

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The beginning of May saw unsettled weather continue, with regular and sometimes heavy rain showers. However, since mid-May conditions have been more settled, with little rain and good levels of sunshine. As a result, most farmers have managed to catch up with late sowing and spray applications.

Overall, weed and disease pressure has remained low this month. However, it's reported that delayed fungicide and herbicide applications in April/early May have resulted in increased incidence in affected crops. Most farmers have now completed intended spray programmes, though some at slightly less than optimal timings. Occasional crops had exceeded growth stage cut offs (due to rapid development) and as a result applications were missed.

Due to the wet and mild weather, Septoria has been the main concern this year. Septoria pressure is at its highest level in over a decade, with reports of it appearing as high as leaf 3, especially in more susceptible varieties and where T2 applications were delayed.

Cabbage stem flea beetle (CSFB) remains the biggest issue in winter oilseed rape (OSR) crops. Most regions have experienced damage in OSR crops, aside from Scotland, Wales and the North West which reported low level damage. Of the regions that have been affected, crop failures were reportedly small (between 0% and 3%).

To summarise, generally most crops are faring well due to favourable conditions over the past month. With rainfall early May, followed by sunshine and mild conditions, yield prospects are average or above. Looking ahead, forecast weather will be crucial over the coming weeks and months for development.

CROP CONDITION

Crop condition was assessed using the USDA approach. This classifies crops into one of five categories (see details below). The values are given as a percentage of the GB crop planted area for that crop, that fall into each of the categories – regional condition scores are available on the [AHDB website](#).

Crop condition definitions:

- Very poor:** Extreme degree of loss to yield potential, complete or near crop failure.
- Poor:** Heavy degree of loss to yield potential, which can be caused by excess soil moisture, drought, disease etc.
- Fair:** Less than normal crop condition. Yield loss is a possibility, but the extent is unknown.
- Good:** Yield prospects are normal. Moisture levels are adequate and disease, insect damage and weed pressure are minor.
- Excellent:** Yield prospects are above normal. Crops are experiencing little or no stress. Disease, insect damage and weed pressures are insignificant.

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Crops not yet emerged
Winter Wheat	0%	2%	13%	64%	21%	0%
Winter Barley	0%	2%	10%	69%	19%	0%
Winter Oats	0%	1%	18%	70%	10%	0%
Winter OSR	4%	7%	26%	48%	15%	0%
Spring Wheat	0%	2%	19%	73%	4%	0%
Spring Barley	0%	6%	20%	52%	21%	0%
Spring Oats	0%	2%	25%	60%	13%	0%

Source: RSK ADAS

Note: Figures may not sum to 100% due to rounding

WHEAT

Crop establishment

For the week ending Tuesday 30 May, 85% of the GB winter wheat crop was in good/excellent condition, ahead of 82% at the same point last season, but down 3% on the month. Just 2% of the crop was reportedly in poor/very poor condition, up 1% on the month, but down from 3% at the same point last year.

Overall winter wheat crops are developing well. Most crops are now in between the growth stages 39 and 45 (flag leaf fully unrolled to flag leaf sheath swollen). This is ahead of where crops were at the same time last year.

Nutrition

Nitrogen applications for yield have all been completed. For milling wheat, foliar nitrogen applications are planned and were starting to be made at the end of May. There have been some reports of sulphur deficiencies occurring in crops on lighter land.

Weed pressure

Generally, weed pressure is not a cause for concern in the winter wheat crop across GB. However, brome, ryegrass, and blackgrass are appearing above crop canopies where resistance is an issue or spray applications were missed.

In the East of England in particular, grass weed control had reduced effectiveness due to the combination of a move to less intensive tillage and missed graminicides applications earlier in the spring due to rain.

Broadleaf weed control is good, with occasional localised reports of burr chervil and groundsel in crops.

Pest pressure

In general, no major pest problems have been reported so far. Localised patches of BYDV have started to appear, though overall incidence is low. There have been some reports of aphids in crops, but only at relatively low levels and not yet at threshold for treatment.

In Yorkshire, recent moisture levels have led to some concern that orange wheat blossom midge might emerge in the coming weeks. Something to watch out for.

Disease pressure

As previously mentioned, Septoria is the primary concern in terms of disease pressure at the moment. Many farmers increased T1 fungicide rates and/or switched to more Septoria-active

fungicides in response to early disease pressure. Where fungicides were applied as planned, control is good and overall disease risk levels remain low.

Incidences of yellow rust have also been reported, particularly in susceptible varieties where T1 and T2 applications were delayed.

In the West Midlands there have been reports of take-all and eyespot now becoming apparent in crops where water stress is evident.

Prospects for the coming months

Overall, winter wheat crops are looking well at this point in the season, and yield prospects are good. There are only occasional crops in poor condition that have high levels of blackgrass or have suffered standing water earlier on in the season.

WINTER BARLEY

Crop establishment

Overall, GB winter barley is in relatively good condition. For the week ending Tuesday 30 May, 88% of winter barley was in good/excellent condition, up from 82% at the same point last year, but down from 90% last month. 2% of the crop was in poor/very poor condition, compared to 3% at this time last season.

The last few weeks have seen swift development, with the majority of crops now between the growth stages 60 and 70 (start of flowering and flowering complete). Winter barley crops are at a similar growth stage as the same point last season.

There is variable risk of lodging throughout GB, though levels are not too concerning currently as robust plant growth regulator (PGR) programmes have been used to reduce the risk.

Nutrition

All fertiliser applications have now been completed.

Weed pressure

Much like wheat, weed pressure is reportedly low, with occasional incidences of brome and blackgrass appearing above crop canopies.

In Wales, there have been reports that wild oats are beginning to emerge above crop canopies.

Pest pressure

There have been no major pest pressures reported so far. Any pest pressures in winter barley crops are similar to wheat, available above.

Disease pressure

Generally, there is low disease pressure. There have been reports of occasional incidences of net blotch.

In Yorkshire, brown rust has also been difficult to control in certain hybrid varieties.

Prospects for the coming months

There are small areas in poor condition due to standing water earlier in the season or dense blackgrass populations. However, overall, winter barley crops have good prospects as long as lodging risk does not increase. Any increase in lodging risk will be dependent on future weather conditions.

WINTER OATS

Crop establishment

For the week ending Tuesday 30 May, 80% of GB's winter oat crop was in good/excellent condition, down from 87% at this point last year. 1% of the crop was in poor/very poor condition, down from 3% this time last season.

Winter oat crops are generally developing well, with the majority of crops now between growth stages 39 and 45 (flag leaf blade all visible and flag leaf sheath swollen).

Nutrition

Final nitrogen applications and PGR's have been applied.

Weed pressure

Again, much like wheat, weed pressure is generally low. Grassweeds are evident in occasional crops, but broadleaved weeds have been well controlled.

Pest pressure

No major pest issues have been reported so far this season. There are localised patches of BYDV but incidence remains low.

Disease pressure

Crops are looking clean with little to no incidences of disease reported.

Prospects for the coming months

Generally, most winter oat crops across GB look in good to excellent conditions with good yields prospects.

WINTER OILSEED RAPE (OSR)

Crop establishment

Crop conditions remain very mixed at this point in the season. Damage from CSFB, pigeons and rape stem weevil are the main causes of variability.

At week ending Tuesday 30 May, 63% of winter oilseed rape was in good/excellent condition, compared to 70% at the same point last season. 11% of the crop was in poor/very poor condition, compared to 6% last season.

In terms of development, the majority of winter OSR crops are now between the 50% flowering and 100% potential pod set stage. The Eastern region reported that cooler regional weather has had an impact on winter OSR crops there, with crops in the area ranging from yellow bud to 100% potential pod set.

Nutrition

All nitrogen applications have now been completed on OSR crops.

Weed pressure

Weed control so far this season has generally been good in the majority of crops.

Pest pressure

CSFB remains the main pest issue to date, with the South East specifically seeing slowed growth in many areas as a result. Rape winter stem weevil has been particularly prevalent in the East Midlands and East of England. There have also been reports of pigeon damage in some crops in the North West and West Midlands.

Other pest pressures include cabbage seed weevil, pollen beetle and mealy cabbage aphid, though all at relatively low levels.

Disease pressure

Very few incidences of disease have been reported so far. The risk of sclerotinia is variable across GB, but fungicide sprays are in the process of being applied, with up to two sprays applied where the risk is higher.

Prospects for the coming months

The outlook for the coming months is mixed, with crops ranging from poor to excellent depending on pigeon, CSFB, and rape stem weevil damage. These pressures will have impacted plant numbers and vigour, though good growing conditions for many in the past month have allowed crops to cope with damage and recover for the most part. Going forward, sunshine and rainfall be important as crops progress.

SPRING WHEAT

Crop establishment

For the week ending Tuesday 30 May, spring wheat drilling was complete. Delayed by rain, the final 6% was drilled in May. Crop development varies from emerging to flag leaf fully emerged depending on region and when the crop was sown.

Crops are generally faring well, with just under 78% of the spring wheat crop reportedly in good/excellent condition (table may not match due to rounding). This is up from 73% last year. 2% was in poor/very poor condition for week ending 30 May, compared to 8% last season.

Nutrition

The majority of nitrogen applications have now been completed. Though in the West Midlands some additional nitrogen applications for protein are still outstanding.

Weed pressure

There are no major incidences of weed pressure reported at the moment.

Pest pressure

Generally, there have been no significant pest pressure issues so far. Gout fly eggs have been seen in several regions, but only at low levels.

Disease pressure

Crops are generally looking clean. Though in the East Midlands, there have been occasional reports of yellow rust on susceptible varieties.

Prospects for the coming months

Overall, crops appear to be in good condition and yield prospects look good.

SPRING BARLEY

Crop establishment

The dry weather over the past few weeks has meant that drilling of spring barley is now complete, with the remaining 6% drilled throughout May. Delayed by rain, drilling spanned over many months (Dec/Jan to May) and as such, development of the crop varies on when it

was planted. Earlier grown crops are now approaching ear emergence, whereas later crops are still in the tillering stage.

At the week ending Tuesday 30 May, 74% of spring barley crops were in good/excellent condition (may not match table due to rounding), down from 78% last season. The percentage of the crop in poor/very poor condition was 6%, up from 3% at this point last year.

The West Midlands is the furthest ahead in the growth stage. This is due to a combination of differences in timing of planting, varieties used and regional weather differences.

Nutrition

Similarly to spring wheat, the majority of nitrogen applications have now been completed.

Weed pressure

Again, much like spring wheat, there has been no significant weed pressure reported so far.

Pest pressure

Low pest pressure has been reported so far. There are some symptoms of BYDV apparent, but overall incidence is low.

Disease pressure

No major incidences of disease have been reported so far. However, Rhynchosporium has been reported in some crops, especially where fungicide treatments were delayed.

Prospects for the coming months

Prospects for the spring barley crops are looking well, with earlier sown crops in slightly better condition than later sown crops.

SPRING OATS

Crop establishment

Drilling of spring oats is now complete. In total, though drilling started for some in January, the majority of spring oats were drilled in April (58%), with the final 18% drilled in May. Generally, the crop is looking well.

For the week ending Tuesday 30 May, 73% of the crop was in good/excellent condition, down slightly from 75% at this point last season. Just 2% was in poor/very poor condition, down from 4% last season.

Nutrition

As with other spring cereals, the majority of nitrogen applications are now complete.

Weed pressure

Again, there have been no significant reports of weed issues so far.

Pest pressure

Pest pressure in spring oat crops remains low.

Disease pressure

No major disease issues have been reported.

Prospects for the coming months

The crop is currently faring well, and prospects are good.

SPRING OILSEED RAPE

Crop establishment

Due to there being so few spring OSR crops, information on the crop is based on very limited data and confidence in the data is low as a result.

Generally, crop establishment was variable, depending on the timing of planting.

Nutrition

All nitrogen applications have been completed.

Weed pressure

Weed control has been effective so far.

Pest pressure

There were reports of some CSFB causing early damage, though the majority of crops now appear to be recovering.

Disease pressure

No major incidences of disease have been reported yet.

Prospects for the coming months

Crop condition and yield prospect is currently very variable.