

## NOTE

This is the second harvest report of the 2023/24 season and covers the beginning of harvest up to 08 August 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 regions, though harvest is yet to start for certain crops in some areas. The areas covered are specified for each crop. The harvest insights in this report are based on information from the North East, Yorkshire, East Midlands, West Midlands, Eastern, South East and South West regions. This means early yield and quality data may not be considered representative for the whole country. Ranges presented within the written text reflect observed on-farm variability.

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

Since the first report, mild and wet weather has continued across the UK with an average air temperature of 14.9°C recorded during the week ending 08 August. This is 1.1°C below the long-term average. Across the UK, average rainfall for the week ending 08 August was 22.9 mm, which is 1.6 times higher than the long-term average. Unsettled weather has continued to delay harvest progress across most of the UK.

**For winter wheat, only 5% of the total area has been harvested**, which is below the five-year average of 36% complete by this stage in the season.

**Winter barley harvest is now 94% complete**, which is about on par with the five-year average of 93%. **Harvest of spring barley is 5% complete**, below the five-year average of 11% complete at this point in the season.

**Oat harvest is 5% complete**, and **winter oilseed rape harvest is 76% complete**, both below the five-year averages of 23% and 80% respectively.

Since the previous report, due to the recent rainfall there has been a slight increase in crop leaning and lodging in regions where reports are available. However, the overall rate of lodging remains relatively low across all crops, with only a few localised instances of more severe impacts.

Overall crop quality is variable between the regions where reports are available. This is a result of factors such as soil type, amount of rainfall, and varietal differences.

# WHEAT

## WINTER WHEAT

### Harvest update

Harvest progress data covers all regions for winter wheat, though harvest is yet to start in the North East and Scotland.

The winter wheat harvest has had a slow start due to recent rainfall. As a result, progress ranges from 0% in the North East and Scotland, to 15% harvested in the West Midlands. By 08 August, it is estimated that 5% of the GB winter wheat area had been harvested.

There have been some reports of crops lodging and leaning in some regions, but overall, the rate is expected to be relatively low.

### Yields

Early indications are that winter wheat yields are good and around the five-year average. The GB winter wheat yield is currently averaging 7.8 – 8.4 t/ha. On farm, yields are ranging from 6.2 - 13.0 t/ha. Higher yields are being achieved from crops on heavier land than crops on lighter soils, which previously experienced water stress.

### Quality

This is the first report in the series providing information on winter wheat, so the volume of processed samples is low. As a result, quality reports are expected to change once more crops are analysed.

**Specific weights** – Specific weights are ranging between 74-78 kg/hl.

**Hagberg falling number** – Limited data available at this point.

**Protein** – Limited data available at this point.

**Moisture** – The average grain moisture is around 16.8%. There has been a variation in drying requirements, but in some regions the majority of crops have reportedly needed drying, including the South West and East Midlands.

# BARLEY

## WINTER BARLEY

### Harvest update

Winter barley harvesting is nearing completion, with progress ranging from 87% complete in the North East to 99% completed in Wales. As of 08 August, 94% of the GB winter barley area was estimated to be cut.

### Yields

Winter barley yields are ranging from 5.0 – 12.0 t/ha on farm, with the higher yields achieved on heavier land. Lower yields are seen on lighter soils, which previously suffered from water stress, across most regions. Yields are on par with the five-year average, with the GB average currently estimated between 6.8 – 7.2 t/ha.

## Quality

**Specific weights** – Specific weights have been quite variable, ranging from 58 – 64 kg/hl on farm. The GB average is currently 62 – 64 kg/hl. Crops that have been grown on heavy land have generally averaged higher specific weights compared to those on water-stressed, lighter soils.

**Screenings** – Screenings are currently low ranging between 2 – 4% on farm. There is currently not enough data to produce a GB average. Some regions, such as the East Midlands, have reported variability in screenings.

**Grain nitrogen (malting varieties)** – Early grain nitrogen indications range between 1.5-1.7%. However, there is limited data available at this point, and insufficient to produce a GB average.

**Moisture** – The GB average moisture content is currently 15 – 17%. As with winter wheat, a large proportion of the crop needed drying in some regions.

## SPRING BARLEY

### Harvest update

Only the earliest sown spring barley crops have been harvested. Crops planted in March/April should be ready for harvest in the coming weeks. Around 5% of the GB spring barley area had been harvested up to 08 August.

Harvest is furthest ahead in the Eastern region where 20% has been cut. Harvest has not yet begun in the North East, North West, Scotland and Wales.

### Yields

On farm, regional yields range between 5.0 - 9.0 t/ha. The current GB average is 5.2 – 5.8 t/ha.

### Quality

This is the first report in the series providing information on spring barley, so the volume of processed samples is low. As a result, quality reports are expected to change once more crops are analysed.

Generally, specific weights and nitrogen content are reported as acceptable. However, numbers are variable as they are based on the small number of early crops already harvested.

The moisture content of the GB crop is currently averaging 14 – 18%. In some regions, such as the East, there have been concerns over lodging, so crops are being harvested at a higher moisture and being dried carefully to prevent damage in the field. There have also been some reports of weathered and deteriorating crops in some regions.

## OATS

### Harvest update

As of 08 August, 5% of the GB oat area was harvested, behind the previous five-year average. All regions, except Yorkshire, have started harvesting oats. Wales are the most advanced, with 20% of its oat area now cut.

### Yields

Yields generally range between 4.0 - 7.0 t/ha on farm and vary depending on type, variety, and soil type. The GB average yield is currently 4.9 – 5.5 t/ha.

### Quality

This is the first report in the series providing information on oats, so the volume of processed samples is low. As a result, quality reports are expected to change once more crops are analysed.

**Specific weights** – Specific weights are generally acceptable. There is currently limited data to produce a GB average.

**Moisture** – The majority of harvested grain has needed drying, with the GB average moisture content currently at 16 – 18%.

## WINTER OILSEED RAPE

### Harvest update

Harvesting of winter oilseed rape (WOSR) has now started in all regions, although it remains in the early stages in Scotland. As of 08 August, 76% of the GB crop has been harvested, down from 95% cut by this point last year and behind the five-year average pace of 80%.

### Yields

Yields so far are variable, ranging from 1.3 – 4.8 t/ha on farm. Generally, yields are poor, with the GB average currently at 2.7 - 3.0 t/ha. Lower yields have largely been a result of inclement weather, pigeon and pest damage, and smaller seed sizes due to high temperatures in early June.

### Quality

**Oil content** – currently ranging between 42 - 46% on farm, with the GB average currently at 43 – 45%.

**Moisture** – Moisture contents generally range from 8 - 20% on farm, with few reports of up to 25%. Large proportions of the crop, especially in the more northern regions have needed to be dried. Smaller volumes require drying in southern regions.

## STRAW

Early indications suggest that more winter wheat straw has been chopped than initially anticipated in some regions, including the East Midlands, West Midlands and South West, due to the poor weather. In the Eastern region, winter wheat straw yields have been good so far, but there have been issues with baling due to the wet conditions.

Similar to wheat, winter barley straw yields have been reported as good in some regions, such as Yorkshire and the Eastern region. However, there have been issues with getting it baled due to the wet weather. The South East have reported good straw quality too, especially for fields that have been baled ahead of the rain. Spring barley straw yields are variable, depending on when the crop was planted. In some regions, such as the Eastern region, the spring barley straw has been chopped instead of being baled due to sufficient levels of winter barley straw.

Due to the poor weather, little oat straw has been baled yet, with plenty being chopped instead.