reportedly remain further north in Scotland.

Yields

A dry spring in 2025 for planting spring barley benefitted crops where there was sufficient rainfall, although this was not the case for many. The yield picture for spring barley is complex, and with high screening levels reported it is important to note that the volume of 'available' crop is some way below the yield reported at the national level.

The range in spring barley yields on farms in this sample runs from 26% below to 21% above the five-year average. Spring barley yields in Scotland are reported to be 2% below the five-year average, falling in stark contrast to winter cereal yields in the country.

Based on data from farms in this sample national average yield is estimated in line with the five- and 10-year averages at 5.8t/ha.

Quality

While early quality of spring barley was good, reflecting crops in southern England, this picture changed as harvest progressed further north. In Scotland, Northern Ireland and the North of England many crops are not making malting quality largely due to high screening levels, with levels of 30% regularly mentioned. This is leading to a high degree of malting rejections.

While higher in the south of England, nitrogen contents have been more 'typical' in the north and Scotland.

Specific weight – Specific weights for spring barley have typically ranged from 60kg/hl to 66kg/hl, although there will be many crops falling outside of this range.

Screenings – There is a clear split in screenings between crops in Southern England and those in the North of England and Scotland. Screenings have not been an issue in England, however, in Scotland screenings of 30% have been discussed, with more in some cases.

Grain nitrogen (for malting varieties) – The nitrogen level of malting varieties ranges from 1.3% to 2.0% so far but again, there is a split between England and Scotland. In the South of England nitrogen levels are high, whereas there have been very few issues to date with nitrogen levels in Scotland.

Moisture – Moisture levels of crops harvested to date have averaged 14.7%.

Germination – There are no reported problems with germination in the winter malting crop, averaging 99%.

PULSES

Harvesting pulse crops has been challenging this season. Hot and dry conditions at harvest left many cutting beans early in the morning before pods became too brittle. Spring beans in particular have been noted as suffering from the drought.

Taking an average across all farms who have reported yield data for pulses, yields are 19% down on their combined five-year average. This is a different approach to calculating other yields with Defra not providing regional data, as such this is not weighted according to area. The range in yields on pulses is from 69% below the five-year average to 42% above; actual yields range from 1.1 to 5.6 t/ha.

STRAW

As with cereal grain yields, straw yields this season are highly variable. Some farmers have been happy with volumes of straw this year but elsewhere some very small swaths have been seen.

Some have reported that more land has been baled this year in response to smaller volumes. This echoes last year, where the area baled increased. Data from Defra in “Agriculture in the UK” suggested that in 2024, an estimated 89% of wheat and spring barley was baled owing to strong pricing and demand.

GB average [prices for wheat and barley straw](#) are currently ahead of average for the time of year.

Even so, there are localised challenges for straw availability this season, which will add to the challenges for livestock farmers who have seen a lack of forage growth throughout the summer. For more information on grass growth and links to resources see [AHDB's Forage for Knowledge](#).

ADDITIONAL NOTES

This is the sixth and final harvest report of the 2025/26 season and covers data up to the week ending 24 September 2025, which is the twelfth week of the 'typical' harvest period. It is produced with data collected by The Andersons Centre and compiled by AHDB.

The information is based on a sample survey of farmers in the United Kingdom (including Northern Ireland). They provide information on harvest progress, yields, grain moisture levels and insights on straw production. The sample is chosen to represent the cropping mix (wheat, barley, oats and oilseed rape) by region/country, with more widely grown crops and higher producing regions having more coverage. Information on grain and oilseed quality is provided by a panel of merchants.

Please note that these harvest progress reports are separate from [AHDB's Recommended Lists harvest data](#), which includes results from their variety trials.

Grain and seed yields from early harvested crops are based on farmer reported yields. The percentage deviation between the farmers reported yield and the five-year average is applied to the regional five-year average quoted by Defra. Yields have been adjusted where moisture is above 14.5% for cereals and 8% for oilseed rape. Moisture levels below 14.5% and 8% have not been adjusted.