



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Note of the interim meeting of the UK Agricultural Market Monitoring Group, 25 August 2026

The UK Agricultural Market Monitoring Group comprises representatives from Defra, DAERA, Scottish Government and Welsh Government.



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Contents

Introduction	3
Key points: Market situation	3
Intervention scheme announcements	3
Sector discussions	3
Dairy, Beef and Sheep	3
Horticulture	4
Arable	4
Pigs	4
Poultry	5
Any other business	5
Date of next meeting	5

Introduction

This note records the key points discussed at the interim meeting of the UK Agricultural Market Monitoring Group (UK AMMG) held on 25 August 2026. Present were representatives of Defra, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and DAERA (Northern Ireland). The meeting assessed current and on-going dry/hot weather issues impacting on the agricultural sector.

The publication of these notes aims to provide transparency and accountability.

Key points: Market situation

Across the UK, the impacts of prolonged dry weather have varied significantly, with England and Wales experiencing the more severe conditions. The whole of Wales and 71% of England are in drought status. This creates pressure on crop production, livestock farming, water availability and wildfire risk. In Scotland, impacts have been relatively limited, while reports suggest crop and livestock conditions remain generally favourable. Northern Ireland has also avoided drought status, although dry weather reduced grass growth below seasonal averages, but conditions have improved during August.

While it is too early to assess the full impact on agricultural production, this will become clearer once harvesting is complete. It is likely to vary according to region, crop type, soil conditions and the timing and severity of water stress.

UKAMMG will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Intervention scheme announcements

On 15 August 2026, UK Government announced support for farmers in England affected by prolonged hot and dry weather in 2026. The announcement can be found here: [Hot and dry weather: temporary support for farmers in 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

On 10 August 2026, the Welsh Government highlighted existing support available to farmers affected by drought conditions. The press release can be found here: [Support available for farmers as dry weather continues | GOV.WALES](#)

Sector discussions

Dairy, Beef and Sheep

Prolonged dry weather has reduced grass growth and forage availability in some areas. As a result, some producers have started using silage and other feed reserves earlier than

usual. However, the strong growing conditions earlier in the year, enabled many farms to secure good volumes of high-quality forage.

Dairy production levels have eased compared with the exceptionally high output seen in 2025, but UK milk production remains above 2024 levels.

The weather conditions have also contributed to significant outbreaks of bluetongue disease, which is causing increased sheep mortality, particularly in southwestern England.

Despite these challenges, short-term market supply remains broadly stable, although weather conditions over the coming months will be important in determining forage availability and grazing opportunities through the autumn and winter.

Horticulture

The hot weather has had mixed impacts across the horticulture sector. While some crops, particularly UK apples, are reported to be of good quality, size is expected to be smaller than usual. In contrast, a few vegetable crops have experienced reduced yields, smaller sizing and quality issues because of heat. The most notable weather-related impacts have been seen in crops such as iceberg lettuce, onions, carrots and parsnips, where heat has reduced volumes and affected crop quality.

Arable

Harvesting is well underway having started much earlier this year than usual with cutting of some crop types largely or entirely completed.

The arable sector has been affected by the prolonged hot weather, with lower yields reported across several crop types, although grain quality and protein levels have remained relatively good. The dry conditions have had a particularly notable impact on spring crops, including spring barley and oats, where some growers are reporting more substantial yield reductions. While it is too early to assess the full impact of the current drought, UKAMMG will continue to monitor the harvest closely.

Pigs

The dry weather has reduced sow fertility and breeding performance, while higher temperatures have also slowed growth rates in finishing pigs. There have also been some increases in fallen stock linked to heat stress, especially in outdoor systems, although the severity of impacts has varied between farms.

Lower crop yields in the arable sector are being monitored by the pig sector given possible straw availability and increased bedding costs.

Poultry

Extreme heat has resulted in some mortality incidents within the sector and highlighted the importance of resilient water supplies.

Any other business

No other issues were raised.

Date of next meeting

The next UKAMMG meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 8 September 2026.



© Crown copyright 2026

This information is licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

UKAMMGSecretariat@defra.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/defra