

# AHDB Harvest Report

Report 1 – Week 3

Week ending 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021

## Summary

This is the first harvest report of the 2021/22 season and covers the beginning of harvest until 27 July 2021. It is produced with data collected by RSK ADAS Ltd and compiled by AHDB.

The weather in June was beneficial for crop development in most regions. Provisional June temperatures for the UK were 1.2°C above the 1981 – 2010 average, which was needed after the particularly wet May. Sunshine hours were 104% of the June average.

However, storms in late June pushed rainfall figures above average for parts of South East England. East Anglia had 110% of average June rainfall. The storms in June and parts of July caused a degree of lodging within some fields, with winter barley crops reportedly experiencing the worst of it.

The changing weather conditions throughout the growing season meant slower crop development. As a result, the start to the winter barley harvest was a week or so late for most, owing to crop maturity levels. Winter oilseed rape (OSR) also saw a late start, with some fields only recently experiencing desiccation.

Harvesting of GB winter barley is estimated at **47% completed**, with nearly all progress made in the week ending 27 July. This is 6% ahead of the five-year average though behind last season by 8%.

For winter OSR, harvest progress is estimated at **9% complete**, again with almost all progress made in the week ending 27 July. This is 19% behind the five-year average, owing to the strong progress seen in 2020 and 2018. Progress is 37% behind last year.

A very small start has been made to the winter wheat harvest. Progress is estimated at only slightly above 0%, so further information is limited.

Yields of both winter barley and winter OSR are highly variable, perhaps an effect of the dry April and heavy May rainfall. Nationally, the winter barley early yield indications suggest an average of 6.6-7.0t/ha. This is more typical of 2018 yields and matches the 5-year average yield of 6.8t/ha. Initial winter OSR yield indications suggest an average of 3.0 – 3.4t/ha. The five-year average yield is 3.3t/ha.

Indications of the quality for both crops are based upon a small volume of samples processed to date and so could change in later reports. Winter barley specific weights so far are lower than usual, although the majority are reaching specification. The typical range is 60-64 kg/hl, although there is a large amount of variability across processed samples. Nitrogen contents are typically 1.4-1.6%, based on limited data. For winter OSR, early oil contents average between 43-45%.

## Straw

[Straw prices](#) were high throughout the 2020/21 season and into the beginning of this season. Straw supply has been increasingly tight for livestock producers owing to reduced levels from the 2020 harvest. As such, baling levels of barley straw have been high to take advantage of continued high prices in the opening week of July. However as further supply arrives, straw prices are likely to decline to more average levels. Early straw yields from winter barley for most regions have been good.

## Winter barley

### Harvest update

An estimated 47% of the GB winter barley area had been harvested by 27 July.

On the whole, harvest began in the week beginning 14 July with an estimated 2% of the total area cut in that week. Harvest was initially localised to the Midlands, Eastern England, and South East. However, every region but Scotland made progress in the week ending 27 July. The West Midlands is reportedly closest (90%) to completion.

The GB 2021 winter barley harvest is the third fastest progress rate since 2014. Bright sunny days were beneficial and enabled the bulk of progress to date to be made during the week ending 27 July.

Lodging has been a feature for some fields, ranging from an estimated 5% in the West Midlands to 25% in the South East. The poor stormy weather in late June and parts of July particularly affected crops with poor lodging resistance.

Localised thunderstorms and high rainfall paused harvest during the weekend for some, especially in the South East. But, most were able to resume on 26 or 27 July.

Very little grain drying has been required on the whole, with crops in parts of the South coming in below 14% moisture. The daily hot temperatures created a need for a degree of cooling for some samples.

### Yields

The current yield estimate for winter barley is 6.6 – 7.0t/ha, with the midpoint matching the five-year and ten-year average of 6.8t/ha. This mainly based on data from the south and east of England.

Yields reported have been variable, ranging between 5.0 and 10.0t/ha. Crops destined for malting have reported a typical range of 5.0 – 7.0t/ha, with a max of 9.0t/ha. Feed varieties have reported a max of 10.0t/ha for the best samples. Some of the better yields have been for crops in the East Midlands. In some cases, crops on lighter soils have reportedly been achieving lower yields than those on heavier soils.

### Quality

This is the first report in the series and only the second week of harvest so the volume of processed samples is low. As a result, quality reports are expected to change once more crops are analysed.

**Specific weight** – Specific weights are averaging 60 – 64 kg/hL, but are highly variable ranging from 58 – 72 kg/hL, with occasional reports as low as 51kg/hL. These are lower than usual but the majority of samples are hitting specification. Six-row varieties are often recording lower scores than two-row varieties.

**Screenings** – Typical screening reports are 5 – 8%.

**Grain nitrogen (malting varieties)** – Average N content is between 1.4% and 1.6% based from limited data. The range of samples is 1.3% - 1.7%.

**Moisture** – Very little grain drying has been required owing to frequent high daily temperatures. Moisture contents are averaging 12-14%.

**Germination** – A low volume of samples means data is limited for germination levels. The next report should include a range for germination percentages.

## Winter oilseed rape

### Harvest update

An estimated 9% of the GB winter oilseed rape (OSR) area was harvested by 27 July.

A very small percentage of the area was cut in the week ending 20 July, all in Eastern England. Harvest began for the Midlands and Southern regions in the week ending 27 July, with Eastern England at 24% complete by this date. Wales, Scotland and Northern regions had yet to begin the winter OSR harvest.

With crops slow to ripen, harvest progress has been slow to get going. In some regions, desiccation had yet to start, or had only just started, by the end of the reporting period. Harvest progress is the second slowest since 2014, only ahead of 2019, which was 3% complete at this point.

### Yields

Based on early progress, the average national yield estimate for winter OSR is 3.0 – 3.4t/ha. This range sits within the boundaries of the five-year average yield of 3.3t/ha. If realised, this yield would be above the 2.7t/ha average from 2020.

This yield estimate is based on progress made in the East, the Midlands and Southern regions. Additional data from the remainder of the crop could change the yield estimates. Fields with a large degree of CSFB damage are reportedly yet to be harvested in some regions.

Early yield reports are highly variable ranging between 2.0 – 4.7t/ha nationally. Lower yields are associated with CSFB, verticillium wilt, phoma and pod midge damage.

The [recent crop report highlighted that](#) condition scores were much better than last season. At the start of July 59% of the GB crop was estimated to be in 'good' to 'excellent' condition.

### Quality

As harvest progress has been slow, analysed samples are low in number but will pick up in time for the second harvest report.

**Oil content** – Average between 43% and 45% so far.

**Moisture** – Hot daily temperatures were beneficial to lowering moisture contents. Samples in the East of England have not required drying as a result. Some regions have reported moisture contents dropping below 8%.