

A National Statistics  
publication for Scotland

# Cereal and Oilseed Rape Harvest 2021

## First Estimates

12<sup>th</sup> October 2021



# Cereal and Oilseed Rape Harvest 2021 First Estimates

## Introduction

Industry experts predict another good year for cereal production. With total cereal production expected to be around 3.1 million tonnes: above the five year average. Better weather may also reduce the need for drying crops.

There are reports cereals were less affected by adverse weather than in the previous year. Winter crop planting areas have also recovered in 2020. However, the expert panel reported farmers are still noticing varying crop yields.

The final estimates from the annual survey will be published in December.

### **How first estimates are calculated**

Our annual harvest first estimates are based on advice from industry experts on expected yields. We combine this with census results for the areas grown to estimate the total amount of production.

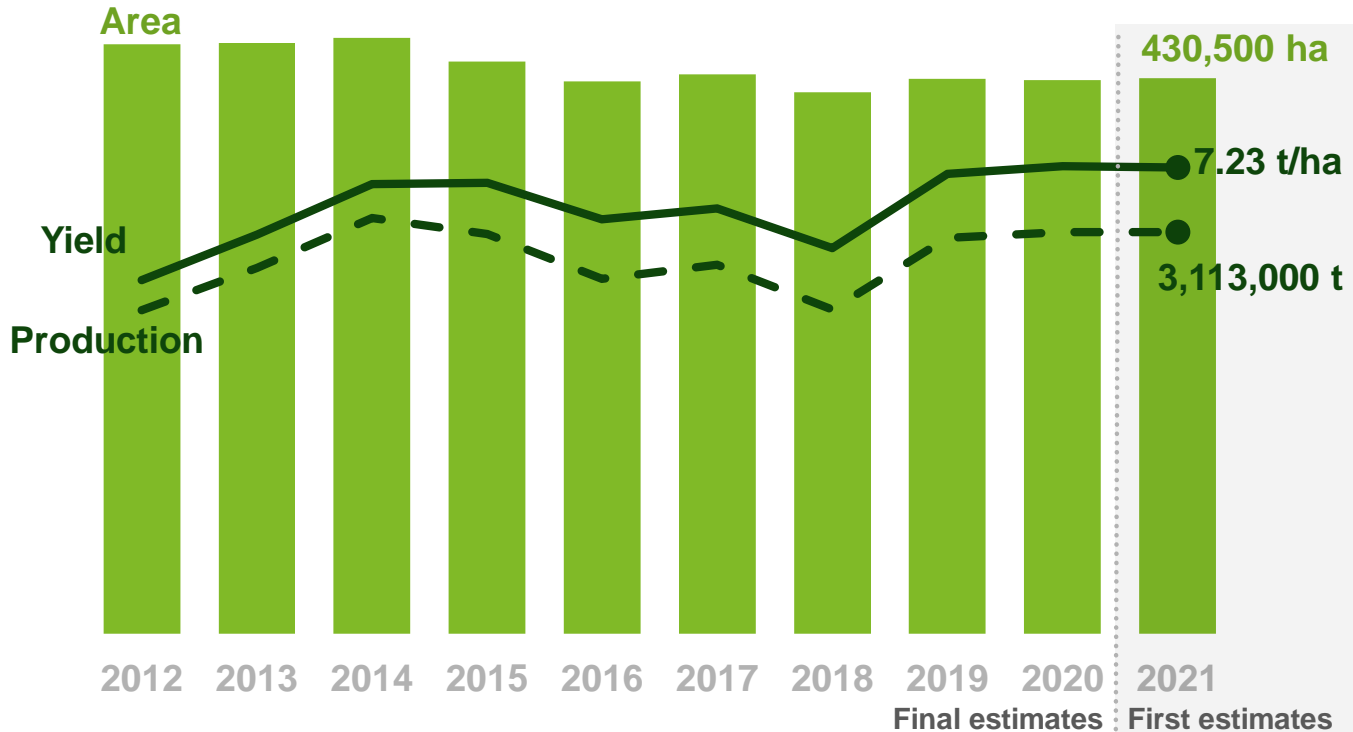
### **First estimates monitor cereal production**

This data provides an early indicator of harvest problems.

### **First estimates are fairly accurate**

The data collected on areas grown is very good. However, differences in the first and final yield estimates can vary as more information is collected once the harvest has been completed.

# First estimates suggest a good year for the overall 2021 harvest



### Commonly used terms

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

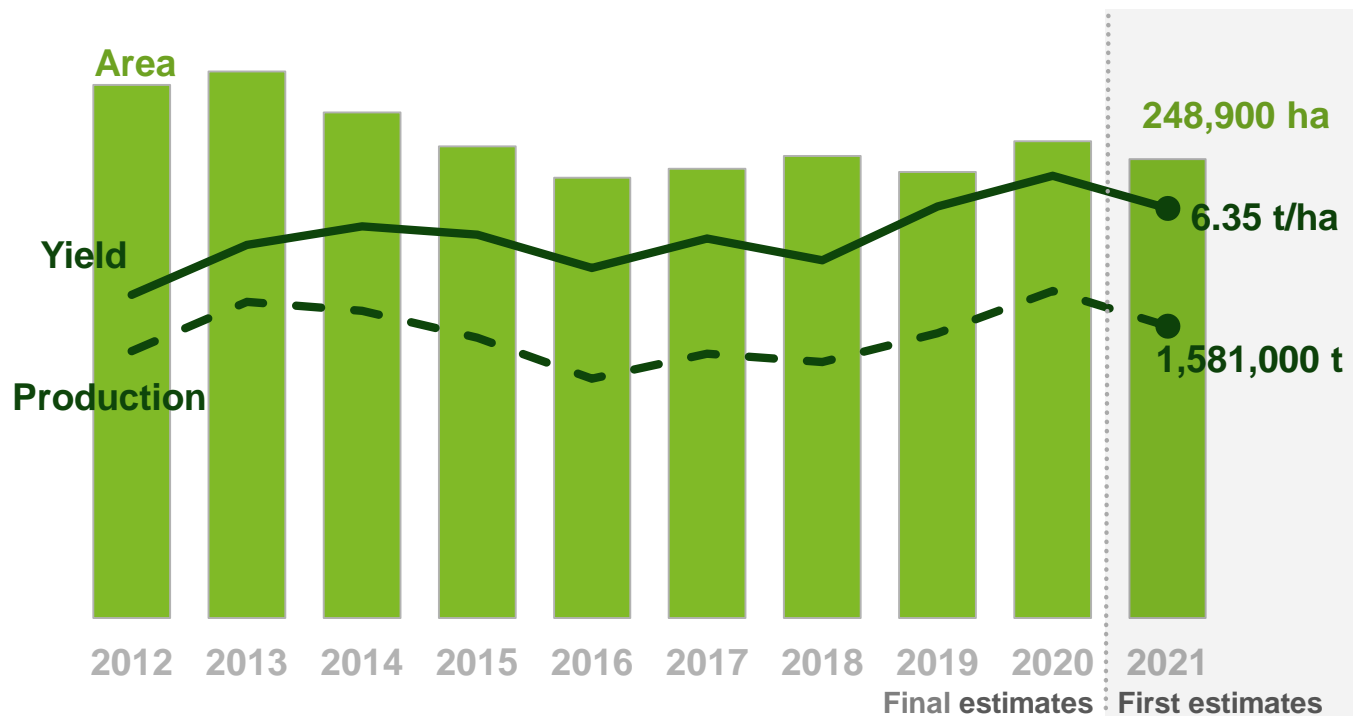
**Production:** the total amount of crops that are produced measured in metric tonnes.

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

Overall, 2021 has been another good year for the cereal harvest. Total production is predicted to be similar to total cereal production in 2020 at around 3.1 million tonnes.

Wet conditions in 2020 led to decreases in the area used to grow winter-planted crops and affected yields. Favourable conditions for the 2020-21 sowing season and harvest have resulted in recovery of winter planting, reflected in increased areas and yields for wheat and winter barley and decreases for spring crops.

# Spring barley predicted to decrease but remain above average



Spring barley accounts for

**49%** Total crop production

**54%** Total crop area

Barley is the main cereal crop grown in Scotland. Spring barley is sown around March, whereas winter barley is sown in the autumn.

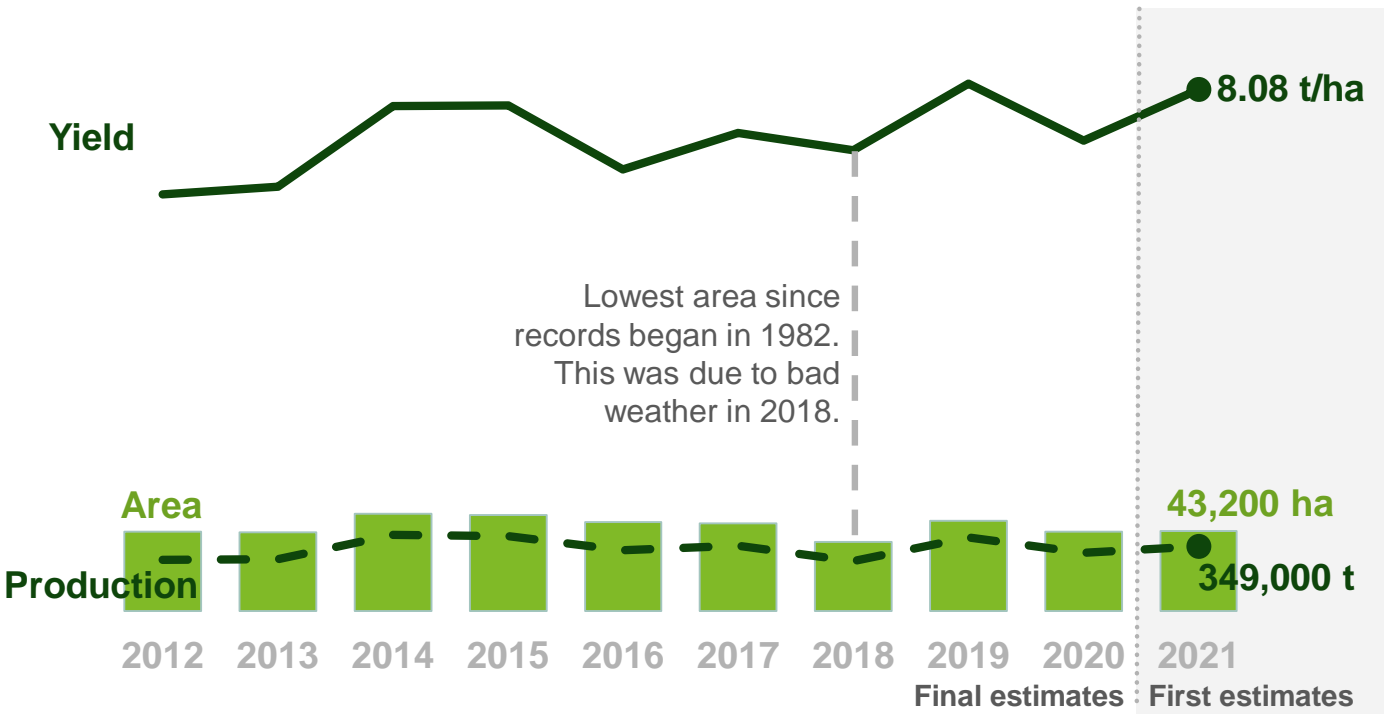
In 2021, an estimated 82 per cent of barley production was made up of spring barley.

Spring barley area decreased in 2021 as winter crop areas increased. 2020 was a record year for spring barley. Yield is predicted to decrease on average in 2021 by around seven per cent. However, predicted yield remains above the average figure over the last five years.

Spring barley production is predicted to decrease by around 11 per cent, mostly as a result of decreased yield.



# Winter barley yield and production expected to increase



Lowest area since records began in 1982. This was due to bad weather in 2018.

Winter barley accounts for

**11%** Total crop production

**9%** Total crop area

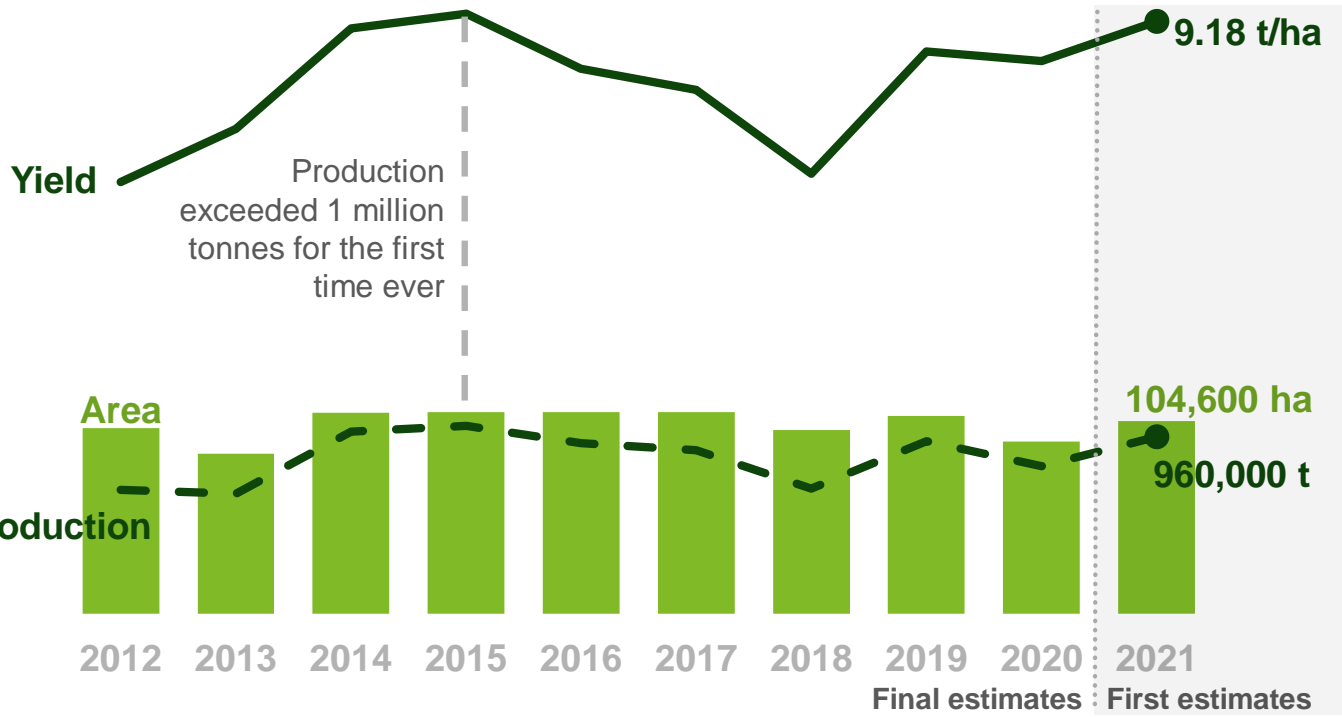
Barley is a key ingredient for the Scottish whisky industry, with 57 per cent of the 2020 crop sold to merchants for malting.

A further 35 per cent of barley was used as animal feed.

Winter barley area has experienced a small increase compared to 2020 of 0.4 per cent.

However, winter barley yields are predicted to rise back to figures closer to those seen in 2019, resulting in an increase in production. A predicted ten per cent increase in yield is predicted to result in an ten per cent increase in production compared to 2020.

# Wheat production expected to increase, with high yields predicted



Wheat accounts for

**30%** Total crop production

**23%** Total crop area

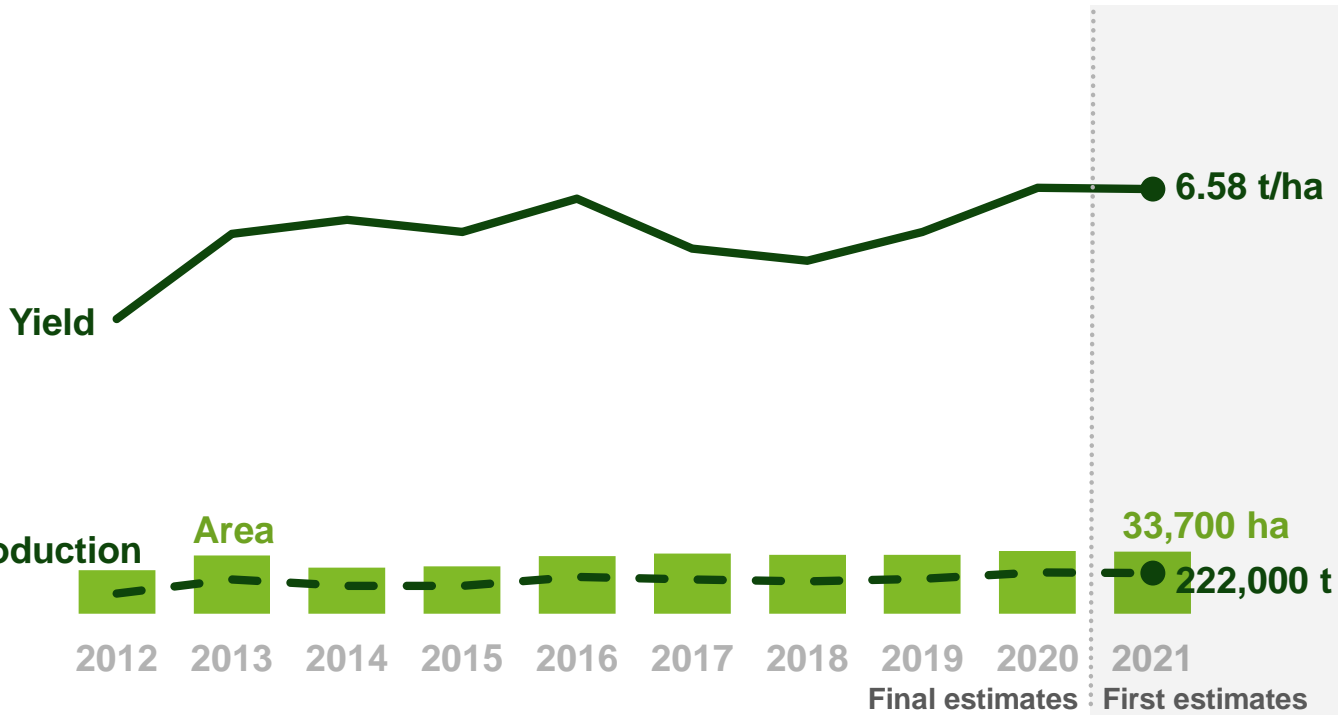
Scottish wheat is mainly soft wheats that are used for distilling. In 2020, around 29 per cent of wheat was sold to merchants for malting. A large proportion, 46 per cent, was used for animal feed.

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

A 12 per cent increase in planted wheat area, combined with a predicted seven per cent increase in yield are expected to result in a nearly 20 per cent increase in wheat production compared to 2020.

Wheat yield is predicted to rise to around 9.2 tonnes per hectare. If this is achieved this will be the second highest yield recorded over the last 20 years.

# Little change in oat production and yield expected



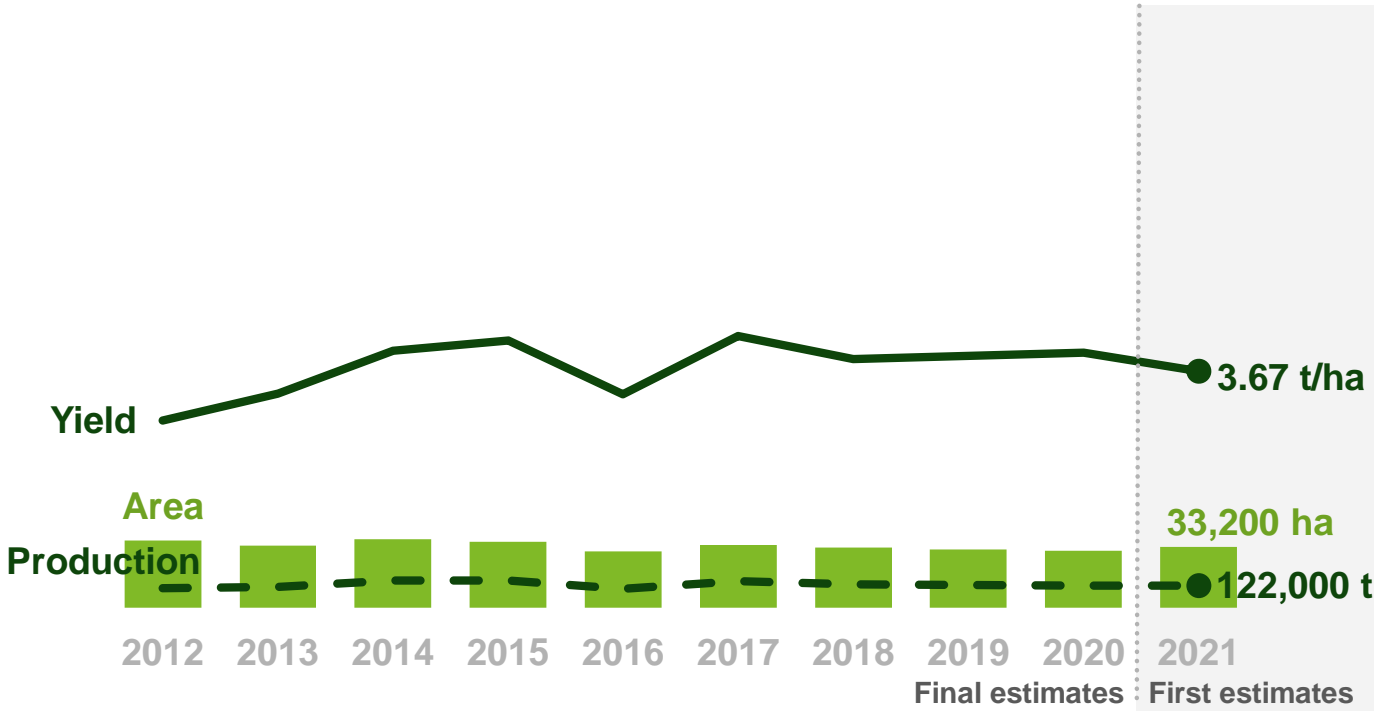
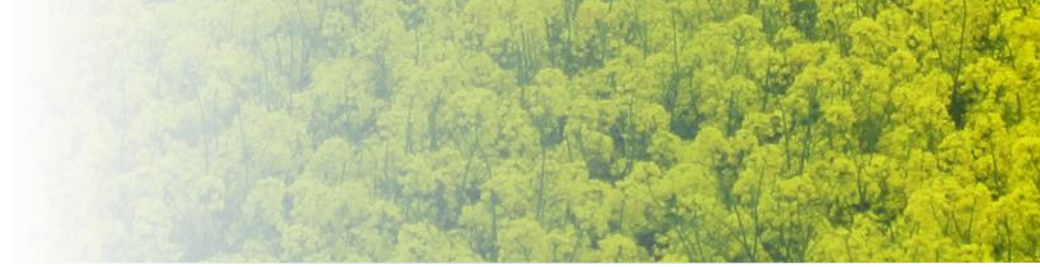
Oats accounts for  
**7%** Total crop production  
**7%** Total crop area

The majority of oats grown in Scotland are sown in the spring and are used for milling – in 2020, almost 80 per cent of oats were used for milling.

Oats are also used in specialist animal feed and in further processing for oatcakes and porridge oats.

Little change is predicted for oat area, yield or production compared to 2020. Small decreases are anticipated, mostly as a result of a small decrease in area.

# Little change predicted for oilseed rape production



Oilseed Rape accounts for

- 4% 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.

Almost all of oilseed rape is the winter variety.

Little change is predicted for oilseed rape production this year compared to 2020. While the area grown has increased around eight per cent, a predicted decrease of around seven per cent in yield may result in little change in production compared to the previous year.

Oilseed rape estimates are not as reliable as those of other crops due to the small amount grown and limited data available at this early stage



# Cereal and Oilseed Rape Harvest 2021 First Estimates

## Data Sources and More Information

### Data Source

First estimates of the Cereal and Oilseed Rape Harvest are made at the annual Crop Report Meeting. A panel of experts from the Scottish cereal industry provide their estimates of the harvest yields and these are applied to final figures for areas sown. Area data is derived from the 2021 June Agricultural Census.

It is important to note that the collection of yield estimates prior to the completion of the harvest may lead to a level of inaccuracy with these first estimates.

Final estimates of the 2021 cereal harvest will be available in December. These are based on data gathered from a sample of farms across Scotland.

### Data Tables and Methodology

The data used to create the charts in this publication and the methodology document are available online at [www.gov.scot/ISBN/978-1-80201-462-4](http://www.gov.scot/ISBN/978-1-80201-462-4)

If you have any questions or comments about this publication, please email Jay Gillam at [jay.gillam@gov.scot](mailto:jay.gillam@gov.scot).

### Crown Copyright

You may use or re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. See: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/)

# Annex A

## Area, Yield and Production – 2012 to 2021

Year	TOTAL CEREALS <sup>(1)</sup>			SPRING BARLEY			WINTER BARLEY		
	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)
2012	456,902	5.48	2,507,016	289,222	5.00	1,446,950	42,816	6.46	276,511
2013	458,219	6.19	2,836,836	296,444	5.78	1,713,548	42,694	6.57	280,511
2014	462,123	6.97	3,221,284	274,377	6.07	1,664,905	52,507	7.82	410,765
2015	443,564	6.99	3,100,624	255,878	5.94	1,520,756	51,808	7.84	406,169
2016	428,348	6.43	2,752,412	238,899	5.43	1,296,481	48,031	6.84	328,766
2017	433,460	6.60	2,859,045	243,838	5.88	1,432,815	47,509	7.41	352,108
2018	419,897	5.98	2,512,412	250,476	5.54	1,387,503	37,542	7.14	268,124
2019	430,292	7.13	3,068,559	242,090	6.38	1,543,825	48,802	8.17	398,748
2020	429,314	7.25	3,112,216	258,702	6.85	1,771,970	43,091	7.29	314,306
2021	430,477	7.23	3,112,622	248,921	6.35	1,581,062	43,246	8.08	349,408

Year	WHEAT			OATS			OILSEED RAPE		
	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)
2012	100,637	6.69	673,288	23,672	4.57	108,249	36,611	2.91	106,420
2013	86,840	7.52	652,933	31,728	5.89	187,021	33,653	3.32	111,652
2014	109,023	9.07	989,347	25,050	6.10	152,924	37,073	3.98	147,570
2015	109,562	9.30	1,019,182	25,615	5.92	151,569	35,797	4.15	148,491
2016	109,594	8.45	925,992	31,210	6.44	200,936	30,731	3.31	101,862
2017	109,489	8.12	889,308	32,625	5.66	184,813	34,187	4.21	144,038
2018	99,778	6.82	680,955	32,101	5.48	175,829	32,736	3.86	126,330
2019	107,480	8.72	936,865	31,920	5.92	189,121	31,808	3.90	124,148
2020	93,538	8.57	801,621	33,984	6.60	224,319	30,793	3.96	121,921
2021	104,571	9.18	960,027	33,739	6.58	222,124	33,188	3.67	121,677

(1) Includes Triticale up to and including 2016.



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

© Crown copyright 2021



This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

ISBN: 978-1-80201-462-4 (web only)

Published by The Scottish Government, October 2021

Produced for The Scottish Government by APS Group Scotland, 21 Tennant Street, Edinburgh EH6 5NA  
PPDAS949046 (04/21)

W W W . g o v . s c o t