

AHDB HARVEST REPORT

Report 4 – Week 7

Week ending 20 August 2025



OVERVIEW

This harvest has been extremely challenging for many growers, with considerable variability in yields across the country, within regions and even farms.

Even where yields have been above expectations, price declines throughout the course of the year will have a significant impact on the profitability and cash flow for arable farms. For those recording low yields, the situation looks even more challenging. This is exacerbated by two difficult years 2024 and 2025 occurring consecutively.

	Harvest 2025 to date*		Historical UK average yield, t/ha					
	% complete	Estimated UK average yield, t/ha	Five-year average	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Wheat	92%	7.3	7.8	7.3	8.1	8.6	7.8	7.0
Winter barley	100%	6.7	6.7	6.4	7.0	7.4	6.8	6.2
Spring barley	68%	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.5	6.1	5.7	5.8
Winter oilseed rape**	100%	3.7	3.1	2.8	3.1	3.7	3.2	2.7
Oats	89%	4.8	5.3	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.6	4.9

Source: Defra, AHDB

*up to 20 August 2025, (week 7).

**historical yields include both winter and spring oilseed rape.

Overall, the harvest has progressed well, with most winter cereals now cut. With good weather, the remaining winter cereal crops will likely be cut by the end of this week, or early next week in the North. For many, harvest will have finished two weeks or more ahead of a typical year.

Spring barley harvesting is estimated to be 68% complete, with the majority remaining to be cut in the north of England, Northern Ireland and Scotland. As the harvest of spring barley has moved further north, the grain quality has proved more challenging with very high screening levels, resulting in rejections.

WINTER BARLEY

Harvest update

The winter barley harvest was completed in the week ending 06 August, in line with 2024 but ahead of the five-year average.

Yields

As with all crops in all regions, there is significant farm-to-farm variability in winter barley yields. The many different drivers include soil type and local rainfall levels, grass weed pressures and varietal choice, to name a few. For farmers in this survey, winter barley yields ranged from 4.09 t/ha to 8.27 t/ha, highlighting the intense variability between farms.

Further yield data from farms in Scotland since our last report shows a slight downward revision in the yield picture for the UK. The average UK yield is now estimated 1% below the five-year (2020-2024) average at 6.66 t/ha. However, the five-year average contains two years with particularly low yields, 2020 and 2024. Compared to the 10-year average, the 2025 average would represent a fall of 4%.

Quality

Quality of winter barley has generally been good, with high specific weights and low levels of screenings. However, nitrogen levels have been higher than normal, which could impact on end-market usability.

Specific weight – Specific weights are coming in between 61 – 73 kg/hl, with an average across all regions of 65 kg/hl.

Screenings – Grain size is good, with screening retentions (on a 2.25 mm sieve) for winter barley averaging 99%.

Grain nitrogen (for malting varieties) – Nitrogen levels for winter malting barley range from 1.4% to 2.0%, averaging 1.7%. Given the hot and dry weather in the late spring and into early summer, it is not surprising that nitrogen levels are reported as high. This may prove challenging for some end markets, with the majority of malting barley requirements as reported by [MAGB](#) in the 1.66% to 1.85% range.

Moisture – Moisture levels of winter barley crops averaged 14.3%.

Germination – There are no reported problems with germination in the winter malting crop, with the crop averaging 99%.

WINTER OILSEED RAPE

Harvest update

The winter oilseed rape (WOSR) harvest was complete by 8 August, slightly ahead of 2024 and the five-year average of 82%.

Yields

Yields for WOSR crops harvested before storm Floris were generally good, but those harvested after experienced yield losses owing to seeds being knocked out of pods.

The national average yield for WOSR is calculated to be 3.7 t/ha based on the results from farms in this survey. This is up 20% on the five-year (2020-2024) average and the joint highest since 2015, in line with 2022.

As with all other crops in this report there is significant variation in the yields reported during the survey. These yields range from 9% below the five-year average to 42% above the five-year average. The large increases against the five-year average are reported in regions that have struggled with oilseed rape in recent years. For those farms, “normal” yields are reported against some really challenging five-year averages.

Quality

Oil content – Oil content is averaging around 45%, with a range of 42%-46%.

Moisture – Average moisture of oilseed rape is reported to be 8.6%. with a range from 8% to 10%.

OATS

Harvest update

The oat harvest is reported to be 89% complete in the UK as at 20 August, up from 48% a fortnight ago, with most progress made in the past week. This well ahead of last year's 61% complete and the five-year average pace (55% complete).

The oat crop is 88% combined in the North East, 82% in Northern Ireland and 34% complete in Scotland.

Yields

Based on data reported so far, yields are down on the five-year average by 10% at 4.8t/ha, albeit with significant variation from 17% up to 28% down on the five-year averages. With oat harvesting ongoing, this estimate is still subject to change.

The challenges of weather conditions through this spring markedly limited oat yields for many. But alongside the weather challenges, the [Sustainable Farming Incentive](#) (SFI) in England could have also impacted spring cereal yields. According to data from [Defra](#) 14,700 hectares of land has been entered into the low input harvested cereal option, which limits use of certain active ingredients and restricts seed rate.

Quality

While winter oat quality has generally been good, spring oats have struggled more, with both lower yields and specific weights reported. Harvest is still ongoing so the quality of spring oats will continue to be monitored.

Specific weight – Specific weights for winter oats are averaging 53 kg/hl, but spring oats have reportedly been light, with lower yields and specific weights reported. This brings the average specific weight of all oats analysed so far down to 50kg/hl, with a significant range.

Moisture – The average moisture of oats is reported as 13.5% but ranging from 10.0% to 16.5%.

WHEAT

Harvest update

As of Wednesday 20 August, 92% of the wheat crop had been cut in the UK, up from the 48% complete by 06 August. This is ahead of the pace in the past two years and only slightly behind 2022, when 98% had been cut by the end of week 7.

Some areas are left to be cut on farms in the survey in the South West, Yorkshire and the North East, although it is thought these will be wrapped up imminently. In Scotland, an estimated 37% of the crop has been cut, while in Northern Ireland the wheat harvest is two-thirds complete.

Yields

The wheat harvest has had arguably the greatest level of variation so far. There is significant variation in yield between and within farms, regions and across the UK, which means this survey is unlikely to reflect all individual farm circumstances.

A large number of those in the survey have had some of the worst years on recent record. Some 30% of the farms in this survey are down on yield by 10% or more against their five-

year average. The lowest reported during the survey is a 29% decline against the farms' five-year average wheat yield.

Meanwhile, farm participants in Scotland, the South East and West and Wales report having better years. For Scotland, the volume of data on yields will increase in the coming weeks.

With some yield assessments still to be made, final yields are not yet known. This variability makes it particularly challenging to draw national and regional pictures about yields this season.

Based on the sample of farms in this survey, the average UK wheat yield is estimated at 7.3t/ha, 5.4% below the five-year average. Furthermore, it is worth bearing in mind that the five-year average includes two particularly challenging years, 2020 and 2024. The estimated 2025 UK wheat yield falls 9.1% below the 10-year average.

The significant variation in yield driven by many factors. These include the availability of moisture throughout the growing season, changes in cultivations and changes in grassweed pressures. In addition, there are potential changes in the area being farmed with some less productive land in England moved into the SFI scheme.

The weight of grain relative to the volume is also an important consideration. Specific weights this year are very good so far, which is leading to smaller, heavier grain heaps in some cases.

Quality

Wheat quality, as reported by trade, remains largely positive, with high protein levels and specific weights in UK Flour Millers Group 1 samples. For some, Hagberg Falling Number (HFN) levels did decline slightly after heavy rain in early August.

Specific weight – Specific weights are good, with a high of 84 kg/hl reported in one case, and an average to date of 79-80kg/hl in England.

Hagberg Falling Number (HFN) – HFNs have generally been good and in excess of 300s for Group 1 samples. However, there have been some limited reports of HFNs as low as the 220s after the rain in early August.

Protein – Protein contents are often 13.5% or higher for Group 1 samples.

Moisture – The average moisture observed across the UK so far is 14.4%, though with a range of 12.2% – 17.0%.

SPRING BARLEY

Harvest update

The spring barley harvest is now estimated to be 68% complete at the national level, following strong progress in the past week. The harvest pace is well ahead of last year (32% complete by week 7) and the five-year average (42% complete).

Although there are pockets of the crop in many regions across the country still to be cut, the majority of what remains is in Scotland, Yorkshire, the North East and Northern Ireland.

In Scotland, the spring barley harvest is reported to be 29% complete.

Yields

The yield picture for spring barley is complex. After some promising early reports, the range in spring barley yields reported within this survey runs from 26% below the five-year average, to 21% above it. As this is a survey, even this wide range in reported yields will not reflect all farm situations and could show significant variation in some cases.

While the average for farms in this survey that have harvested so far is currently showing as 1% above the UK five-year average, it's important to keep this extreme variability in mind.

A dry spring in 2025 for planting spring barley benefitted crops where there was sufficient rainfall, although this was not the case for many. This was compounded by the considerable variability in late-May / early-June rainfall, both within and between regions.

Quality

While early quality of spring barley was good, reflecting crops in southern England, this picture has changed as harvest has progressed further north. Over the past fortnight, there have been reports of crops not making malting quality, largely due to high screening levels. Nitrogen content has been more 'typical' in the north and Scotland, but screenings of 30% have been mentioned.

With large areas still to be harvested in Scotland and northeastern England, this data may change as further results are analysed.

Specific weight – Specific weights have generally been okay with reports crops averaging 66kg/hl so far in England, although there is significant variability. A range is not presented due to limited information yet for Scotland and the North of England due to their earlier stages of harvesting.

Screenings – There is a clear split in screenings between crops in Southern England and those in the North of England and Scotland. Screenings have not been an issue in England, however, in Scotland screenings of 20-30% have been discussed, with more in some cases.

Grain nitrogen (for malting varieties) – The nitrogen level of malting varieties ranges from 1.3% to 2.0% so far but again, there is a split between England and Scotland. In the South of England nitrogen levels are high, whereas there have been very few issues to date with nitrogen levels in Scotland.

Moisture – Moisture levels of crops harvested to date have averaged 14.2%.

Germination – There are no reported issues so far with germination, averaging 99%.

PULSES

Harvesting pulse crops has been challenging this season. Hot and dry conditions at harvest leave many cutting beans early in the morning before pods become too brittle.

Taking an average across all farms who have reported yield data for pulses, yields are 15% down on their combined five-year average. This is a different approach to calculating other yields with Defra not providing regional data, as such this is not weighted according to area. The range in yields on pulses is from 69% below the five-year average to 42% above; actual yields range from 1.0 to 5.6 t/ha.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

This is the fourth harvest report of the 2025/26 season and covers data up to the week ending 20 August 2025, which is the fifth week of the 'typical' harvest period. It is produced with data collected by The Andersons Centre and compiled by AHDB.

The information is based on a sample survey of farmers in the United Kingdom (including Northern Ireland). They provide information on harvest progress, yields, grain moisture levels and insights on straw production. The sample is chosen to represent the cropping mix (wheat, barley, oats and oilseed rape) by region/country, with more widely grown crops and higher producing regions having more coverage. Information on grain and oilseed quality is provided by a panel of merchants.

With harvesting still underway, yield and quality data will likely be skewed to those regions where more harvesting has taken place. They should not yet be considered representative of the whole country.

Please note that these harvest progress reports are separate from [AHDB's Recommended Lists harvest data](#), which includes results from their variety trials.

Grain and seed yields from early harvested crops are based on farmer reported yields. The percentage deviation between the farmers reported yield and the five-year average is applied to the regional five-year average quoted by Defra. Yields have been adjusted where moisture is above 14.5% for cereals and 8% for oilseed rape. Moisture levels below 14.5% and 8% have not been adjusted.