



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



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Farming Statistics Provisional 2015 cereal and oilseed rape production estimates United Kingdom

This release contains provisional estimates for the size of the UK cereals and oilseed rape harvest for 2015. There has been a delay in the publication of these statistics, which were originally intended to be released on the 15th October 2015 alongside the provisional crop area and livestock estimates from the UK June Surveys of Agriculture and Horticulture. Final results from both surveys will be published on 17 December 2015.

As part of our quality assurance process, it was found that a small number of invalid records had been included in calculating the wheat and barley production figures that were published on the 8th October. It was not possible to rectify this and produce revisions in time for publication on the 15th October. These revised statistics replace the wheat and barley production statistics published on the 8th October 2015.

Internal validation processes have been changed to prevent this happening in future. Production estimates from earlier years have been checked and are not affected.

The key results are given below.

Crop areas, yields and production ([Tables 1 - 3](#))

Wheat: UK wheat yields increased by 2.8% rising from 8.6 tonnes per hectares in 2014 to 8.8 tonnes per hectare in 2015. This is the highest the UK wheat yield has reached in the past 25 years.

Barley: Strong yields and an increase in area planted led to an increase of 5.3% in UK barley production between 2014 and 2015. The provisional production estimate for 2015 is almost 7.3 million tonnes. Winter and spring planted barley both saw increases in area; however it was winter barley that saw the larger increase (7.5%) in production due to a 4.4% increase in yield to 7.5 tonnes per hectare.

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Oats: Provisional oat yields saw a small decrease (0.8%) in 2015. This combined with a 4.3% decrease in area planted led to a drop of 5.1% in production to 779 thousand tonnes.

Oilseed rape: The provisional oilseed rape harvest has shown a decrease of 5.6% to 2.3 million tonnes in 2015. This decrease in production has been a result of a 3.3% decrease in the planted area. The overall oilseed rape yield has remained almost unchanged at 3.6 tonnes per hectare in 2015.

Survey methodology, data uses, next publications ([pages 7 - 8](#))

Information on how each of the UK countries runs their surveys can be found on pages 7 to 8 along with data uses and upcoming publication dates.

Detailed results

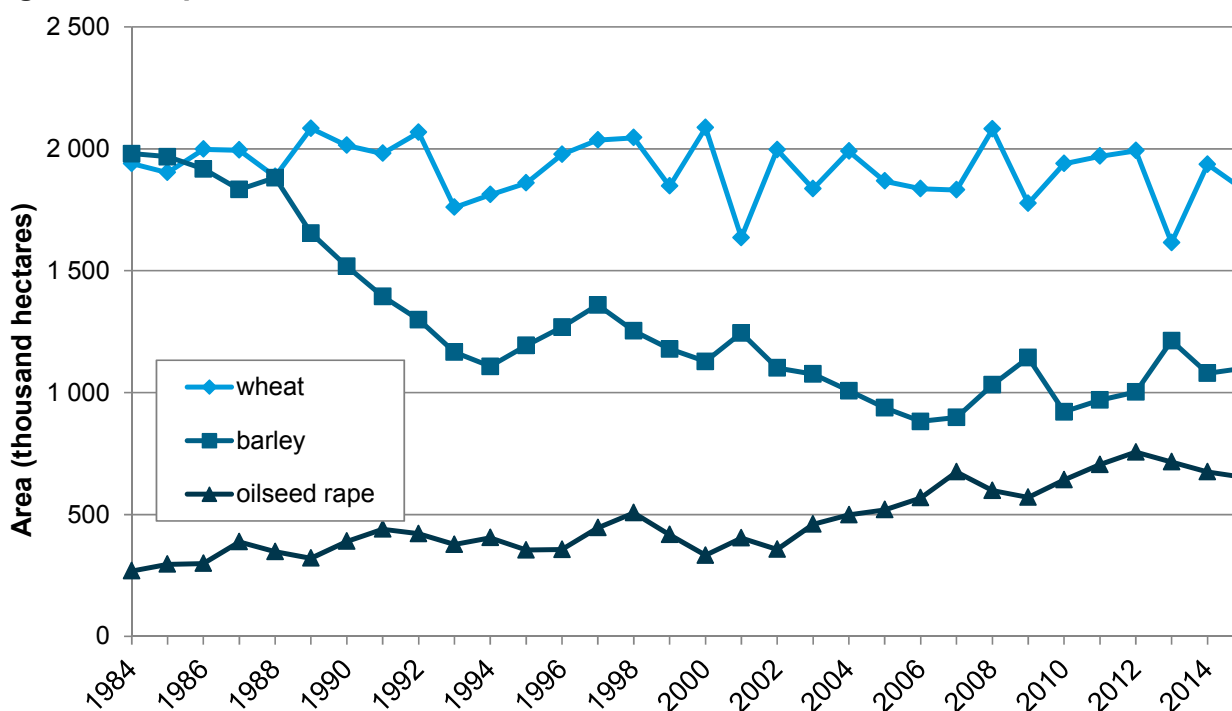
Cereals and oilseeds

The provisional UK cereal and oilseed areas from the June Surveys of Agriculture and Horticulture were published on 15th October 2015. These areas and figures from the Cereal and Oilseed Production Survey are used to produce provisional estimates of the size of the UK harvest.

UK June crop areas shown here in table 1 may differ slightly to those provisional areas published on the 15th October. This is due to more up to date figures now being available from Scotland and UK totals have been updated accordingly.

Figure 1 shows the area of the three most popular crops grown in the UK; wheat, barley and oilseed rape. These areas are shown for reference as any changes in area planted will have an impact on the size of the harvest.

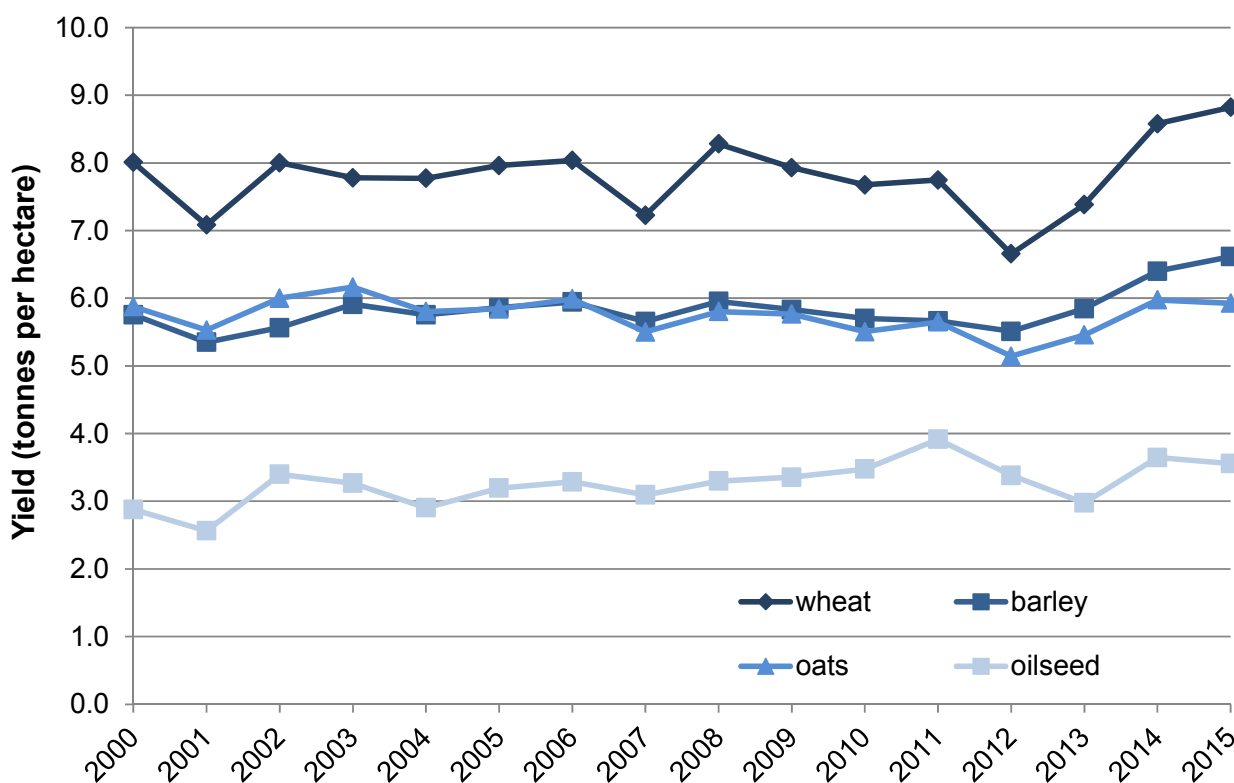
Figure 1: Crop areas in the UK between 1984 and 2015



As a whole, cereal crops have performed well this year, with the overall yield for total cereals showing a 2.6% increase from 7.7 tonnes per hectare in 2014 to 7.9 tonnes per hectare in 2015. Although some regions have faced delays, there have been no major weather incidents to hamper the harvest as a whole. There has been no stand out issues relating to pests and disease, which may also contribute to the strong yields. As a result of the increase in yield, total cereal production has remained stable at 24.5 million tonnes. This is despite the 2.5% decrease seen in the total cereals area.

As expected the yields for individual crops differ greatly (Figure 2). The UK wheat yield has continued to increase in recent years and now stands at 8.8 tonnes per hectare, the highest it has been in the past 25 years. The UK barley yield also increased in 2015, largely as a result of a 4.4% increase in the winter barley yield. Yields for oilseed rape remained almost unchanged at 3.6 tonnes per hectare.

Figure 2: UK crop yields between 2000 and 2015

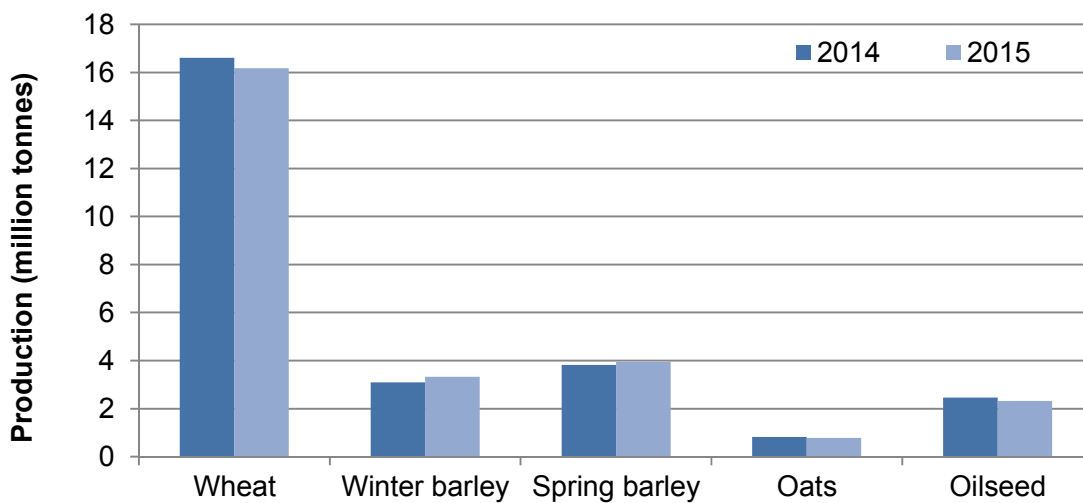


The combined effect of changes in areas planted and the achieved yields can be seen in the production estimates in figure 3 and table 3.

The increased wheat yield helped to partially offset the 5.3% fall in area. This resulted in a 2.6% decrease in production, which fell from 16.6 million tonnes in 2014 to 16.2 million tonnes in 2015. Although lower than in 2014, the wheat harvest in 2015 is still the second largest since 2008.

Winter and spring barley both saw increased levels of production in 2015. The 3.5% increase in spring barley production was due to a 1.1% increase in area planted and a 2.3% increase in yield to 6.0 tonnes per hectare.

Figure 3: Crop production in the UK between 2014 and 2015



Winter barley also increased in area. This combined with a 4.4% increase in yield to 7.5 tonnes per hectare led to a 7.5% rise in production to 3.3 million tonnes. This resulted in a total UK barley harvest of almost 7.3 million tonnes.

Oat production decreased by 5.1% in 2015 and fell from 820 thousand tonnes in 2014 to 779 thousand tonnes. The yield saw a small decrease of 0.8% from 6.0 to 5.9 tonnes per hectare. The fall was largely due to the reduced area planted.

Despite a stable yield of 3.6 tonnes per hectare the amount of oilseed rape produced in the UK fell by 5.6% between 2014 and 2015. The fall in production to 2.3 million tonnes is largely due to the smaller area planted.

Results Tables

Table 1: Area of cereals and oilseed rape on agricultural holdings on 1 June

	Thousand hectares					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% change 2015-14
Cereals	3 075	3 142	3 028	3 179	3 100	-2.5
Wheat	1 969	1 992	1 615	1 936	1 833	-5.3
Barley	970	1 002	1 213	1 080	1 100	1.9
winter	359	385	310	429	442	2.9
spring	611	618	903	651	658	1.1
Oats	109	122	177	137	131	-4.3
Minor cereals ^(b)	27	26	24	26	36	36.6
Oilseed rape	705	756	715	675	653	-3.3

Source: UK Agriculture departments June Survey/Census of Agriculture.

(a) UK June crop areas shown here differ slightly to those provisional areas published on the 15th October. This is due to more up to date figures now being available from Scotland and UK totals have been updated accordingly.

(b) Minor cereals are a total of rye, mixed corn and triticale.

Table 2: Yield of cereals and oilseed rape on agricultural holdings

	Tonnes per hectare					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% change 2015-14
Cereals^(a)	7.0	6.2	6.6	7.7	7.9	2.6
Wheat	7.7	6.7	7.4	8.6	8.8	2.8
Barley	5.7	5.5	5.8	6.4	6.6	3.4
winter	6.1	6.4	6.4	7.2	7.5	4.4
spring	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.9	6.0	2.3
Oats	5.6	5.1	5.5	6.0	5.9	-0.8
Minor cereals ^(b)	4.4	4.0	4.4	5.0	6.9	38.0
Oilseed rape^(c)	3.9	3.4	3.0	3.6	3.6	-2.4

(a) All cereal production estimates have been standardised to 14.5% moisture content.

(b) Minor cereals are a total of rye, mixed corn and triticale.

(c) Oilseed rape production estimates have been standardised to 9% moisture content.

Table 3: Production of cereals and oilseed rape on agricultural holdings

	Thousand tonnes					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	% change 2015-14
Cereals^(a)	21 485	19 515	20 084	24 468	24 473	0.0
Wheat	15 257	13 261	11 921	16 606	16 171	-2.6
Barley	5 494	5 522	7 092	6 911	7 276	5.3
winter	2 200	2 456	1 983	3 094	3 324	7.5
spring	3 294	3 066	5 110	3 817	3 952	3.5
Oats	613	627	964	820	779	-5.1
Minor cereals ^(b)	120	105	107	131	247	88.5
Oilseed rape^(c)	2 758	2 557	2 128	2 460	2 322	-5.6

(a) All cereal production estimates have been standardised to 14.5% moisture content.

(b) Minor cereals are a total of rye, mixed corn and triticale.

(c) Oilseed rape production estimates have been standardised to 9% moisture content.

Methodology: Cereal and Oilseed Rape Production Survey

England

Results are based on provisional results from the Cereal and Oilseed Rape Production Survey, a representative sample of cereal and oilseed rape growers across English regions and farm sizes. These provisional results are based on responses from 2,075 farms (59% response rate) across the country (see table 4).

Table 4: Response rate for Cereal and Oilseed Rape Production Survey 2015 by region

English region	Number sampled	Number of responses	Response rate (%)
North East	163	76	47
North West and Merseyside	249	136	55
Yorkshire and the Humber	520	266	51
East Midlands	456	273	60
West Midlands	246	130	53
Eastern	879	588	67
South East and London	391	242	62
South West	598	364	61
Total	3502	2075	59

The Cereal and Oilseed Rape Production Survey gathers data on production tonnages and moisture content for the various cereal and oilseed rape crops and seeks confirmation of the planted areas for these crops gathered from the June Survey of Agriculture and Horticulture. All moisture contents are standardised to ensure production estimates are comparable. Cereal production estimates are standardised to 14.5% moisture content and oilseed rape to 9% moisture content, with production tonnages being adjusted accordingly. These data are then used to calculate regional yield estimates for each crop type. Yield estimates are applied to regional June crop areas to derive England production estimates for each of the cereal and oilseed rape crops.

Wales

No yield data were collected for Wales. The Welsh production figures have been estimated on a regional basis within Wales using the final results of the June 2014 Survey along with the yields for the English regions bordering Wales.

Scotland

The 2015 estimates of production are based on provisional crop areas from the 2015 June Survey of Agriculture and Horticulture, along with crop yield estimates from Scottish Government Agricultural Staff, supplemented by discussions with industry experts and trade organisations.

Northern Ireland

Areas are based on final estimates from the 2015 June Survey of Agriculture and Horticulture. Production figures are based on yield estimates from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland.

Data notes

The cereal production (tonnage) figures include tail corn, cereals still to be harvested for grain, grain to be crimped and cereals intended for seed production. The figures exclude crops which have become unfit for harvesting, carry over stocks from the 2014 harvest, bought in grain and crops harvested as wholecrop for silage.

Data uses and users

- Data on crop areas help us monitor the long term trends in cropping. Amongst many other things, this helps us assess the impacts of the abolition of formal set-aside.
- The cereals and oilseed rape harvest estimates are heavily used by the cereals industry to monitor the availability of grain throughout the year.
- Any changes in the agricultural sector also affect people. For many, it is their livelihood and a way of life.

Other survey results and publications

Final results from the Cereal and Oilseed Rape Production survey will be published alongside the final crop area, livestock population and agricultural workforce estimates from the June Survey of Agriculture and Horticulture. Release details are shown below:

UK Publication

- 17 December 2015: Farming Statistics final crop areas, yields, livestock populations and agricultural workforce at 1 June 2015 – United Kingdom.

Please note that the publication date is provisional and subject to change.

Regional results for cereal and oilseed rape production are available on our website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs/series/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry>.

More detailed results from the June Survey can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-in-england-and-the-uk-at-june>. This includes various time series of crop areas and livestock numbers dating back as early as 1866 and detailed geographical breakdowns of the results.

Results from all the Defra farming surveys can be viewed on the Defra website via the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?publication_filter_option=statistics. This also contains details of future publication dates.