

AHDB provides regular updates about GB harvest progress on the Markets website. In past harvest reports, harvest week 1 has been the second week of July and so although this is the fourth report of this year's harvest, it provides information for week 7 (Week Ending 22 August), 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 7- WE 22 August

Harvest report prepared by ADAS for AHDB Cereals & Oilseeds, using data supplied by regional reporters (mostly independent agronomists). The approach used is consistent with previous years allowing comparison of data and provides a snapshot of harvest progress throughout the harvest season.

This week's report is based on data collected from England, Scotland and Wales. Due to the Defra June Survey being released, crop areas for England have now been updated to align with the Defra provisional areas.

A dry period of settled weather for three days (15-17 August) allowed for good harvest progress in the early part of the week. However, heavy rain affected much of the country on Friday night, bringing harvest progress to an abrupt halt. Limited progress was made later in the week. Overall progress in the last week was equivalent to 600,000ha, or 17% of the GB area of cereals and oilseeds crops harvested.

To date 68% of the GB crop area has been harvested, ahead of the five year average of 59% by this point in August. It should be noted that although harvest progress is ahead of normal, the early ripening of crops meant most farmers had anticipated an early harvest, well ahead of normal. For many farmers weather disruptions have caused delays to harvest, with ripe crops sitting in the field risking loss of quality whilst farmers wait for a weather window to allow harvest to resume.

The majority of grain harvested in the last week required drying. Although reports suggest that grain has dried relatively well this week, damp straw has been the limiting factor to progress.

Winter wheat harvest is now 65% complete with the East Midlands and the Eastern region being 80% or more complete. Winter barley harvest is now complete with

small areas harvested in Scotland and Wales over the last week. Spring barley harvest is 40% complete, with the majority of crops harvested to date in the English regions. Oat harvest is 60% complete with the majority of winter oats harvested and a start made on spring oats in the south. Just under 95% of the winter oilseed rape crop has been harvested, with just small areas left to harvest in Wales. A start has been made to spring oilseed rape and spring wheat crops.

Table 1 GB average yields and quality for cereals and oilseeds

Crop	GB Yield Estimate t/ha	Specific weight kg/hl	Other Quality
Winter wheat	8.0-8.2	73-74	HFN~ 215-260s Protein~ 12.9%
Winter barley	7.0-7.2	64-65	Grain N ~ 1.7% Screenings ~ 5-10% Germination ~ 95-100%
Spring barley	6.0-6.2**	64-65	Grain N ~ 1.7% Screenings ~ 2-8% Germination ~ 96-100%
Oats	6.0-6.2	Winter only – 54-55	
Winter oilseed rape	3.4-3.6	68-70	Oil – 45%

*HFN – Hagberg Falling Number

** England only

Weather

A dry and settled period at the beginning of the reporting week granted the opportunity of longer harvest windows for most farmers. All changed from Friday, when heavy rainfall affected the country, regular showers continued through the weekend, although conditions became more settled from Monday onwards. Rainfall at the AHDB trial sites averaged 15mm, with a high of 37mm in Edgmond (Shropshire) and a low of 6.2mm in East Saltoun (East Lothian). Temperature averages for the week across the AHDB trial sites have varied between 14-17°C.

Harvest Progress

To date 68% of the GB cereal and oilseed area has been harvested, ahead of the five year average of 59% complete by this point. There were an estimated 600,000ha harvested in the last week, slightly down on the 720,000ha harvested in the previous week.

The good early start made to harvest progress compared to normal years hides the challenges now being faced by farmers this season. Most crops, especially in southern

England, were ripe and ready for harvest 1-2 weeks earlier than normal and therefore there had been anticipation of an early quick harvest. However, the move to regular, heavy, showery weather throughout late July and much of August has meant that it is weather that is delaying harvest, rather than crop development. This is leaving farmers many frustrated as they see ripe crops standing in wet fields waiting for harvest, risking a loss of quality and increasing the risk of lodging.

The improvement in weather conditions between 15 and 17 August meant that longer harvest days were available, with many farmers starting late morning and continuing to harvest until after dark. However, heavy rainfall on Friday night brought harvest to a halt, with many farmers not able to resume until Monday or even Tuesday afternoon.

Harvest progress charts are available to view [here](#). Select the region and crop that you are interested in to see progress. There is also a dashboard available to show national harvest progress against previous years.

Winter Wheat

GB winter wheat harvest 65% complete. An estimated 25% of the GB area of winter wheat was harvested in the week ending 22 August, despite another week of mostly unsettled weather. Three dry days at the beginning of the period allowed good harvest progress, with farmers now harvesting at higher moistures in order to ensure the crop gets harvested with minimal further delays. The largest areas of crops harvested in the last week were in the East Midlands (~170,000ha) and the Eastern region (~78,000ha), although harvest is underway in all regions. The majority of Group 1 and 2 wheats have been harvested, with many of the remaining crops being Group 3 and 4 varieties. Lodging has not increased significantly over the last week, with an estimated 5% of the national area affected by lodging to a greater or lesser extent.

Yields

The current GB average yield is forecast to be slightly above average at 8.0-8.2t/ha (GB 5 year average 7.9t/ha). As harvest continues, English crops are continuing to yield 5-10% above the farm average in most regions, however, in Scotland where only the earliest thin crops have been harvested yields have been poor and below average. There remains a great deal of variability in farm yields with reports ranging from 2.5-13.0t/ha. Milling wheat yields have ranged from 6-12t/ha and feed wheat 2.5-13.0t/ha, with the higher figures coming in from the South East, Yorkshire and Eastern counties. Heavier soil types with greater soil moisture

availability during grain fill are tending to give the better yields of 8.5-13.0t/ha although there are reports of second wheats struggling on heavier soils. Lighter soil types are yielding in the range of 6-10t/ha.

Quality

The quality of most Group 1 milling wheat crops has been good, with most farmers prioritising their harvest, resulting in minimal delays. Early reports indicate that on Group 1 milling varieties most crops are meeting specification. However, on the Group 3 and 4 wheats where harvest has been delayed due to prolonged unsettled weather, Hagberg Falling Numbers (HFN) are beginning to fall (most remaining crops are now below specification in South West, South East and West Midlands) but protein contents and specific weights have continued to meet specification.

- **Specific weight** - currently averaging 73-74kg/hl, range of 72-83kg/hl.
- **Falling Hagberg Number (s)** – currently averaging 215-260 seconds, range of 220-350 for Group 1 milling wheat, lower HFNs reported on Group 3 & 4 varieties, with some dropping below 150 seconds.
- **Milling Protein** – currently averaging 12.9% 12.5-14.0 for Group 1 and 2 milling.
- **Moisture** - average 17%, range 16-22%. Almost all crops harvested in the last week have required drying, coming in at higher than ideal moisture contents.

Spring wheat

A start was made to harvest in spring wheat, with 7% of the GB area currently harvested. The areas harvested to date are mainly in the Eastern and South West regions, both around 20% harvested. It is too early to give GB yield estimates but early indications from these two regions show yields of around 5-6t/ha.

Winter Barley

Winter barley harvest 100% complete. In WE 22 August, the remaining 1% (2,500ha) of the GB winter barley area was harvested in Scotland and Wales. Winter barley harvest was completed a week ahead of the last five year average progress, and in line with the earliest recent year of 2014. Around 8% of the 2017 GB winter barley crop was affected by lodging.

Yields

The current GB average yield is forecast to be above average at 7.0-7.2t/ha (5 year average of 6.8t/ha). Yields in 2017 were variable with a range of 4-10t/ha. Malting barley crops tended to yield 5-9t/ha, whilst feed crops were yielding

up to 10t/ha. The better yields tended to come from crops on heavier soil types, whilst some of the lower yields came from lighter land.

Quality

Most malting winter barley has met its specification this year, with much of it harvested before being adversely affected by the unsettled weather.

- **Specific weight** - average 64-65 kg/hl, wide range of 58-70 kg/hl.
- **Grain Nitrogen (malting varieties)** – average 1.7%, range 1.3-1.8%.
- **Germination** - range 95-100%.
- **Screenings** - High in some areas, typical range between 5% (East) and 10% (North West).
- **Moisture**- average 16%, range 15-20%. Some earlier crops were harvested dryer but since mid-July, the majority of crops have required drying.

Spring Barley

GB spring barley harvest is an estimated 40% complete, equivalent to approximately 285,000ha harvested to date. Spring barley harvest started in the last week of July, however, rate of harvest progress has been influenced by a combination of availability of ripe crops ready for harvest and availability of suitable harvest opportunities between showers. The largest areas of crops harvested in the last week were in the Eastern region (~40,000ha) and the South East (~27,000ha), with small areas harvested in Scotland and Northern England. Unsettled weather continues to increase the area of spring barley affected by lodging, now estimated at 17%.

Yields

Spring barley yield forecast (England only) is currently 6.0-6.2t/ha (5 year average of 5.6t/ha). This yield figure is based on crops harvested in Southern England and is subject to change as crops in the North and Scotland start to be harvested. Yield reports are highly variable with above average yields reported in the South West and East, average in Wales, South East and Yorkshire and below average in the Midlands.

Quality

Quality data is based on early harvested crops, predominantly from England (excluding the North) and therefore overall quality values are expected to change as the crop is harvested in other regions. Malting specification has been met on the majority of early harvested malting crops but brackling and lodging are now starting to affect quality.

- **Specific weight** - average 64-65kg/hl, range of 63-67kg/hl.

- **Grain Nitrogen (malting varieties)** – average 1.7%, range 1.3-1.8%.
- **Screenings** - range 2-8%.
- **Germination** - range 96-100%.
- **Moisture** - average 16%, range 15-18%.

Oats

By WE 22 August, 60% of the GB area of oats had been harvested, which is a week ahead of the five year average harvest progress. Almost all winter oat crops have been harvested except for in Wales, with harvest of spring oats now underway in most regions. The largest areas of oats harvested in the last week were in East Midlands (~6,000ha) and North East and Eastern region (~5,000ha each). Lodging has increased slightly over the last few weeks, with an estimated 14% of the GB oat area affected by lodging, with some large areas of lodging in the South East.

Yields

Current GB average yield forecast is 6.0-6.2t/ha (based on performance of predominantly winter oats and spring oats in southern England). Current yields range from 4.0-9.0t/ha. Winter oat yields have tended to range from 5.4-9.0t/ha, whilst spring oat yields range from 4.7-7.6 and naked oats are lower at 4.0-5.1t/ha.

Quality

Quality data is based on winter varieties harvested in all regions except Scotland, Wales and the North West and is therefore subject to change as results come in from these regions.

- **Specific weight** - average 54-55 kg/hl, range of 50-59kg/hl.
- **Moisture** - average 16%, range 13-18%

Winter oilseed rape

An estimated 95% of the GB winter oilseed rape area has been harvested to date, progress is a week ahead of the five year average of 84% by this point in August. Much of the remaining crop is in Wales and Scotland. Lodging is estimated to have affected 3% of the GB winter oilseed rape area. Disease levels were low, a small proportion of crops have issues with high thistle and cleaver levels.

Yields

Current GB average yield forecast is 3.4-3.6t/ha (5 year average is 3.4t/ha). Farm yields have typically ranged from 2.3-5.2t/ha, with most crops producing slightly higher than average yields. The poorest yields of under 3t/ha tend to be from

crops grown on lighter land and areas where the crop struggled due to pigeon damage, earlier drought or poor establishment leading to patchy fields. The highest yields of up to 5.2t/ha have been reported on heavy land in the East, South and Midlands.

Quality

- **Oil content** - average is good at 45%, range of 42-47% reported.
- **Specific Weight** - 68-70 kg/hl.
- **Moisture** – weekly average 9%, range 8-14%, majority hasn't required drying in the last week.