

## NOTE

This is the fifth harvest report of the 2023/24 season and covers the beginning of harvest up to 12 September 2023. 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.

Harvest progress data is available for all crops in all regions. The reported ranges within the text reflect and represent the observed on-farm variability in crops.

Grain and seed yields from early harvested crops are adjusted to a moisture content of 14.5% for cereals and 8% for oilseed rape.

## OVERVIEW

Weather conditions in recent weeks has been predominately hot and dry throughout the UK, with periods of dry weather providing good windows of opportunity for harvesting. The majority of regions experienced a heatwave alongside localised storms and showers. An average air temperature of 20.2°C was recorded during the week ending 12 September, which is well above the long-term average. Across the UK, the average rainfall for the week ending 12th September was 17.3 mm, which is just above the long-term average, although certain regions have experienced above-average rainfall.

**By 12 September, 99% of the total winter wheat area had been harvested**, up from 89% a fortnight earlier. Progress is now just above the five-year (2018-2022) average of 98% complete by this stage in the season.

**Both the winter barley and winter oilseed rape harvests are now complete.**

The **spring barley harvest was 87% complete** to 12 September. This is a little behind the 5-year average of 92% but has caught up from the lag at the start of harvest. Meanwhile **oats harvest is at 98% completion**, ahead of the 5-year average of 91%.

Green crops have been reported in some regions, particularly for spring oats. Despite this, the recent hot and dry weather has enabled most crops to be harvested.

Better weather has reduced the need for grain drying in recent weeks, although morning dews mean that some need for drying continues.

Straw yields have been variable across the regions, with late sown crops generally poor. A lot of straw has started to look weathered, although the weather conditions over the past week have provided good baling opportunities.

# WHEAT

## WINTER WHEAT

### Harvest update

Harvest progress data covers all regions for winter wheat. Recent drier and warmer weather has enabled winter wheat harvest to progress well over the past two weeks, with harvest now 99% complete.

All regions have now finished winter wheat harvest apart from the North East (99%), West Midlands (99.5%) and Scotland (83.6%) where harvest is in the closing stages.

In general, Hagberg falling numbers have been better than expected given the wet start to harvest and most have held up well in recent data, although they are now beginning to decline. Though the majority of milling wheat has already been harvested.

In the East Midlands, no mycotoxin issues have been reported. However, ergot has been present in some storage facilities, although this has generally been at low levels.

### Yields

Regional yield indications vary, with on-farm reports over the most recent week ranging from 5.0 t/ha to 12.5 t/ha. As with previous reports, higher yields have generally been achieved on heavier land compared to crops on lighter soils that experienced water stress.

Above-average yields have been reported for the South West, South East, East Midlands, Eastern region and Scotland, in the week ending 12 September. Larger variation of yields in the North East, North West, Yorkshire and West Midlands.

As of 12 September, the average GB winter wheat yield for all crops harvested to date is estimated at 7.8 - 8.2 t/ha, which is currently sitting around the five-year average.

### Quality

**Specific weights** – The GB average is currently 73 – 75 kg/hl, remaining the same in the last report a fortnight ago.

There is a wide range of results in the North West and Yorkshire. Also, there is reports in the Eastern, South West and Wales that specific weights are lower than GB averages.

**Hagberg falling number (HFN)** – Typical HFN are ranging between 200 – 220 nationally, down from 220 – 250 in the last report. There is also regional variation, with HFNs said to be holding up well in the North East and Eastern region despite the wet weather. In the East Midlands, HGN are reported to be acceptable. It's reported that in the West Midlands and South East region that HGN are now declining. Similar to a fortnight ago, low HFNs are the main issue for milling wheat in Yorkshire.

**Protein** – Typical national protein ranges from 12.5 – 13.0%, unchanged from the last report. In the East Midlands protein content has been acceptable. In the Eastern region, it is reported variable. This week in the South East, its reported that protein content is falling.

**Moisture** – The GB average is 15 – 16%. Rain and heavy dews in some areas meant drying continues for some. Over the past week, its reported that is Scotland around 20% of grain has been dried, and in Yorkshire this has been around 10%.

## BARLEY

## WINTER BARLEY

### Harvest update

As reported a fortnight ago, harvest is now complete in all regions.

### Yields

Yield indications were good, ranging between 6.2 to 9.0 t/ha. Crops on heavier land typically achieved slightly higher yields than those to lighter soils which suffered from water stress.

The typical GB average yield for all winter barley is still estimated between 6.8 – 7.2 t/ha, sitting around the five-year average.

### Quality

**Specific weights** – Specific weights have varied by region, ranging from 58 – 64 kg/hl on farm. The GB typical average is currently 63 – 65 kg/hl, with the low end slightly increasing from a fortnight ago.

**Screenings** – Screenings are low, typically between 2–5%.

**Grain nitrogen (malting varieties)** – The GB average grain nitrogen indications range between 1.5 – 1.7%.

**Germination (malting varieties)** – The GB average germination rate is reported as 96 – 98%.

**Moisture** – The GB average moisture content is 15 – 16%.

## SPRING BARLEY

### Harvest update

87% of the total harvest had been completed by 12 September, slightly behind the five-year average of 92%. At this point last year (week 10) harvest had just been finished nationally.

Spring Barley harvest has progressed well over the past fortnight, with many regions complete apart from the North East (90%), North West (99%), Yorkshire (99%), West Midlands (99.6%) and notably Scotland (66% complete).

### Yields

On farm, regional yields over the week range between 4.5 – 8.6 t/ha, with the top end slightly lower than a fortnight earlier. Variation in yields depends on varieties, sowing date, and soil type. Crops grown on heavier land have performed slightly better, as have earlier sown crops in general.

The current GB typical average for all crops harvested to date is 5.3 – 5.7 t/ha, slightly lower from report 4 (data to 29<sup>th</sup> August). This range is now below the previous five-year average of 5.8 t/ha.

### Quality

**Specific weights** – Specific weights are reportedly variable. In the East Midlands specific weights are generally 60 – 65 kg/hl, in the South East average specific weights are 62 kg/hl. For the West Midlands, specific weights vary from 57 – 67 kg/hl, and are likely to be lower in crops that still need cutting. Specific weights are reported in the South West lower in later drilled crops. In Yorkshire, specific weights have been variable.

The GB average is currently 61 – 63 kg/hl, decreasing slightly from a fortnight ago (62 – 64 kg/hl).

**Screenings** – The GB average for screenings is reported to be between 2 – 5%, decreasing slightly from a fortnight ago.

**Grain nitrogen (malting varieties)** – The majority of crops have had acceptable N content and there have not been any reports of any mycotoxin issues.

GB average grain nitrogen indications range between 1.5 – 1.7%, up from 1.5 – 1.6% in the previous report.

**Germination (malting varieties)** – The situation varies amongst the regions for which we have insights. In the Eastern region, germination levels are reported at 98%, and most crops in the East Midlands passing (98% germination). In the South West germination levels are around 96%. In Scotland germination is around 98%.

In Yorkshire, germination levels have been affected by the wet weather prior to harvest. Rates of 90-95% are common and are a major reason for malting rejections. Similar information in the West Midlands as quite a few crops have failed germination tests, 96-98% is common.

The GB average germination rate is reported as 96 – 98%, the same as a fortnight ago.

**Moisture** – The GB average moisture content is currently 14 – 17%.

## OATS

### Harvest update

The oat harvest has progressed well over the past two weeks, with 98% of the crop now harvested. This is ahead of the 5-year average of 91%.

Many regions in GB have completed their oat harvest apart from the North East (93%), North West (99%), Yorkshire (92%), West Midlands (99%) and Scotland (95%).

### Yields

Regional on-farm yields generally ranged between 5.7 - 8.6 t/ha for winter oats, and 3.7 - 8.5 t/ha for spring oats. As with other crops, sowing date and soil type are key influences on yield achieved. Naked oat yields have been variable, with yields ranging from 3 - 6.5 t/ha.

The GB average yield estimate for winter and spring oats harvested by 12 September 2023 is currently 4.9 – 5.5 t/ha. This is currently sitting around the five-year average of 5.4 t/ha.

### Quality

**Specific weights** – Specific weights are generally reported to be acceptable, albeit variable on a national scale.

In Yorkshire, specific weights have ranged from 50-56 kg/hl. In the East Midlands, specific weights have ranged between 42 - 57 kg/hl, some very low specific weights have been reported which were associated with poor yields. In the West Midlands, specific weights have ranged between 47 - 56 kg/hl. In the Eastern region, there has been reports of variable specific weights reported, ranging between 54 - 58 kg/hl for winter oats and ranging between 45 - 58 kg/hl for spring oat crops that were late sown and on lighter land. In the South of

England, specific weights are averaging 53 kg/hl. Finally in Scotland, specific weights are varied ranging between 44 - 56 kg/hl.

The typical GB average specific weight is ranging from 50 – 53 kg/hl.

**Moisture** – The GB average moisture content is currently at 14.5 – 15.5%.

## WINTER OILSEED RAPE

### Harvest update

Harvest is now complete in all regions.

### Yields

Yields ranged between 2.8 – 3.8 t/ha. Lower yields were primarily a result of inclement weather during the growing season, as well as significant pest damage in some regions, particularly from Cabbage Stem Flea Beetle (CSFB).

The typical GB average is currently estimated at 2.8 – 3.0 t/ha, below the five-year average.

### Quality

**Oil content** – GB average is currently at 43 – 44%, the same as the last report.

**Moisture** – Average weekly moisture contents generally range from 8 – 12% on farm.

## STRAW

Straw yields have been variable across regions, with late sown crops seeing generally poor yields. A lot of straw has started to look weathered, although the weather conditions over the past week have provided good baling opportunities.

For winter wheat, in Yorkshire straw yields have been variable, however there have been good baling opportunities as a result of recent dry weather. In the North East, more straw has been baled directly behind the combine. In the Midlands, straw has yielded well with baling almost complete, with more being baled due to the better weather. In the Eastern region, straw yields have been high, and baling is now complete. However, in the South West, straw is weathered and brittle, with only a small amount baled.

For spring barley, in Scotland, the recent drier weather has allowed for more baling of straw. However, straw yields are reportedly below average in the North West, and in the West Midlands straw is weathered and brittle.

For oats, straw yields have been variable in Yorkshire. In the East Midlands, there are reports of straw still being green and damp, but the recent hot weather has allowed for some drying before baling. Also, in Scotland it's reported that the straw is very green. In the West Midlands, straw yields have been good, with winter oats being particularly productive. In the Eastern region, baling is now complete, aided by the recent weather.