

## REPORT 1 (WEEK 2)

As the GB harvest gets underway, AHDB will provide regular updates on the Markets website. In past harvest reports, harvest week 1 has been the second week of July and so although this is the first report of this year's harvest, it provides information for week 2 (Week Ending 18 July), for ease of comparison with previous reports. Please note that reporting takes place up to the close of play of Tuesday each week.

### Overview – Week 2 (WE 18 July)

Harvest of early maturing winter barley crops started in the first week of July, with small areas of crop harvested. More consistent harvest of both winter barley and winter oilseed rape started in the second week of July (Week 1 – WE 11 July). This report summarises progress through to WE 18 July. Early yields are promising, with the majority of crops harvested to date close to or slightly above the farm average. Initial quality data is limited, but early indications are positive.

*Note: this early report is based on quality data provided for just four English regions - the South West, South East, East Midlands and Eastern regions.*

Crop	UK area harvested to date (%)	Current yield range (t/ha)	Typical weekly quality from WE 26 July			Comments
<b>Winter Barley</b>	27%	Slightly above average	SpWt (kg/hl)	65-66	Specific weights range from 60-70 kg/hl (better than in 2016).	
			Malting grain N (%)	1.6	Generally clean crops with low disease levels.	
		5.5-9.5	Screenings (%)	6	Light soils matured early.	
			Germination (%)	N/A	No data on germination yet.	
		Harvest moisture (%)		14	Low lodging levels reported.	
<b>Winter OSR</b>	15%	Slightly above average	Oil content (%)	44	Early yields are variable but around the farm average.	
		2.0-5.5	Specific weight (kg/hl)	68-70	Low levels of lodging (max 5% of regional area reported in the Eastern region).	
			Harvest moisture (%)	8		

## Weather

The prolonged hot and dry weather in late June and early July hastened grain ripening, leading to an early start to harvest. Conditions in early July were conducive to harvest, although only relatively small areas of early ripening crops were ready for harvest. However, weather conditions became more unsettled, with heavy thundery showers spreading across most of GB, between 6- 18 July. Up to 40mm of rain fell in the Eastern counties over this period, causing minor disruptions to the start of harvest. During dry spells, harvest resumed for winter barley and the first winter oilseed rape crops were cut between odd showers. For detailed weather data in your region, please [click here](#).

## Harvest Progress

The earliest winter barley crops were harvested on 26 June in Suffolk, but for most growers in the South and East of England, harvest began around 3 July making the start of harvest around a fortnight earlier than in 2016. Just over 7% of the UK winter barley area and 4% of the winter oilseed rape area had been harvested by the week ending 11 July. Up until 18 July, an estimated 27% of the winter barley area and 15% of the winter oilseed rape area had been harvested. Warm and generally dry conditions have allowed good harvest progress to be made in the South and East of England and a start to harvest in more

northern regions. By 18 July, an estimated 7% of the UK combinable crop area had been harvested (although this is based on data from just the South West, South East, East Midlands, West Midlands and Eastern region). Based on available data harvest progress is well ahead of normal, being around a fortnight ahead of 2016.

**For charts on harvest progress, [click here](#). Select the region and crop that you are interested in to see progress to date as well as national harvest progress against previous years.**

## Winter barley

Winter barley harvest began in the South and East of England around 3 July with 7% of the area harvested by 11 July (week 1) and 27% of the UK area harvested by 18 July (week 2). The winter barley harvest is the earliest harvest in the last five years and is in line with the early harvests of 2009 and 2006. Winter barley harvest is nearing completion in the South West (87% complete) and around 40% complete in the Eastern region. Harvest is also underway in the Midlands and South East, with smaller areas harvested further north.

Lodging has not been a serious issue this year, with an estimated 3% of the barley area in the South affected (data is not yet available for the North). Some fields are worse affected than others where heavy thundery downpours and strong winds caused large areas of individual fields to lodge, and this will cause challenges during harvest. However, the majority of crops are standing well.

## Yields

It is too early to provide national average yield estimates, but early indications are that average yields are close to or slightly above the five year average (6.8 t/ha), with yields in the East Midlands and Eastern region above the five year average. In the South East and the South West, yields are around the five year average, whilst in the West Midlands early harvested crops have yielded slightly below the farm average, but these are mostly crops on light land that have suffered from water stress. Reported farm yields have ranged between 5.5-9.5 t/ha. The better yields are tending to come from heavier soil types, whilst on lighter land, yields as low as 5.5 t/ha have been reported for the more water stressed crops. A clearer picture is expected in the next few weeks as other regions start reporting.

As always, there is variability between soil types and varieties. These are summarised below;

**Table 1 Yield variation in winter barley – up to 18 July**

Yield range (t/ha)	Heavy soil	Light soil
	6.0-9.5	5.5-8.5
	<b>Malting</b>	<b>Feed</b>
	5.5-8.0	5.5-9.5

## Quality

Quality data to date is based on a small number of early harvested grain samples with a focus towards the South and East of the UK and so should be treated with caution at this stage of the season. Early indications are that specific weights are good - up to 70kg/hl.

- **Specific weight** – generally high, weekly average 65-66 kg/hl, range 60-70 kg/hl
- **Screenings** – average 5%, range 3-8%
- **Grain Nitrogen** (malting varieties) – very limited early data reports around 1.6% N (Eastern counties)
- **Germination** – no data on germination so far, although no issues have been mentioned
- **Moisture** – average 14%, range 11-17%. Most grain harvested this week was harvested at <15% moisture and did not require drying, with farmers waiting to harvest until crop moisture had dropped.

## Winter oilseed rape

Harvest of oilseed rape began between 8-16 July in the South and East of England and was 4% complete by 11 July and 15% complete by WE 18 July. Progress is most advanced in the South East and Eastern region (32% and 25% respectively) with 10-15% of the regional area complete in the East Midlands and South West.

Harvest progress is ahead of the five year average (9% of the OSR area harvested by this date). Harvest is ahead of four of the last five years, with just the 2014 harvest being further ahead with 44% of the national area harvested by this stage.

Harvest progress over the last week has been good. Crops are generally in good conditions with little disease, although black grass levels under the canopy have been high, along with thistles and cleavers.

It is estimated that 2% of the winter oilseed rape area in the South and East of England has been affected by lodging. This lodging is mainly due to crops (which were standing well) being hit by the more recent heavy rain and winds, particularly in the Eastern regions.

## Yields

Current yield information is based on early harvested crops from Southern and Eastern regions and should be treated with caution at this stage in the season. Early yields are slightly above the five year average (3.4 t/ha), but vary hugely by region and soil type, depending on the effect of earlier water stress. Farm yields are coming in at between 2.0t/ha for poorly established, pest ravaged crops up to a high of 5.5t/ha recorded in the East Midlands.

## Quality

Quality data to date is based on a small number of early harvested grain samples with a bias towards the South and East of England, so extrapolation is limited.

- **Oil content** – Oil content data has only been available from the Eastern and East Midlands regions, but crops seem to be around the average, coming in at 43-47%. As crops begin to move off farm more detailed reports of oil content will be available in the coming weeks.
- **Moisture** – weekly average 8%, range 4-11%, with no reports of crops requiring drying. Occasional crops were considered too dry to harvest and in some cases harvest paused, waiting for morning dew to increase moisture contents.
- **Specific weight** – Data is only available for the East Midlands, with specific weights between 68-70kg/hl being reported.

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