

NOTE

This is the third harvest report of the 2022/23 season and covers the beginning of harvest up to 09 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.

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

An excellent year for harvest progress so far, with 63% of the total GB harvest already complete. This far exceeds the five-year average by week 5 of 40% complete, with reports of some farmers having already completed harvest. However, this rate of progress is only marginally ahead of 2018, where harvest progress was at 59% by week 5.

Winter wheat harvest has started in all GB regions, with an estimated 65% of the total area cut to date. There are divergences in yields, with crops grown on heavier land yielding better than those grown on light soils, due to moisture retention.

The GB **winter barley** harvest is now complete, with all regions except the North East and Scotland finishing harvest in week 4. Like wheat, yields vary, depending on soil type. **Spring barley** harvest is 23% complete, driven by progress in the southern half of England.

Winter oilseed rape (WOSR) harvest is nearing completion at 95% cut to date. There are still some crops to be cut in the North East, East Midlands, Wales and Scotland.

Winter oat harvest is continuing, while **spring oat** harvest has got underway across southern regions. It is expected that 35% of the total crop has been cut to date.

There was hot, dry, settled weather for all regions over the last week, with minimal overnight dew allowing combines to work from early in the morning to late at night.

Grain stores are struggling to keep up with the volume of grain coming off the fields as grains ripen and are harvested rapidly. This highlights the shortage of lorries and drivers, which is affecting the rate of harvest progress for some, with combines halted due to no storage space left.

There has been very little grain dried, with the exception being if part of the field is unripe and still green. Grain conditioning is mainly focused on cooling the grain for safe storage.

Combine fires continue to be a safety concern

Grain markets have been volatile, with prices dropping as further exports are able to leave Ukraine amidst a third port reopening to allow grain exports to cross the Black Sea.

STRAW

Winter barley straw is of variable quality, with some hard to bale due to brittleness from being bleached by the sun. Prices are lower due to high quantities of straw being produced this year. For spring barley, the straw yield is decreasing the later the crop was drilled.

For winter wheat, baling continues for many. However, with plentiful supplies of good quality straw around, prices are not very competitive. This is leading to an increase in farmers choosing to chop straw and reincorporate it back into the soil to conserve nutrients and enable a P&K holiday.

In terms of oat straw, hot and dry conditions have ripened crops well, reducing the amount of green straw, allowing for baling.

WHEAT

WINTER WHEAT

Harvest update

Winter wheat harvest has now started in all GB regions. As at 9 August it is estimated that 65% of the GB winter wheat area had been harvested. This rate of progress exceeds the five-year average of 23% complete by week 5 and is just slightly ahead of the rate of progress seen in 2018 (just under 60% complete at this point in 2018).

In the East Midlands, South East, South West and Eastern region, winter wheat harvest is ranging between 78% and 85% complete. If the weather remains favourable for harvest in these regions, then it is likely that winter wheat will be completed over the coming week. In the North East and Scotland the winter wheat harvest has just started and is estimated at 1% and 8% complete respectively.

There have been very few reports of lodging, with less than 2% of the crop expected to have been affected.

Ergot is reported every year, often at low levels and is generally removed by optical sorters during grain processing. In places where there was rainfall during flowering there is a slightly higher risk of ergot and there have been occasional pockets reported, in parts of Lincolnshire and Kent. Overall, the occurrence of ergot is low.

Yields

Yields are currently ranging from 5.0t/ha on the lightest, most water stressed land and up to 14.0 t/ha on heavier soil that retained moisture following good establishment. The current yield estimate for winter wheat is 8.1-8.5t/ha. Yields of milling wheat varieties are currently ranging from 7.0-11.5t/ha.

Quality

Specific weights – Specific weights have been good so far and are currently ranging between 76-85kg/hl, with bright bold grains that meet market requirements. The pleasing specific weights, alongside low levels of lodging, indicate that farmers have used appropriate levels of nitrogen throughout the growing season.

Hagberg falling numbers (HFN) - Hagberg falling numbers ranging between 260-360 seconds on farm with the GB average currently at 280-320 seconds. Milling wheat varieties are typically averaging a HFN of 300 seconds.

Protein – On farm protein levels are ranging between 12.0% and 13.5%, with the GB average estimated at 12.0-13.0%. Milling varieties are typically at 12.5%.

Moisture levels - Very little grain has had to be dried, with most harvesting at 12-15% moisture. Conditioning grains by blowing air on to cool them has been a greater priority to ensure safe storage.

SPRING WHEAT

Harvest update

Spring wheat harvest remains in the early stages, with crops harvested in the East Midlands and Eastern region so far. Earlier drilled crops with better establishment are yielding 7.5-8.5 t/ha, while later drilled crops in lighter, drier soil yielding 5.0-7.0t/ha.

BARLEY

WINTER BARLEY

Harvest update

The GB winter barley harvest for 2022 is now complete, with all regions except the North East and Scotland completing harvest in week 4. This rate of progress is ahead of the five-year average of 87% complete by week 5.

Very little lodging reported, with less than 1% of the GB affected.

There have been limited amounts of ergot found in samples from central stores, which has resulted in some malting barley being downgraded to feed. However, it is unlikely that these levels are higher than previous years.

Yields

The yield has varied between 6.0t/ha on the lightest, driest land up to 12.5t/ha on the heaviest land that retained moisture. The GB average winter barley yield is 7.2-7.4t/ha, which is slightly higher than the previous five-year Defra average of 6.9t/ha.

Quality

Specific weights – Specific weights are ranging between 65kg/hl and 72kg/hl on farm, with hybrids producing slightly lower specific weights than two row varieties. The GB average winter barley specific weight is estimated at 66-68kg/hl.

Screenings – Screenings are averaging between 2-3%.

Grain nitrogen (malting varieties) – Reduced N applications, due high costs, has resulted in occasional samples recording grain nitrogen levels at 1.5%. However, most samples have been at acceptable levels, ranging between 1.6-1.8%. Grain nitrogen is averaging acceptable levels of 1.65-1.70%.

Moisture – The winter barley crop is averaging 14-15% moisture content. Very little grain has required drying.

Germination – Early samples indicate that winter barley germination levels are averaging between 95 and 99%.

SPRING BARLEY

Harvest update

23% of the GB spring barley harvest is now complete, with the North West and Scotland yet to start. This rate of progress exceeds the five-year average of 10% complete by week 5. Please note early data is dominated by crops harvested in the southern half of England.

There are currently low levels of mycotoxins in samples and limited reports of ergot.

Yields

Yields are varying between 5.0-10.0t/ha, again with lower yields from lighter, drier soils, and higher yields on heavier, moisture retentive soil. The GB average is currently estimated at 5.5-5.9t/ha. Malting barley yields are ranging between 5.0t/ha and 8.0t/ha, while feed barley yields are between 5.0t/ha and 10.0t/ha.

Quality

Early quality data is predominantly from information on crops harvested in the southern half of England.

Specific weights - Specific weights are currently in the range of 64-67kg/hl, indicating grains are of an acceptable density. The current GB average is 63-67kg/hl.

Screenings – Screenings are currently averaging between 1% and 5%.

Grain nitrogen (malting varieties) – Nitrogen content varying between 1.5-2.1% on farm, with the current average at 1.5-1.9%.

Moisture - Moisture content is varying from 10-17% on farm, with current average at 13-14%. Little drying has been required overall.

Grain nitrogen (malting varieties) – Early sample results suggest that germination is at 99%, with few reported problems, enabling grain to be accepted for malting.

WINTER OILSEED RAPE

Harvest update

The GB WOSR harvest is 95% complete with only the North East, East Midlands, Wales and Scotland with crops still to harvest. The rate of progress is ahead of the five-year average of 85% complete by week 5. This is a similar rate of progress to 2018.

Less than 1% of the GB area is expected to have been impacted by lodging.

Erucic acid levels above 2% have been found in occasional deliveries to central stores resulting in rejections and separate storage to prevent contamination of other oilseeds. Most UK WOSR varieties are 'double-low' allowing them to be suitable for human and animal consumption. High levels indicate contamination with weed species.

Yields

Yields are ranging from 1.7t/ha to 5.5t/ha on farm due to many factors. The lowest yields are seen in crops with poor establishment, water stress and pest/disease infestation. The

highest yields are from crops with good establishment, in water retentive soil and with reduced pest/disease pressure.

Quality

Oil content - Oil content is typically ranging from 42-47% on farm, with the national average at 44-45%.

Moisture - Very little WOSR has required drying. Some end users have refused to transport samples over 24°C for quality and safety reasons.

OATS

Harvest update

Winter oat harvest is continuing, with spring oat harvest just beginning across some regions. 35% of the oat area has been harvested in GB. Data is biased towards winter oats and crops from the southern half of England.

Low mycotoxins reported so far in winter and spring varieties, indicating low fungal burden on the oat crop.

Yields

Provisional yield data is suggesting yields of 6.5-7.25 t/ha for winter oats and 5.0-6.1t/ha for spring oats.

Quality

Information on quality is largely weighted to results of winter oats and from crops in the southern half of England.

Specific weights - Specific weights 55-58 kg/hl off the best winter crops established in moisture retentive land, indicating dense grains that received adequate nutrition. Lower specific weights in spring oats with poorer establishment in lighter, drier soil ranging from 52-53 kg/hl.

Moisture – Little drying has been required, with moisture levels ranging from 11-15% on farm. Grain moisture content is currently averaging 13-14%.