

NOTE

This is the second harvest report of the 2022/23 season and covers the beginning of harvest up to 02 August 2022. It is produced with data collected by RSK ADAS Ltd and compiled by AHDB. The approach used is consistent with previous years allowing comparison of data and provides a snapshot of harvest progress throughout the harvest season. All harvest reports run from Wednesday to Tuesday – with data reported for the week ending on a Tuesday.

This report uses data from all 10 reporting regions. Harvest is nearly complete for winter barley and winter oilseed rape (WOSR) giving confidence in the data presented. Harvest of winter wheat, spring barley and oats has not started in some regions. Therefore, early yield and quality data for these crops is very much skewed and should not be considered to be representative of the whole country.

Grain and seed moistures from early harvested crops are below the standard 14.5% for winter barley and winter wheat, and 8% for oilseed rape. Therefore, the reported yields are unadjusted.

OVERVIEW

The average UK air temperature dropped for the week ending 26 July 2022 to 17.9°C. This was down 2.1°C from the previous week but is 1.7°C above the long-term average. Regional average air temperatures ranged from 16.1°C in Scotland, to 20.3°C in the Eastern region, with all regions recording temperatures above their long-term averages. The UK average temperature for the previous week (w/e 19th July 2022), was 20.0°C, compared to a long-term average of 16.1°C. Regional average temperatures were recorded between 17.3°C in Scotland and 22.2°C in the South East.

Rainfall has been variable. In week ending 26 July, 12.0mm of rain was recorded, compared with the UK long term average of 14.6mm. The Eastern region was the driest with just 1.2mm recorded, while the North West was wettest region with 26.9mm of rainfall.

Rain has hampered harvest progress for farmers in the western regions of England, Wales, and Scotland.

Winter wheat harvest is accelerating, with an estimated 30% of the GB harvest complete.

Winter barley harvest is almost complete at 99%, with just small amounts remaining in the North East and Scotland. Winter barley progress far exceeds recent years, with 2003 being the closest at 96% by week 4 of harvest.

WOSR harvest has reached completion in many areas, with 84% of the GB WOSR crop harvested

Grain movement is proving problematic. The rapid and early harvest has put pressure on haulage companies, with the number of lorries and drivers unable to keep up with demand, leading to difficulties getting grain off farm.

STRAW

Winter barley straw has been baled as usual, with some regions seeing brittle straw that is less favourable for baling. In Scotland there have been reports that the recent rain showers have affected the straw baling process. In terms of straw from the spring barley crop, cut to date in the Eastern region, very little has been baled as enough bales were produced from the winter barley crop.

For winter wheat, straw is being baled promptly, with good yields of clean straw. However, due to lower prices than last year, there is interest in chopping straw and returning it to the soil to conserve nutrients and reduce P&K applications. This in turn could reduce input costs.

Where oat straw is dry enough, it is being baled as it has a market value this year. Green sappy straw is requiring more time to dry out before baling.

WHEAT

WINTER WHEAT

Harvest update

Winter wheat harvest started for the most forward crops in South East and Eastern regions during the second week of July. With the full campaign starting in earnest during week ending 02 August.

It is estimated that 30% of the GB crop has been cleared to date. This rate of progress exceeds the five-year average and is only matched by 2014. In 2014, 30% of the winter wheat crop was harvested by week 4.

Winter wheat harvest has now started in most GB regions, except Wales, Scotland and the North East. However, it is expected harvest will start soon in these areas. Progress is ranging from 1% complete in the North West to 58% complete in the Eastern Region. Winter wheat harvest in the South East and South West is also expected to be around 50% complete.

There have been no reports of lodging.

Yields

Early yields reported have ranged from 6.5 t/ha from the lightest land, up to 14.0 t/ha from heavier land. This heavier land retained moisture during the extended period of dry weather during spring and summer. The current yield estimate for winter wheat is between 8.1t/ha and 8.5t/ha. This is largely based off data from the South and East of England. Preliminary yields of milling varieties are between 7.0 - 9.5 t/ha.

Yield variation partly reflects variable rainfall across the regions during late spring/early summer.

Quality

Quality data is based on samples mainly from the Southern and Eastern regions. Winter wheat quality has been good so far. No ergot has been reported so far.

Specific weights - Early specific weights are ranging between 76-85 kg/hl, which indicates dense grains that meet market requirements. The average specific weight is currently between 78-81kg/hl. The pleasing specific weights, alongside low levels of lodging, suggest that farmers have used appropriate levels of nitrogen throughout the growing season.

Hagberg falling numbers (HFN) - Hagberg falling numbers are ranging between 280-380 seconds on farm. In the data collected so far, milling varieties are typically coming in around 300 seconds.

Protein - On farm protein the range of protein levels is between 12% and 14%, with the average currently 12%-13%. In data collected so far, milling varieties are typically coming in at 12.5%.

Moisture levels - Most grain has been harvested at 13-15% moisture. Where rain showers fell last week, farmers had to put grain through the drier to condition it for storage. Moisture retentive areas have seen some green grains.

SPRING WHEAT

Harvest update

Harvest has begun in the Eastern region only, with early yields ranging from 8.0 - 8.5t/ha. Early drilled crops with good establishment are yielding better.

BARLEY

WINTER BARLEY

Harvest update

It is estimated that 99% of the GB winter barley harvest has been completed. There are small amounts remaining to be cleared in the North East and Scotland. The rate of progress far exceeds recent years, with only 2003 being close with 96% of the winter barley harvested by week 4 of harvest.

Minimal lodging/brackling of the crop has been reported, with only 1% of the total area affected.

In the East Midlands there have been reports of occasional downgrading of malting barley to feed at central stores due to ergot.

Yields

Yields are ranging from 6.5t/ha on the lightest land to 9.5t/ha on the heaviest land that has retained the most moisture. The GB average yield is 7.1 - 7.4t/ha, slightly above the 5-year average. Malting barley yields are typically ranging from 6 - 9t/ha.

Quality

Specific weights – The range of specific weight on farm is between 63-72kg/hl. However, there is variation seen between 6 and 2 row varieties, with some 6 row crops with a specific weight of 55-56kg/hl. The GB average winter barley specific weight is between 65-68kg/hl, which is slightly lower than the previous report which estimated 66-70kg/hl as the average.

However, this was based off early harvest information just from the Southern and Eastern regions.

Screenings – Screenings are typically at 2-4%, in line with average levels.

Grain nitrogen (malting varieties) – Nitrogen is averaging acceptable levels of 1.65-1.7%.

Moisture – Winter barley is currently averaging between 13.5% and 14.5% moisture content. Very little grain has required drying, the issue has been cooling grain to store it safely.

Germination - There is still limited data for germination levels. Subsequent reports should include more samples, allowing germination percentage ranges to be published.

SPRING BARLEY

Harvest update

Harvest has started in England, with 7% of the GB harvest complete to date. Very little has been cut as farmers are focusing on completing the winter wheat harvest. The North East, North West, Wales and Scotland haven't started spring barley harvest yet. While progress in Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands, South East and South West ranges between 1% and 3% complete, 48% of the total area has been cut in the Eastern region.

No lodging seen so far and no reports of ergot yet.

Yields

There is currently limited data on spring barley yields. Early yields are ranging from 5 - 10t/ha, with the lower yields on lighter land due to water stress and poor establishment.

Quality

To date there is very limited data on spring barley quality, with more information expected in future reports as harvest progresses.

Screenings - The initial results from the earliest crops suggest that there are low levels of screenings.

Grain nitrogen (malting varieties) – There are early reports of nitrogen levels between 1.65-1.85% (within acceptable levels).

Moisture - Little to no grain has been dried

WINTER OILSEED RAPE

Harvest update

WOSR harvest has reached completion in many areas, with 84% of the GB WOSR crop harvested. The North East (42% complete) and Scotland (8% complete) are the latest to harvest as crop desiccants have only recently been applied. Harvest is complete in Eastern, South East, South West and North West regions, with harvest very close to completion in Yorkshire and the Humber (93%) and the East Midlands (96%).

There has been very little lodging reported.

Thick green stems have slowed combine progress causing blockages where crops were not desiccated.

Yield

Yields are ranging between 2.1 - 5.0 t/ha on farm due to several factors. The lowest yields are from crops with poor establishment, water stress and pest/disease infestation. The highest yields are from crops with good establishment, in water retentive soil, with reduced pest disease pressure. The average yield remains unchanged from the first report at 3.0-3.4t/ha.

In the West Midlands, it has been reported that CSFB has had less of an impact on crops this year, with fewer adults seen in harvested seed and in stores.

Quality

Oil content - Oil content is typically ranging from 43-45%, with a few confirmed reports of 47% oil content.

Moisture - Little to none has been dried. The recent cooler temperatures have allowed farmers to harvest during the daytime as the moisture content has increased to an acceptable level. On farm the moisture content has been ranging from 6-11%. Early harvested WOSR had a number of occurrences of seeds with a moisture content below specification (below 5% moisture).

OATS

Harvest update

The oat harvest has begun in England and Scotland, with 10% of the total GB area estimated to have been harvested up to week ending 02 August. The Eastern region is furthest forward with 34% of the crop cleared. Oat harvest is yet to start in the North East, North West and Wales.

Very little spring oats have been harvested to date.

Yields

Winter oat yields are ranging from 5.0 - 7.9 t/ha.

Spring oat yields are ranging from 4.5 - 6.0 t/ha in the Eastern region where the spring oat harvest has just begun.

Quality

Information on quality is largely weighted to results from the Eastern and Southern regions.

Specific weights - Specific weights are ranging from 53 - 58 kg/hl with low levels of mycotoxins.

Moisture – There is limited data to provide an average moisture content at this point. However, reports suggest that oats are requiring some conditioning. The grain is typically at a suitable moisture content for harvest but becoming wetter as it passes through the combine due to sappy straw.