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Cereal and Oilseed Rape Harvest 2018 Final Estimates

December 2018



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Introduction

Total cereal production, the area grown and yields in Scotland have decreased in 2018 compared to the previous year. Poor weather conditions experienced at key times during the year have contributed to the fall.

Around 420,000 hectares of cereals have been grown, three per cent lower than 2017. Average yield dropped by nine per cent, which led to a 12 per cent drop in production, to 2.5 million tonnes.

Oilseed rape has seen a similar pattern to cereal crops with drops in production, area and yield in 2018.

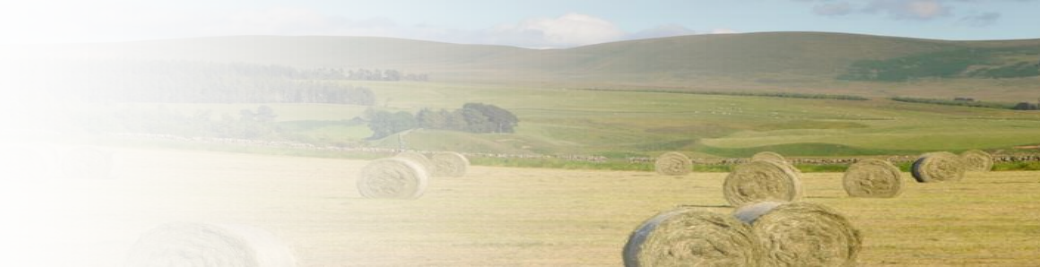
Commonly used terms

Hectares: the official measurement of agricultural land. One hectare is 10,000m² or roughly the same as a full-size rugby pitch.

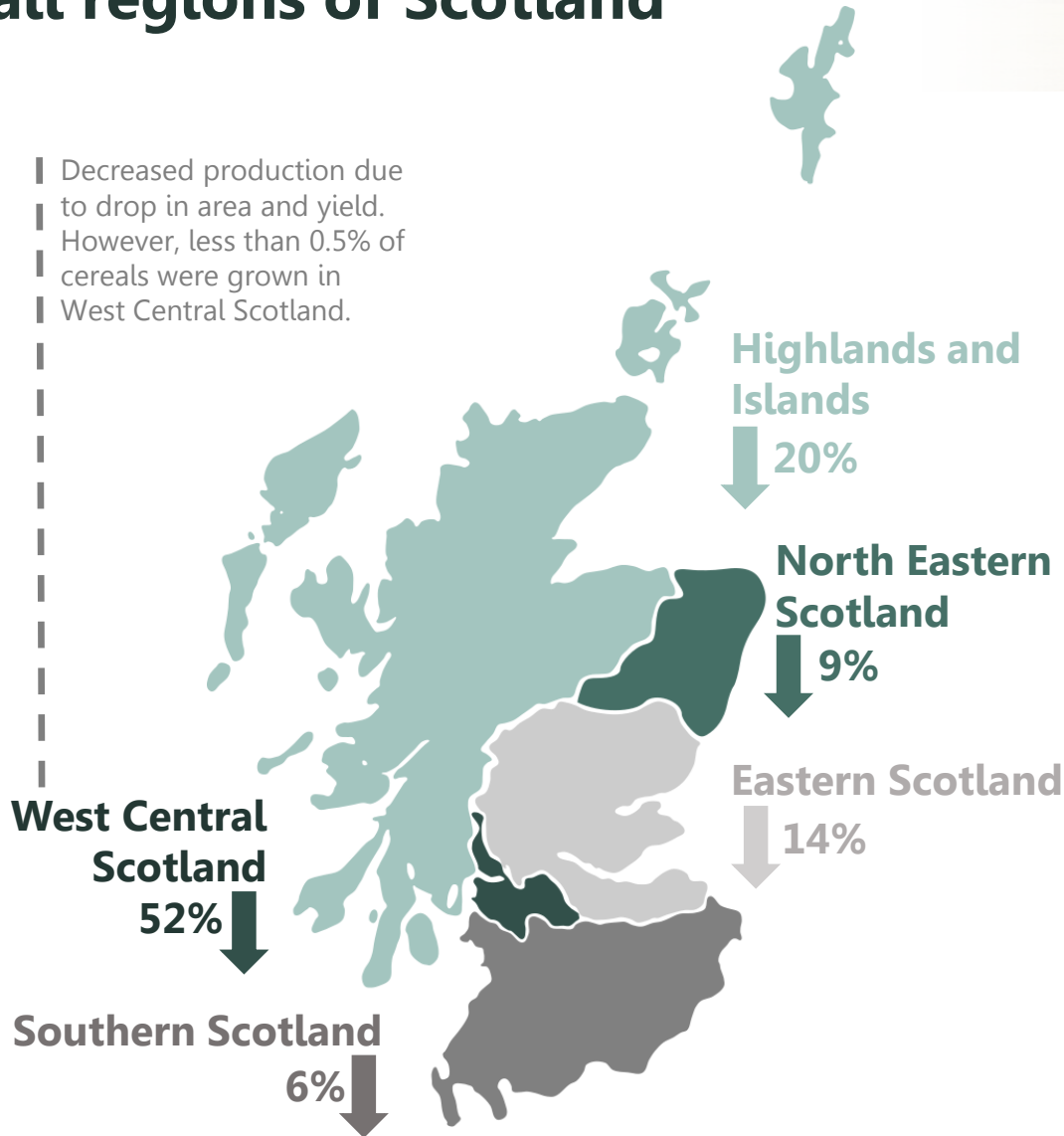
Production: the total amount of crops that are produced measured in metric tonnes.

Yield: the amount of produce, weighed in tonnes, that is harvested per hectare of land.

Cereal production down across all regions of Scotland



Decreased production due to drop in area and yield. However, less than 0.5% of cereals were grown in West Central Scotland.



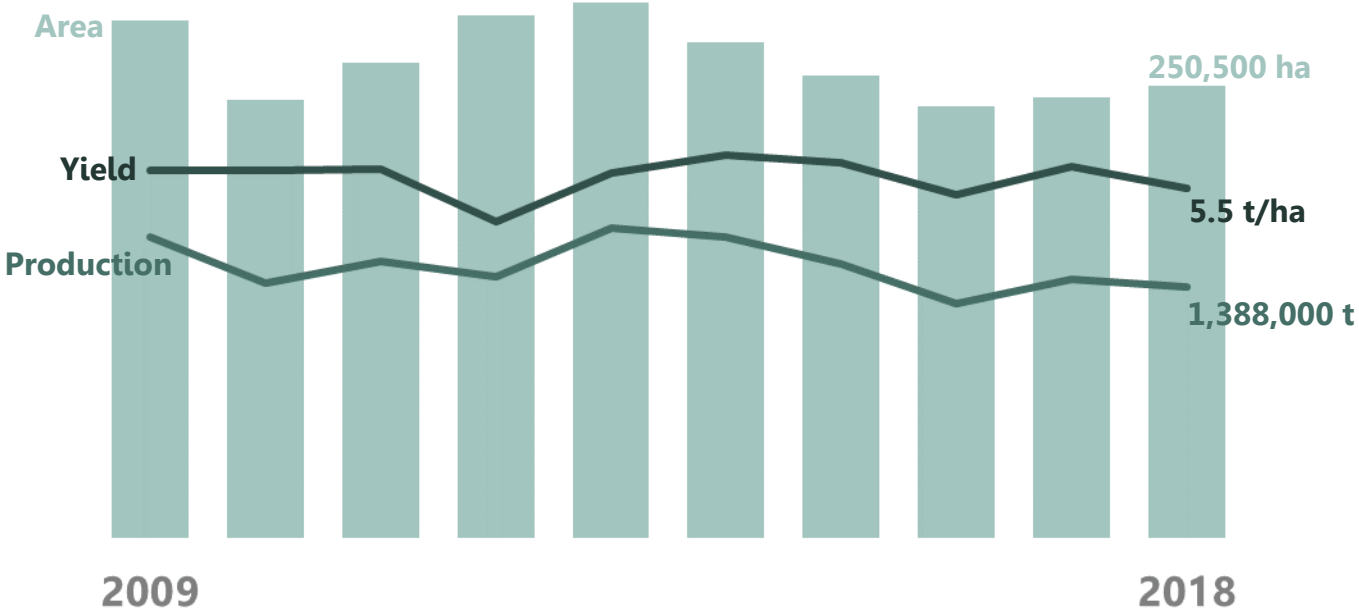
There was a decrease in cereal production across the whole country due to the unfavourable weather conditions experienced in winter 2017, as well as spring and early summer of 2018.

It has been particularly bad for barley and wheat crops which resulted in a number of farmers choosing to whole-crop due to the low yield and quality.

North Eastern, Eastern and Southern Scotland are the main regions for growing crops in Scotland.

Whole-crop: a crop in which the stem, leaves, and grain are harvested together, typically for use as animal feed.

Spring barley production and yield dropped, despite increase in area



Spring barley accounts for

53%

Total crop production

55%

Total crop area

Final spring barley estimates for 2018 showed that yield and production had fallen compared to 2017.

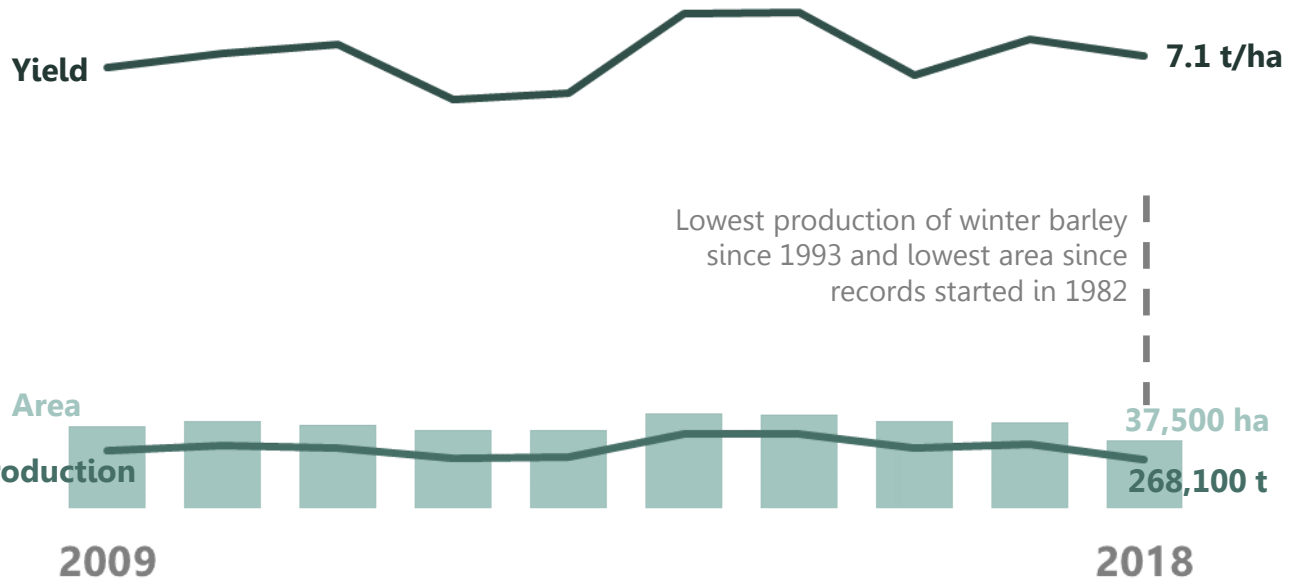
Although the area of spring barley increased by three per cent, yields were down due to the bad weather during the last year.

Southern Scotland was the only region to see an increase in yield and production of spring barley, five per cent and eight per cent respectively.

Barley is the main cereal crop grown in Scotland. In 2017, Scottish spring barley made up a third of the UK spring barley total.

Spring barley is sown around March, whereas winter barley is sown in the autumn. Around 84 per cent of Scottish barley production is made up of spring barley.

Large drop in winter barley area and production



Winter barley accounts for

10% Total crop production

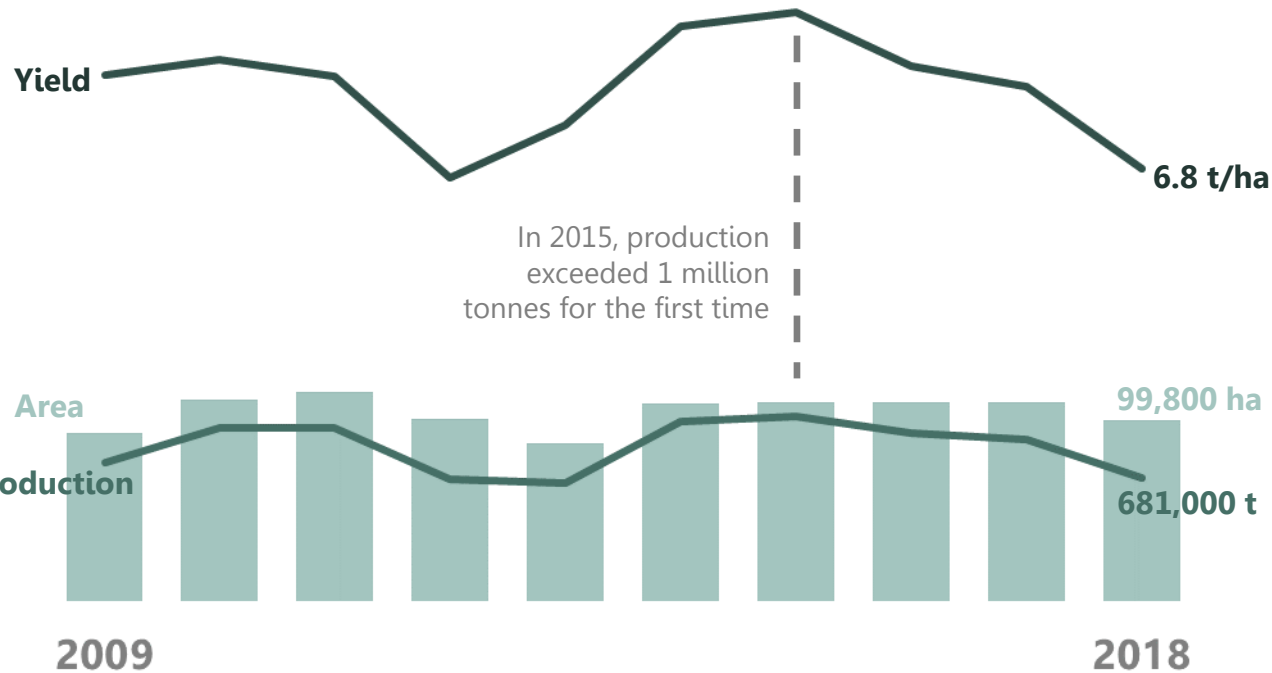
8% Total crop area

Scottish barley has a strong association as a key ingredient for the Scottish whisky industry; however, around 40 per cent of Scottish barley is actually used as animal feed.

Area and production of winter barley experienced a large decrease in 2018, while yields saw a smaller decrease. Expert advice indicated that the quality of winter barley has been good this year which may have helped yields to remain similar to those in 2017.

Winter barley area dropped by a fifth due to poor weather conditions. This, along with a four per cent drop in yield resulted in production decreasing by 24 per cent.

Area, yield and production of wheat all decrease



Wheat accounts for

26% Total crop production

22% Total crop area

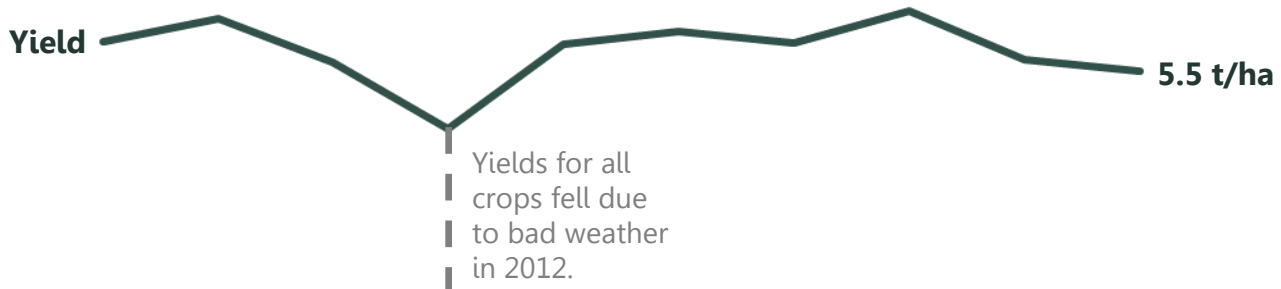
Scottish wheat is mainly soft wheats that are used mostly for malting.

Scotland imports hard wheats for milling (generally used for bread-making) because our climate does not suit hard wheat varieties.

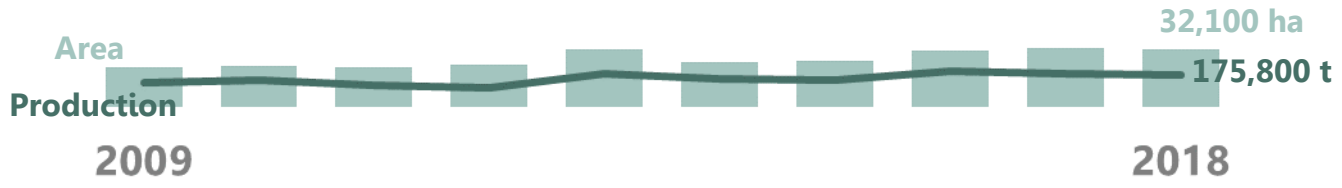
Wheat yields have decreased by 16 per cent in 2018 despite first estimates suggesting they would remain constant. This change in yield estimates is due to limited information about wheat production at the time first estimates were produced.

While the area of wheat grown has been constant over the last four years, it has decreased by nine per cent this year. This and the drop in yield, led to production decreasing by 23 per cent compared to the previous year.

Slight drop in oats area, production and yield



Oats account for
7% Total crop production
7% Total crop area



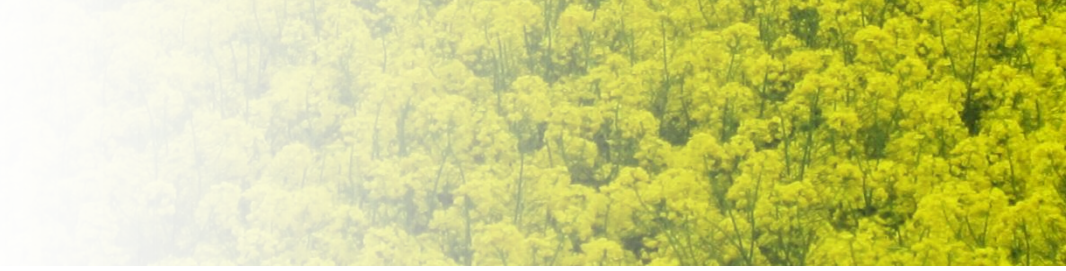
The estimated area of oats sown in 2018 is 32,100 hectares, the second highest since 1989. Oat production is estimated to have decreased by five per cent this year, due to a three per cent decrease in yield.

Eastern Scotland is where 47 per cent of oats are grown. This was the only region to have an increase in oats yield and production, both rising by two per cent.

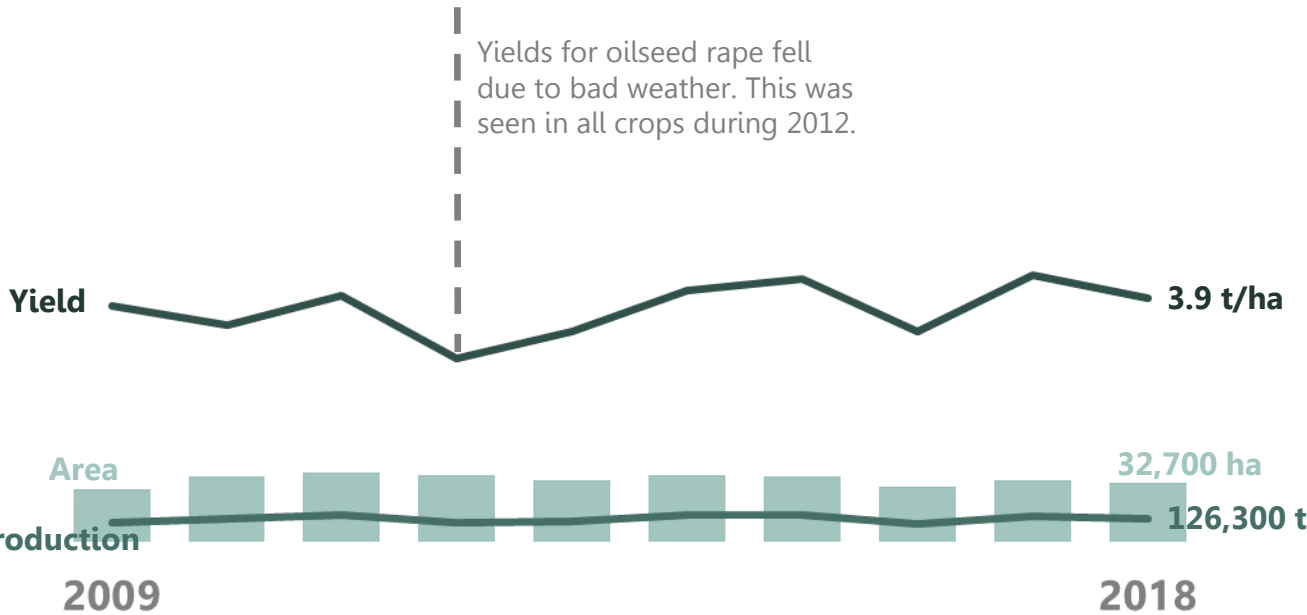
The majority of oats grown in Scotland are sown in the spring and are used for milling and further processing for breakfast cereals, oatcakes, porridge oats and oatmeal.

Oats are also used in specialist feed for horses.

Falls in oilseed rape area, production and yield



Yields for oilseed rape fell due to bad weather. This was seen in all crops during 2012.



Oilseed rape accounts for

5%

Total crop production

7%

Total crop area

Oilseed rape is not a cereal but is part of the cabbage family. Because it is grown and harvested in a similar way to other cereals it is included in our harvest estimates.

The majority of oilseed rape is the winter variety and mainly used for biofuels. A small amount is processed in Scotland for cooking oil.

The area, production and yield of oilseed rape yield have all decreased in 2018 due to bad weather. Area fell by four per cent and yield by eight per cent, leading to a 12 per cent drop in production.

Forty two per cent of oilseed rape is grown in Eastern Scotland and this was the only region to see an increase in yield and production of oilseed rape, four per cent and one per cent respectively.

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Data Sources and More Information

Data Source and Use

Final estimates of the Scottish Cereal and Oilseed Rape Harvest are based on final yield results from the 2018 Cereal Production Survey and final crop areas from the 2018 June Census.

Final estimates are used to monitor cereal production and to meet obligations to the European Union, World Trade Organisation and Food and Agriculture Organisation.

Difference between first and final estimates

Final estimates were broadly similar to the first estimates published in October 2018.

Differences in the first and final estimates are due to the amount of information available when calculating first estimates.

Data Tables and Methodology

The data used to create the charts in this publication and the methodology document are available online.

www.gov.scot/stats/bulletins/01324

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