

AHDB Harvest Report

Report 6 – Week 12

Week ending 30th September 2021

Summary

This is the sixth and final report of the 2020/21 season, with data covering the period 08 September – 28 September, 2021. It is produced with data collected by RSK ADAS Ltd and compiled by AHDB.

The last three weeks have been largely settled, with warm and dry weather across most of England, Wales and Scotland. These favourable conditions have enabled many to clear the fields of the final crops and finish harvest. There have been a few coastal areas, particularly in the North East that were affected by showers, heavy dews and sea frets shortening harvest windows. Despite that, harvest has progressed well for most.

The final crops coming in from the fields over the last three weeks have been at, or very near storage moisture, thanks to the warm and late summer sunshine. Farmers in the North of England have been the exception, having to dry crops that were harvested between the showers. Some farmers have still lightly used the drier to remove chaff and polish up the grains.

Winter wheat harvest has drawn to a close in the UK, which other than in 2016 (98%) and 2017 (96%), is usual for this point in harvest. The Scottish winter wheat harvest has been unusually early for the region this year, with wheat crops often cleared before spring barley.

Both the **winter barley** and the **winter oilseed rape** harvests were complete by week 9 of harvest (7 September).

The **spring barley** harvest stands at 97% complete nationally. This is 2 percentage points above the five-year average and 3 percentage points behind last years completed harvest at this point. Harvest is complete in southern and central England, with small pockets left to clear in northern England and Scotland.

Both **winter** and **spring oats** harvests are now largely complete. The occasional field in Scotland and the North East remains to be cleared. This is in line with the five-year average.

Winter wheat yields have been close to average, between 8.0-8.2t/ha against a five-year average of 8.0t/ha. Current farm yields range from 6.0-14.0t/ha, with plenty of reports of over 10.0t/ha. Milling wheats range from 6.2-12.5t/ha. Second wheats have performed well, where take-all was not an issue. Here, yields have been in line with first wheats.

Spring barley yields have ranged between 5.9-6.3t/ha, improving on the five-year average (5.7t/ha). Farm yields have ranged from 5.0-10.0t/ha, with malting yields typically about a tonne lower than feed. In addition, heavier land yields have been slightly better than lighter soils, although the lighter land has yielded well compared to normal.

Winter oat yields range from 4.8-8.5t/ha. Spring oat yields are, in many cases, matching winter yields, ranging from 4.4-8.5t/ha. Milling crops are posting yields between 6.5-8.0t/ha, with naked oats at the lower end of the range.

Winter barley yields are slightly above the 2016-2020 average (6.8t/ha) at 6.9-7.1t/ha. They are ranging between 4.4-10.5t/ha, with the lowest yields reported on light land. Malting barley yields are typically around 6.5-6.8t/ha.

Winter oilseed rape yields are slightly better than average, at 3.3-3.5t/ha (five-year average of 3.3t/ha). Strong crops have yielded particularly well this year, especially those on heavy land. However, there are a small proportion of crops that had a poor early start, suffered pigeon damage or rabbit grazing, or Cabbage Stem Flea Beetle (CSFB) damage, and these yields have suffered accordingly.

Specific weights for winter wheat tend to be slightly on the lower side at 72-76kg/hl. The protein content of milling varieties typically range from 10.5-13.5%, with lower protein contents reported on some of the higher yielding crops. Hagberg falling numbers started to drop in late harvested milling wheat crops, but earlier harvested crops had HFN's typically above 250s.

Most spring barley crops have germination between 95-99%. Specific weights have ranged from 62-65kg/hl. Grain nitrogen ranges from 1.2-1.7% and screenings of between 1-7% are reported.

Specific weights have been ranging between 42-62kg/hl for oats, most averaging between 49-53kg/hl. Winter varieties are tending to have slightly lower specific weights than spring crops.

Winter barley grain nitrogen levels have typically ranged between 1.4-1.6%. Specific weights are low in most regions, although slightly better reports from the West Midlands and North West. Germination levels have fallen on later harvested crops to 90-92%, and will fail malting specifications.

Oil content for WOSR is around 44%, but some low oil contents have been reported.

Straw

Good straw yields have been reported. The good weather over the past three weeks has allowed many to crack on with baling.

Winter wheat

Harvest update

As at 28 September, the winter wheat harvest was complete. The recent settled weather has allowed fields to be cleared of the final crops. Farmers in the North East had to take opportunities where they could, between patchy showers and heavy dews. For Scotland, the winter wheat harvest was unusually early here, with wheat crops often harvested before spring barley.

Good straw yields have been quoted this year.

Yields

Yields have remained close to average, between 8.0-8.2t/ha (against a five-year average of 8.0t/ha). Current ranges are from 6.0-14.0t/ha, with plenty of reports of crops over 10.0t/ha. Milling wheats are ranging between 6.2-12.5t/ha.

Second wheats have performed well (where take-all was not an issue), with yields in line with first wheats.

Quality

Specific weights tend to be on the lower side, at 72-76kg/hl. There are occasional reports of up to 80-90kg/hl, but also reports of specific of specific weights dropping to 68kg/hl.

Hagberg falling numbers (HFN) started to drop in late harvested milling wheat crops, but earlier harvested crops had HFN's typically above 250s. In the West Midlands, HFN's have been particularly poor, with few samples achieving milling specification.

Protein content for milling varieties is typically ranging between 10.5-13.5%. Lower protein contents have been reported on some of the higher yielding crops (10+t/ha). In Eastern regions, protein levels over 13% are quoted, higher than most regions.

Moisture content. The grain drier has been used less in the last three weeks thanks to the fine weather. Many wheat crops were harvested at 14-16% moisture across the regions, requiring little drying. Overall, for this year's harvest, winter wheat moisture content has averaged between 15-22%.

Overall **mycotoxin** levels are low, with few reports of rejections. However, **ergot** is present in occasional batches.

Spring wheat

Harvest update

Spring wheat harvest progressed well and is completed in many regions. Initial reports indicate that spring wheat crops are yielding well so far. Ergot has been seen in some sample and in crops where high blackgrass burden is present.

Winter barley

Harvest update

Harvest is complete now in most regions, as has been seen by this point in harvest since at least 2014.

Yields

Yields are close to, to slightly improved, on the five-year average this season (6.8t/ha), between 6.9-7.1t/ha. Ranges from 4.4-10.5t/ha have been reported, with the lowest yields on light land. Malting barley yields are typically around 6.5-8.5t/ha.

Quality

Grain nitrogen levels typically range between 1.4-1.6%, with occasional reports of them dropping to 1.3%.

Specific weights are low in most regions (typically 60-64kg/hl). Slightly better weights are reported in the West Midlands and North West (66kg/hl). They are tending slightly higher on two row varieties than six row.

Germination levels of early harvested crops were typically over 98%, but more recent results show levels around 95-98%. However, later harvested crops affected by lodging have dropped to 90-92% and will fail malting specification.

About 20% of the GB crop was affected by **lodging**. In Eastern regions, the last winter barley to be harvested had been delayed by lodged or flat crops. The South East reports that 25% of the crop was lodged.

Moisture content has ranged from 14-20%.

Spring barley

Harvest update

Spring barley harvest is completed in southern and central England and Wales. Small areas are left to clear in northern England and Scotland. Nationally, 97% of the crop is now harvested, 2-percentage points ahead of the five-year average and at a similar rate to 2018.

The North East of England has made excellent progress over the last three weeks, moving from 5% harvested to 99% cleared. Scotland's harvest is also at 90% finished by this point.

Yields

Yields to date are good (5.9-6.3t/ha), ahead of the five-year average (5.7t/ha). Farm yields reported to date have ranged from 5.0-10.0t/ha, with malting varieties typically about a tonne lower than feed. Heavy land yields are also slightly higher than those from crops on lighter land.

The best yields are reporting off well drained heavy land in Yorkshire. Light land has yielded well compared to normal, with minimal impacts of water stress observed this season. Some of the best crops have pushed yields up to 8.0t/ha.

Lodging and brackling have been an issue for some, with affected crops seeing ear damage and loss as a result.

Quality

Most crops tested so far have **germination** between 95-99%.

Specific weights range from 62-65kg/hl. **Grain nitrogen** ranges from 1.2-1.7%, with Scottish crops averaging around 1.4%. **Screenings** to date are typically 1-7%.

Lodging is present, with variable reports received. Up to 40% of the crop has been affected in the South West. Other regions that have not reported lodging have not seen incidence higher than 15%.

Moisture levels have ranged as wide as 14-21% although averaging between 12-16%. Most of Scotland's crop harvested over the past three weeks has reported moisture content below 14%.

Oats

Harvest update

Harvest of winter and spring oats is now largely complete (99%), with just the occasional field of spring oats to cut in the North East and Scotland. This is in line with the five-year average.

Yields

Current winter oat yields range between 4.8-8.5t/ha. Spring oat yields in many cases are matching winter varieties, ranging from 4.4-8.5t/ha. Milling crops are typically between 6.5-8.0t/ha, with naked oats at the lower end of the range. In the North West, spring oats have largely been winter varieties sown in the spring, with good yields reported and quality holding up well.

Quality

Specific weights have generally been within milling specification, sitting between 49-53kg/hl. However ranges as wide as 42-62kg/hl have been reported. Winter varieties are tending to have lower specific weights than spring. In the West Midlands, the Mascani variety is producing good samples, with pleasing specific weights. Conversely, the Eastern region is seeing disappointing specific weights on winter varieties, especially where crops have lodged. They've seen high levels of trash in winter samples, indicating they were not fully ripe when harvested.

Moisture. Moisture content has pegged between 15-18% this year. While most of the crops cleared over the past three weeks have been at a lower moisture content, some have gone through the drier to clean up the grains and remove chaff.

Regionally, there have been some higher levels of lodging reported. For the South West, 40% of the crop is quoted to have suffered lodging, while this stands at 10% for Eastern areas.

Winter Oilseed Rape

Harvest update

Winter oilseed rape (WOSR) harvest is now complete, as is standard for this point in harvest.

Yields

WOSR yields are close, or slightly better, than the five-year average (3.3t/ha), ranging between 3.3-3.5t/ha. Good crops have yielded particularly well this year, with regular reports of over 4.0t/ha and occasional reports of over 5.0t/ha. Heavy land has yielded particularly well, but lighter land has also yielded well this season, with 3.5-4.5t/ha typical. A small proportion of crops that had a poor early start, suffered pigeon or rabbit grazing, or CSFB damage have suffered yield losses, dropping down to about 1.0-3.0t/ha.

Quality

Oil content for WOSR is tending to be around 44%, but some low oil percentages have been reported. This is especially where desiccation was a little early, with oil contents falling to around 40-42%.

In Eastern areas, higher yields have been reported in Norfolk away from **CSFB** pressure. In Essex and Cambs, lower yields are quoted in regions of CSFB pressure.

The majority of crops harvested in England during the last week were harvested at less than 9% **moisture**, although a few started with moistures of 11%. An estimated 80% of the volume harvested this week required drying. Moistures were higher in Scotland and Wales.