



# ADAS Harvest Report 2009

Produced by ADAS for HGCA



Contact [Sarah.Wynn@adas.co.uk](mailto:Sarah.Wynn@adas.co.uk) or [Susan.Twining@adas.co.uk](mailto:Susan.Twining@adas.co.uk)  
(Note Harvest reports run up to close of play on Tuesday of each week)

## Summary

There was a slow down in the rate of harvest this week with only 300,000ha combined. The settled weather prevailed over the eastern side of England, but in the Scotland, Wales and the northern regions of England, where most of the remaining grain is located, unsettled weather limited combining opportunities. As the last of the wheat and spring barley mature and become ready for harvest there are increasing concerns over yield losses and deteriorating quality of these later crops if harvesting continues to be delayed. As farmers in the north are tested by the weather, those in the south and east are well advanced with drilling oilseed rape and cultivations for cereal crops, with the earliest winter wheat likely to be drilled this week.

## Headlines

**Winter Wheat** – Over 90% of the wheat area has been harvested with the remaining area predominantly in the northern regions and Scotland, along with some later drilled winter wheat and spring wheat varieties across the country. Progress this week was slow due to unsettled weather across the north. UK national yield is expected to be around average at 7.8-7.9t/ha, although field yields range up to over 12t/ha. Quality is generally good.

**Winter Barley** – Harvest finished. Yields are expected to be slightly below average at around 6.3-6.4t/ha although in field yields ranged from 5.0t/ha to over 8.0t/ha. Quality is generally good.

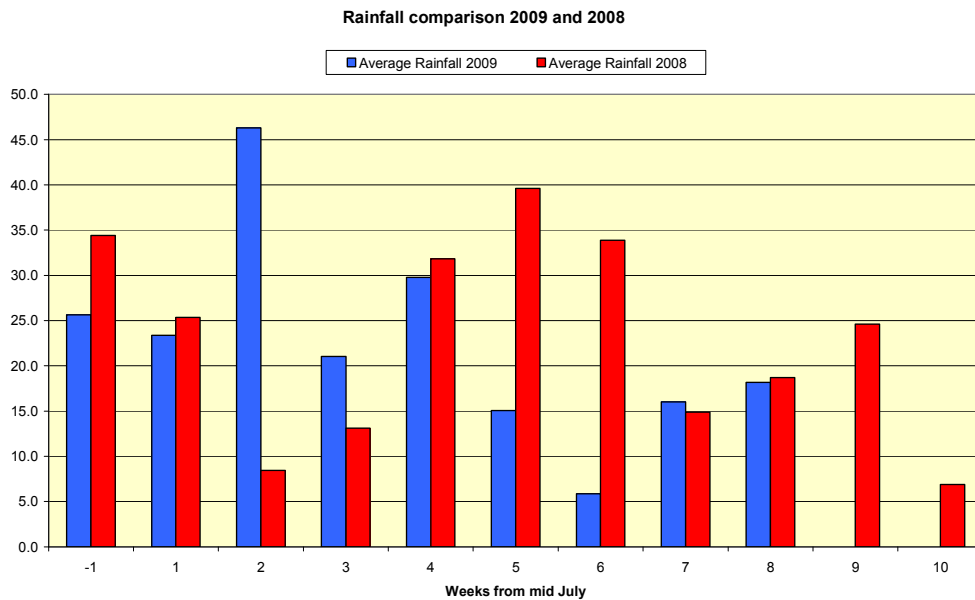
**Spring Barley** – Almost 65% of the UK spring barley area has been harvested. Harvest is virtually complete in many English regions, but there was only slow progress in Scotland in the past week where over 60% of the spring barley is still to be harvested. Yields are expected to be above average at around 5.4t/ha. Quality is generally good, but there are increasing malting rejections due to pre-germination.

**Oats** – Over 60% of UK oats have been harvested. The remaining area consists of later winter oats in the northern regions and spring drilled oats that are just coming ready for harvest.

**Oilseed Rape** – Winter oilseed rape harvest is finished and there is good progress with spring oilseed rape, which is now over 50% harvested.

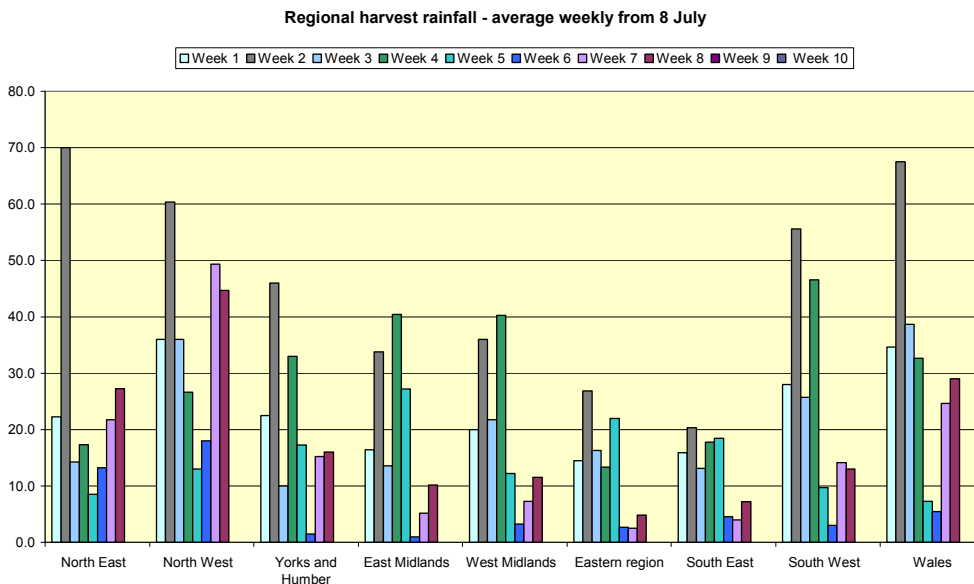
## Weather

The average UK rainfall last week was 18mm (Figure 1) but in a continuation of recent weather patterns, the eastern side England enjoyed a third consecutive week of relatively dry weather with average rainfall of less than 5mm in many counties while it was much wetter in the north and west. In these regions rainfall ranged from 25mm to over 45mm (Figure 2), and fell in regular showers during the week, hampering harvesting activity. As with last week, the temperatures in the south were higher than the north and west.



Source: ADAS 2009 from Met-office data

**Figure 1 Comparison of UK weekly harvest rainfall 2009 and 2008**



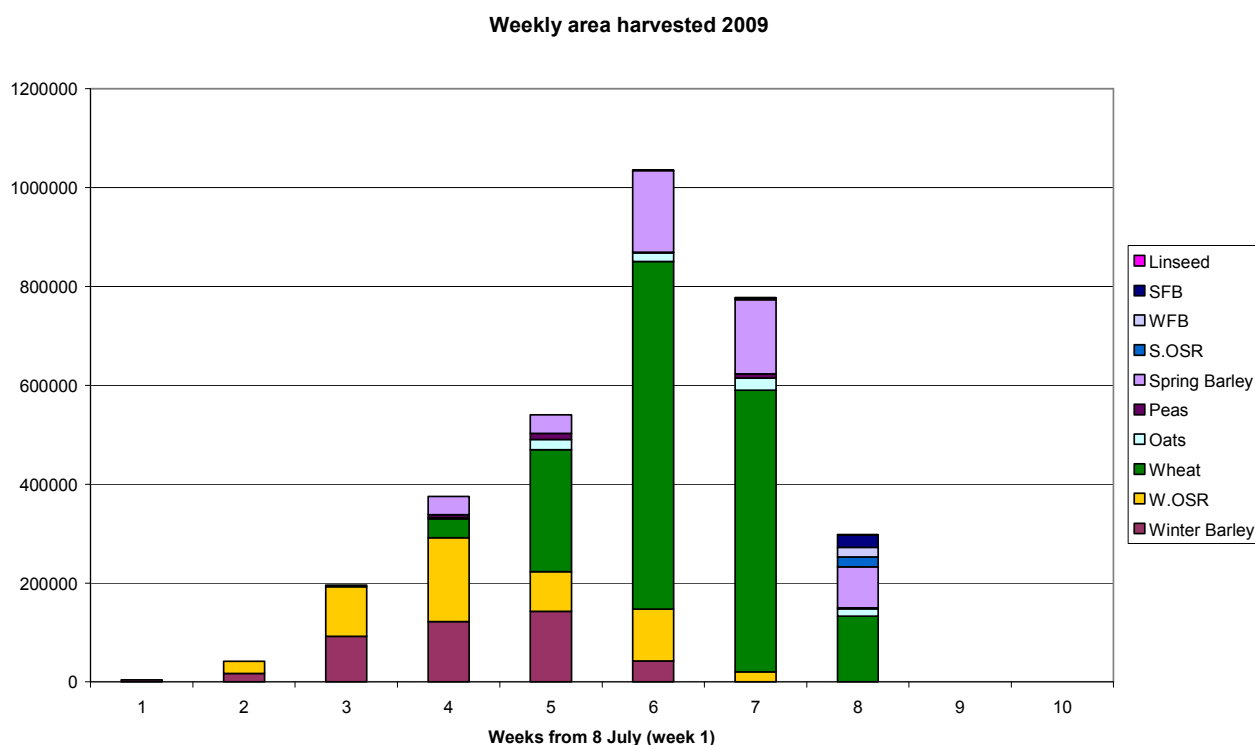
Source: ADAS 2009 from Met-office data

**Figure 2 Regional weekly average rainfall during harvest**

## Combining

The eastern side of the country, once again, had good combining weather for most of the week, with only occasional interruptions due to showers. Further west there were only 4 or 5 days when combining was possible, and these were often limited to between 4 and 8 hours each day due to showers. Scotland was particularly affected with combining only possible on 2-3 days at most.

The three consecutive dry weeks in the main arable production areas in the south and east of the UK are demonstrated in the weekly area harvested profile (Figure 3). The start of the dry spell coincided with the start of peak wheat harvest, so in week 6 over 1Mha of crops were harvested, and a further 800,000ha in week 7. With the bulk of the harvest in these regions being completed, and the difficulties in the past week further north and west where most of the remaining cereal crops were located meant that only an estimated 300,000ha were harvested this week.



Source: ADAS 2009

**Figure 3 Weekly area harvested 2009**

There is an estimated 700,000ha of combinable crops still to harvest (around 15% of the total area), of which around 40% is spring barley and 30% is winter wheat and the remainder in oats, field beans, spring oilseed rape and linseed.

## Farm grain drying and storage

Most grain required drying this week, with the exception of the last of the cereal crops harvested in eastern regions where the weather was more settled. Cereals in Scotland and the northern regions of England were being harvested at between 16% and 23% moisture content. In Scotland where the weather was particularly difficult, most crops were harvested at over 20% moisture content at the start of the day.

## 2010 cropping

Winter oilseed rape drilling started in mid-August and there has been good progress in recent weeks, particularly in the southern and eastern regions. An estimated 60-70% of the intended area was drilled by the end of August. Where oilseed rape was drilled in the last week, many seedbeds in the eastern regions are very dry and this is delaying germination. Rain over Wednesday night helped but a forecast for drier conditions may affect crop establishment in some cases. In other parts of the country there is plenty of moisture and crops are emerging well, with few serious problems from slugs or other pests.

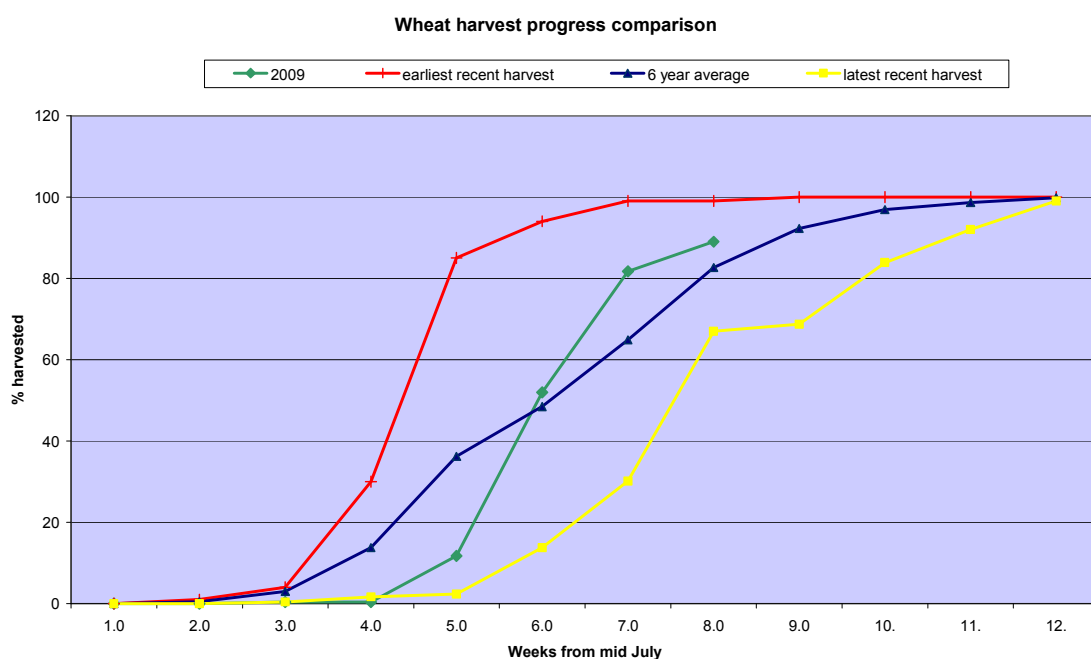
Some early crops of winter wheat and winter barley will be drilled from early September although the peak drilling period tends to be from mid-September to mid-October.

## Harvest Progress

### Winter wheat

Just under 90% of the wheat area is now harvested (Figure 4) with only 8% of the area harvested in the past week. This slow-down is quite common as later crops ripen, although the lack of progress this year is mainly due to unsettled weather in the western and northern regions where most of the remaining wheat is located. Of the 200,000ha still to be harvested, over 40% is in Scotland with smaller amounts in North East, North West and West Midlands (Figure 5). Better progress in the past week means there is very little left to harvest in the other regions. The wheat left in the southern and eastern regions tends to be later drilled winter wheat or spring wheat varieties.

Most of the remaining crops in the northern regions are ready for harvest and there are some crops starting to blacken with sooty moulds, and other quality measures may start to be affected if not harvested soon.

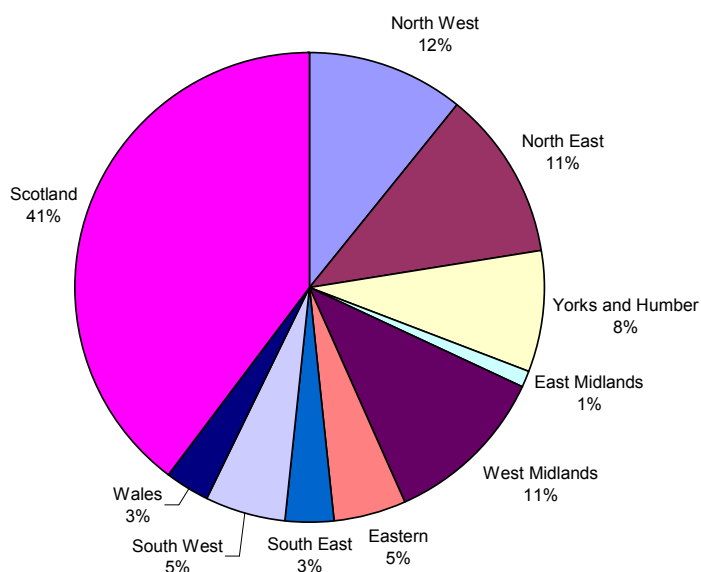


Source: ADAS

2009

**Figure 4** Winter wheat harvest progress comparison (Week 1: 8- 15 July)

### Location of remaining wheat - week 8



Source: ADAS 2009

**Figure 5** Locations of wheat still to be harvested (% of total area in each region)

Yields remain variable, with lower yields from the lighter land, second wheat crops and those affected by poor soil structure following the wet harvest in 2008 and late drilling. These crops were adversely affected by the dry spring and delayed nitrogen uptake. Yields are ranging from 5.0t/ha up to over 12.5t/ha for the best first wheat crops on heavy land. Despite the high top end of the range the national average yield is expected to be at or just below the long term average at 7.8t/ha.

The majority of the wheat area has been harvested in good conditions and quality is good with Hagbergs above 220, specific weights around 76kg/hl and milling protein levels around 12%, although protein levels are variable. Crops harvested south of the Midlands in the past week have generally maintained the quality – many are later drilled winter varieties or spring varieties that have only just come ready for harvest. Crops in the northern regions and Scotland are now at risk of quality deterioration following the delays of the past week with most crops ready for harvest but few opportunities to combine.

## Winter barley

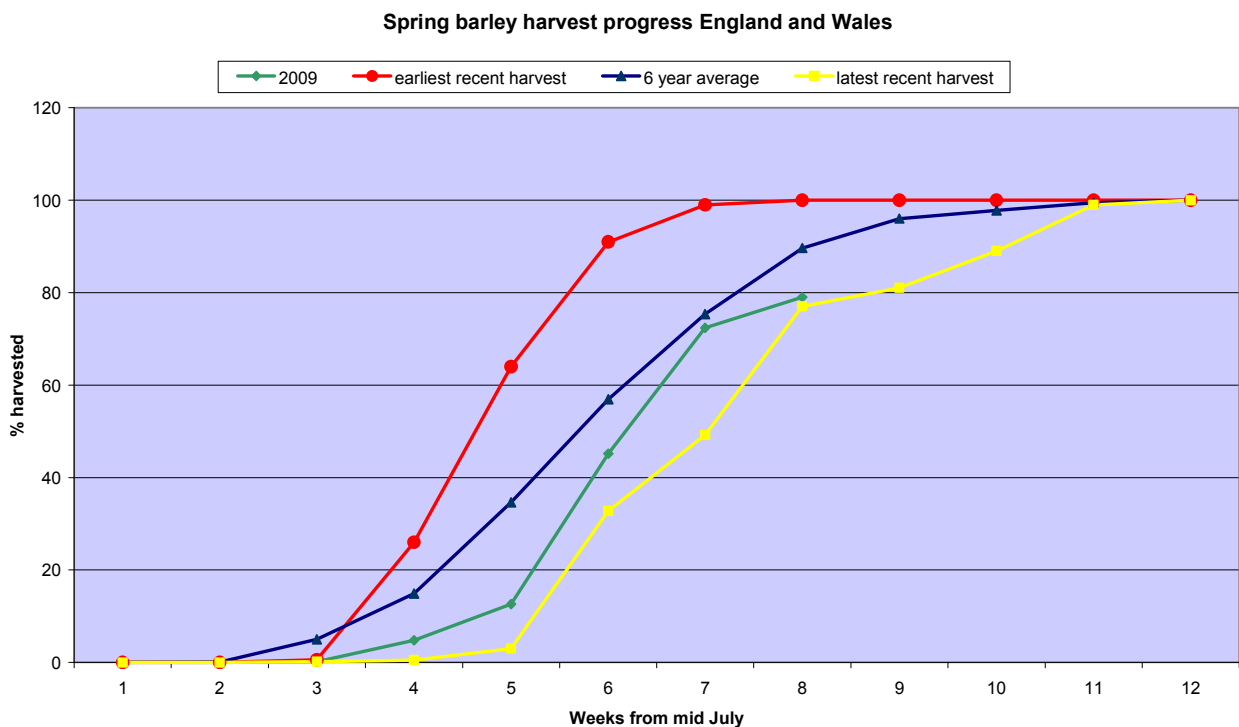
Winter barley harvest is now complete. This has brought to a close one of the latest harvests for winter barley in recent years.

Yields were variable, depending primarily on soil type, although variety, management and drilling date will also have some effect, along with local weather. The national average yield is expected to be below average at around 6.3t/ha (5 year average is 6.5t/ha) with yields varying from 5.0t/ha to over 8.0t/ha on the better land. Some yields were affected by harvest losses, in particular brackling where the seed head drops off before harvest.

The quality of winter barley grain for feed and malting was generally good. Some of the later harvested samples have looked weathered with increasing numbers of splits and broken grains present, this is especially the case in crops that were ripe but had their harvest delayed. Specific weights of winter barley samples have ranged from 64-68 kg/hl and grain N in malting samples is typically around 1.6-1.7% (range 1.3-1.8%). There have been problems with pre-germination in some regions.

## Spring barley

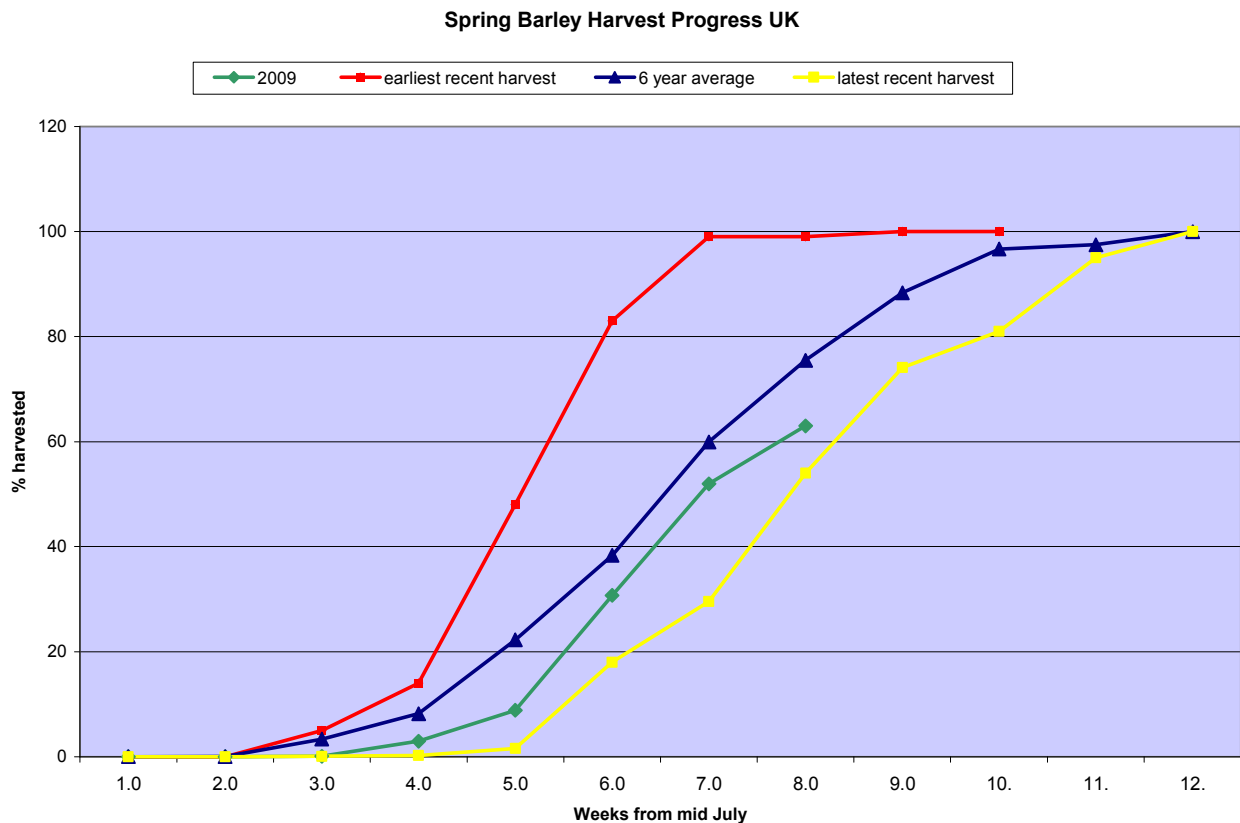
Harvesting progress slowed this week due to poorer weather in the regions where most crops remains to be harvested. Around 63% of the UK crop area has now been harvested, some way below the 6 year average of 76% at this stage but not unusual. The slow down affected England and Wales where only a further 7% of the crop area was cut in the past week since most of the remaining area was in the northern regions where the weather was more unsettled (Figure 6).



Source: ADAS 2009

**Figure 4** Spring barley harvest progress comparison England & Wales (Week 1: 8- 15 July)

In Scotland, where almost 50% of the UK spring barley is grown, some progress was made, as farmers were prepared to dry the grain from over 20% moisture content. Around 37% of the Scottish area is now cut (Figure 7), but this still leaves a significant area still to cut. There has been an increase in lodging and rooks and crow are a common sight feasting on the grains. Brackling causing loss of ears is also increasing in crops ready for harvest.



Source: ADAS 2009

**Figure 5 Spring barley harvest progress comparison Scotland (Week 1: 8- 15 July)**

There are around 270,000ha of spring barley still to harvest, of which almost 75% is in Scotland, with only small areas in other regions.

Yields for spring barley, as with other cereal crops, are highly variable with soil type, drilling date and rainfall having a big influence on the eventual yield. The UK average yield is expected to be around or slightly above average at 5.4t/h (5 year average is 5.35t/ha).

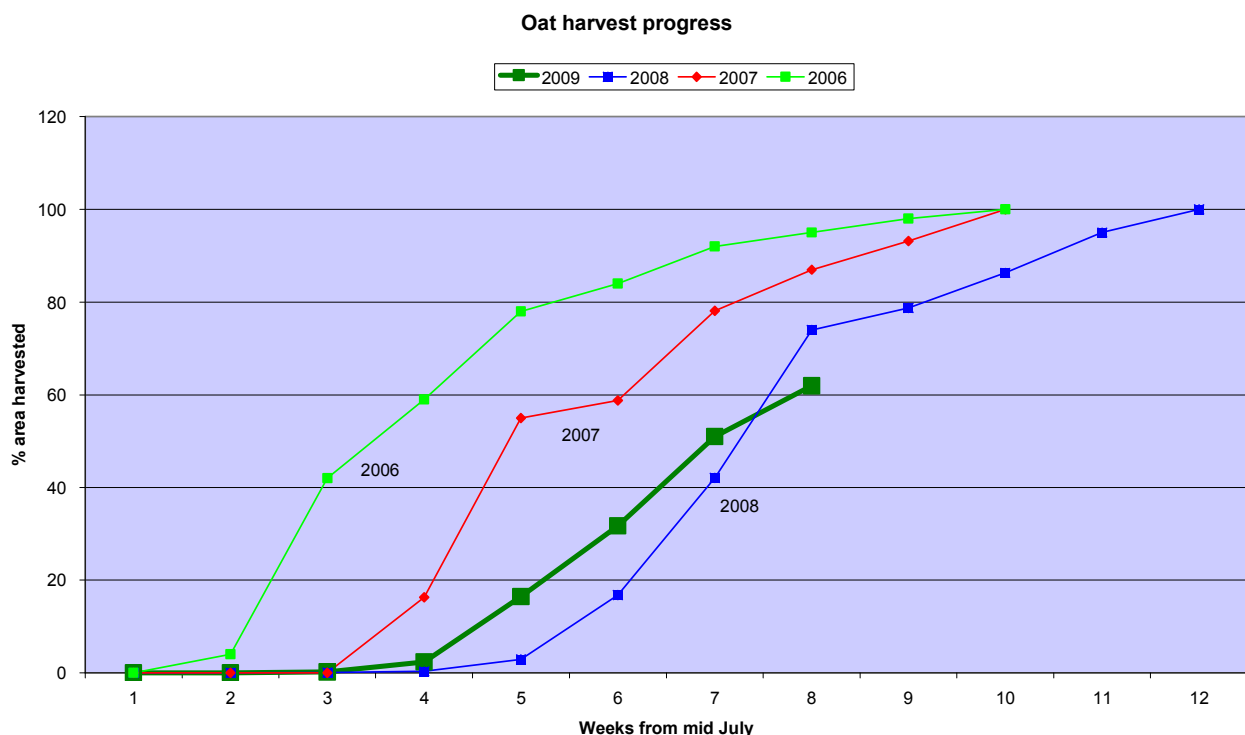
Quality of spring barley samples remains good with specific weights ranging from 62-68 kg/hl with bold samples. Malting nitrogen levels typically range from 1.4-1.8%, with very few over 1.8%. In Scotland where some growers have been contracted for high grain N, they have fallen below the requirements. Pre-germination is reported in a number of samples with figures of 86-96% germination being reported. Rejection rates in parts of Scotland are up to 20% of consignments.

## Oats

Just over 62% of the UK oat area has been harvested (Figure 8) with progress falling behind 2008 harvest, the previous latest harvest. This is almost entirely due to the amount of spring crop in the northern regions of England, Wales and Scotland where harvest has been delayed in the past week. Oat harvest is almost complete in many parts of southern England, while in Scotland, Wales, North East and North West only between 10 and 25% of the area has been harvested.

The national average yield is expected to be around 5.9t/ha, slightly higher than the 5 year average (5.75t/ha) but there is some variation in individual yields from 4.5t/ha (often naked oat varieties) to over 7.5t/ha.

Quality indications are good, with specific weight ranging from 51-58 kg/hl



Source: ADAS 2009

Figure 6 Oats harvest progress comparison (Week 1: 8-15 July)

## Winter oilseed rape

Winter oilseed rape harvest is now finished. It was the latest oilseed rape harvest in recent years, in part due to the harvest weather, but also due to delays in applying desiccants to the crops due to windy weather in early July, and difficulties in timing of desiccants in crops affected by uneven growth following poor establishment last autumn.

Average yields are expected to be above average at 3.6t/ha, although this should be treated with some caution. There is no doubt that yields on good fields of oilseed rape were higher than average, and that even the poorer areas yielded better than expected, but there are likely to be some parts of fields with little or no crops that were not harvested and not included in the final yield figures. Large crops of up to 5.0 t/ha were common but there were many poor crops with yields of 2.0-3.0 t/ha.

### **Spring oilseed rape**

There was some good progress with spring oilseed rape harvesting in southern and eastern regions where crops are ready for harvest and all other crops have been harvested. Further north and west, the remaining cereal crops have the priority for harvesting but there was still some combining where crops were ready. Nationally around 53% of the crop area has now been harvested. Spring oilseed rape harvest is likely to be protracted, given the wide range of sowing dates and consequent maturity dates.

### **Peas**

Pea harvesting is drawing to a close with over 93% of the area now harvested. Varieties suitable for micronising have yielded up to 5.0 t/ha, and marrow fat types have yielded up to 4.0 t/ha.

Colour generally remains good provided crops have not become over ripe. However, heavy rains have flattened some pea crops leaving them very close to the ground and making them difficult to harvest, and small areas may be abandoned in some cases. In the South West the regular rainfall during harvest has already affected quality with many crops failing to make the grade as a result of staining.

### **Field Beans**

There was good progress with field bean harvesting in southern and eastern regions where cereal crops harvesting is finished and field bean crops are ready for harvest. Around 42% of the winter field beans and 36% of spring field beans have now been harvested. Yields are variable ranging from 2.5t/ha to over 5.0t/ha, with an average around 3.8t/ha. Spring field beans tend to be lower than winter field beans, probably related to the spring drought. On the positive side, spring field beans have lower levels of bruchid beetle damage than winter beans so export markets may be available.

### **Contacts**

<b>Sarah Wynn</b>	<b>Susan Twining</b>	<b>Jack Watts</b>
ADAS Boxworth Direct line 01954 268249	ADAS Boxworth Office 01488 681321	HGCA – AHDB Office 0247 647 8760 Mobile 07809 522560
<a href="mailto:sarah.wynn@adas.co.uk">sarah.wynn@adas.co.uk</a>	<a href="mailto:Susan.twining@adas.co.uk">Susan.twining@adas.co.uk</a>	<a href="mailto:jack.watts@hgca.com">jack.watts@hgca.com</a>