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A National Statistics publication for Scotland

Cereal and Oilseed Rape Harvest 2020

Final Estimates

15 December 2020

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Introduction

Overall, 2020 has been a good year for the cereal harvest in Scotland. A small increase in production was due to a 2 per cent increase in yield. Area sown was very similar to the previous year.

2019 and 2020 have been the highest years for cereal production since 2015, with production over 3 million tonnes.

Wet weather contributed to decreases for winter crops. More favourable conditions in spring and summer supported shifts to spring crops, where some record yields have been reported for 2020.

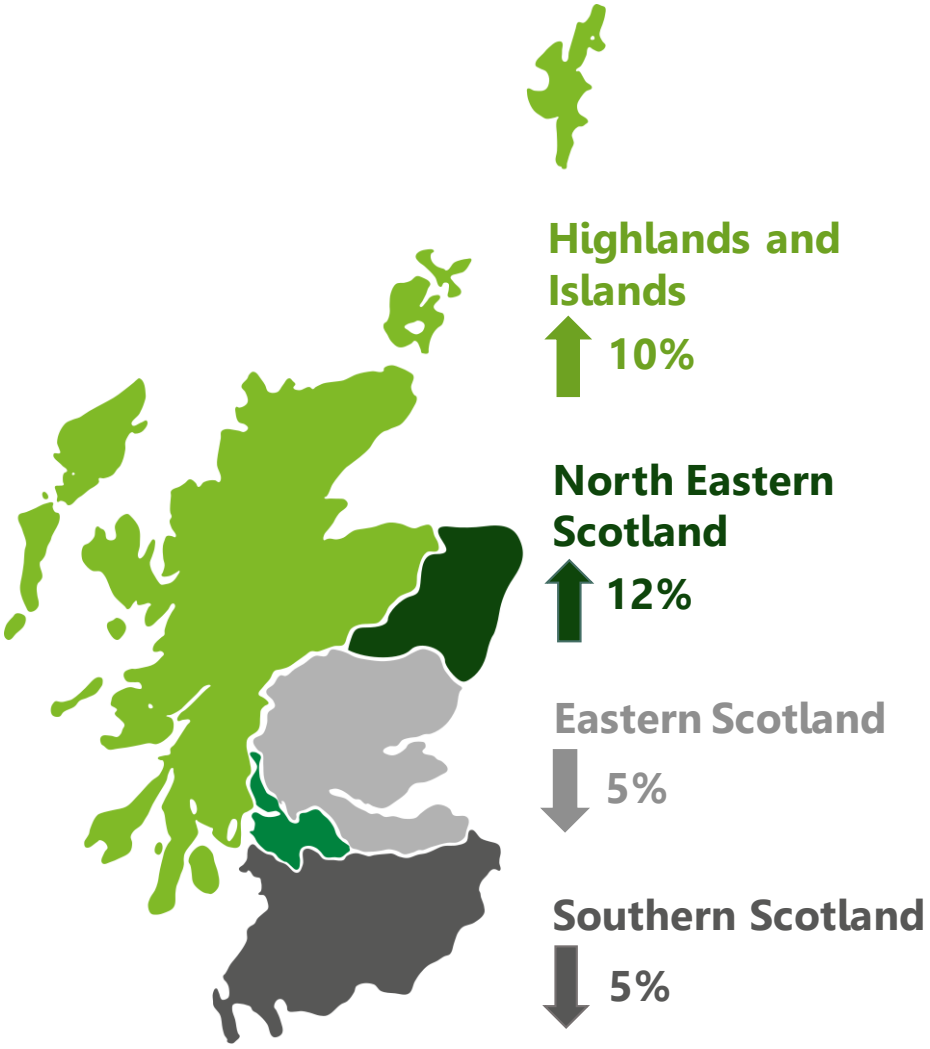
Commonly used terms

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.

Cereal production varied across Scotland



Cereal production varied across the country.

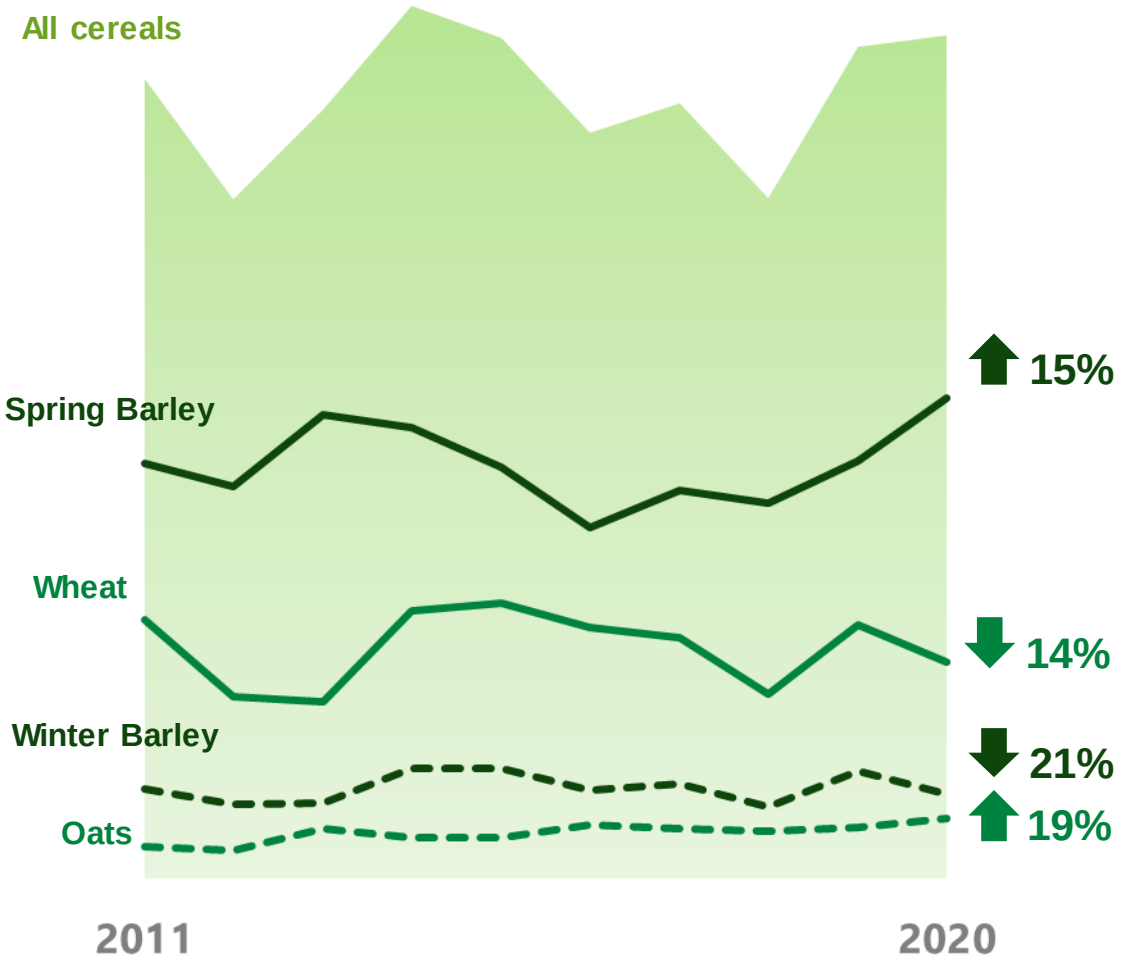
Highlands and Islands saw a 10 per cent increase in production and a 9 per cent increase in yield.

North Eastern Scotland saw a 12 per cent increase in yield and production.

Eastern Scotland and Southern Scotland saw 5 per cent decreases in production. Yield decreased 4 per cent for Eastern Scotland and 5 per cent in Southern Scotland.

West Central Scotland saw decreased production due to decreases in yield. However, only around 1% of cereals were grown in West Central Scotland and these changes may not be significant.

Overall increase in production but varying crop outcomes



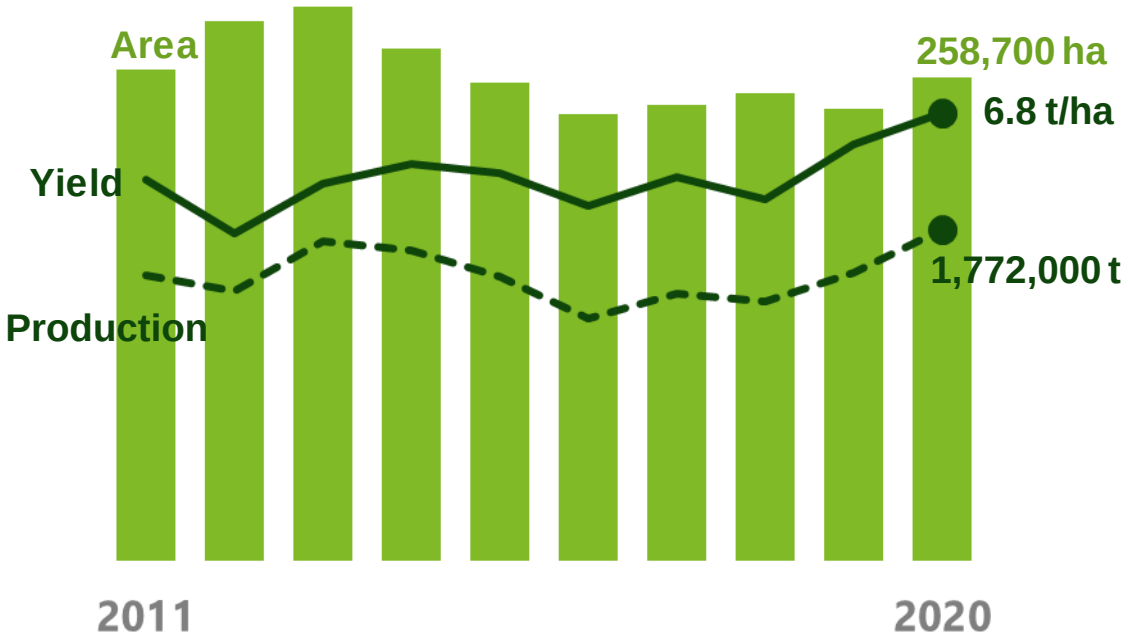
1% Cereal production

While there was little change in total cereal area compared to 2019, increases in yield for some cereals resulted in a small overall increase in production of 1 per cent for 2020.

Poor autumn and winter weather made planning and growing winter crops more difficult. This contributed to large decreases for winter barley and wheat.

More favourable weather in spring and summer supported shifts to spring crops and improved growing conditions.

Record yields for spring barley



Barley is the main cereal crop grown in Scotland. Most of the barley grown in Scotland is spring barley. Spring barley is sown around March. Winter barley is sown in the autumn.

Spring barley accounts for

55% Total crop production

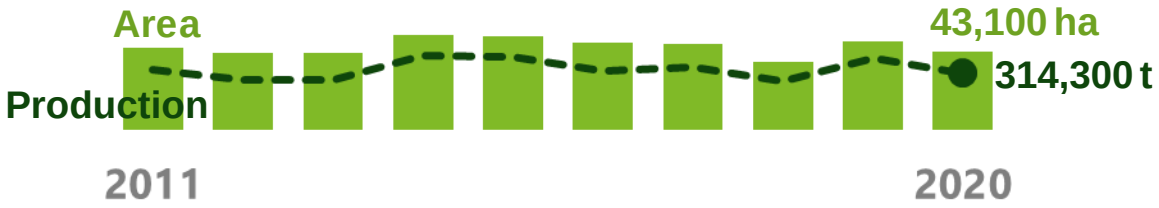
Combined with winter barley this makes up 65 per cent of total crop production.

Spring barley area increased in 2020 as winter barley suffered unfavourable weather conditions and the area grown decreased.

In 2020, 85 per cent of barley production was made up of spring barley.

Increases of around 7% for area sown and yield have resulted in a 15% increase in production for 2020, making it another record year for spring barley.

Large decreases for winter barley



Barley is a key ingredient for the Scottish whisky industry.

In 2019, 53 per cent of Scottish barley was sold to merchants for malting. A further 36 per cent of barley was used as animal feed.

Winter barley accounts for

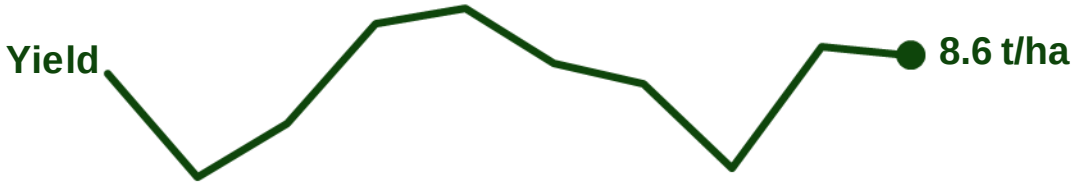
10% Total crop production

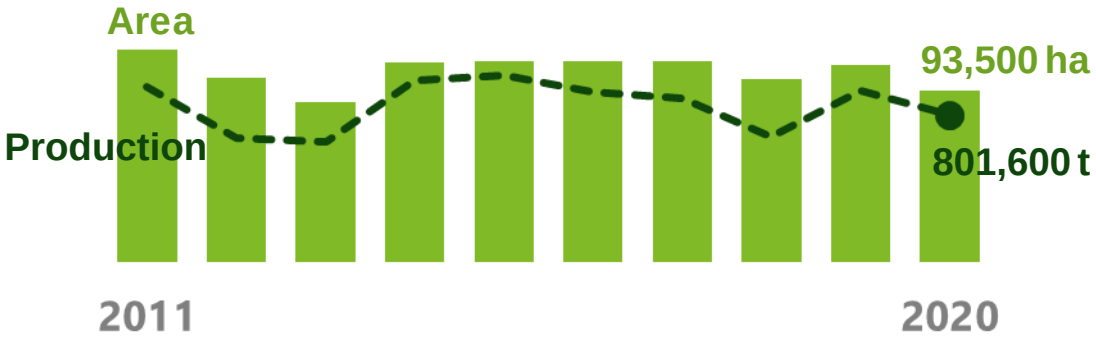
The area of winter barley sown decreased by 12 per cent in 2020. This was due to wet weather conditions over the autumn winter months.

This also led to a 11 per cent decrease in yield and a 21 per cent decrease in production.

Industry experts have stated that while yields may be lower this year, weights have been good and better than those obtained for spring barley.

Decreases for wheat area, yield and production





Scottish wheat is mainly soft wheats used in distilling. In 2019, around 33 per cent of wheat was sold to merchants for malting.

The Scottish climate does not suit hard wheat varieties.

Wheat accounts for

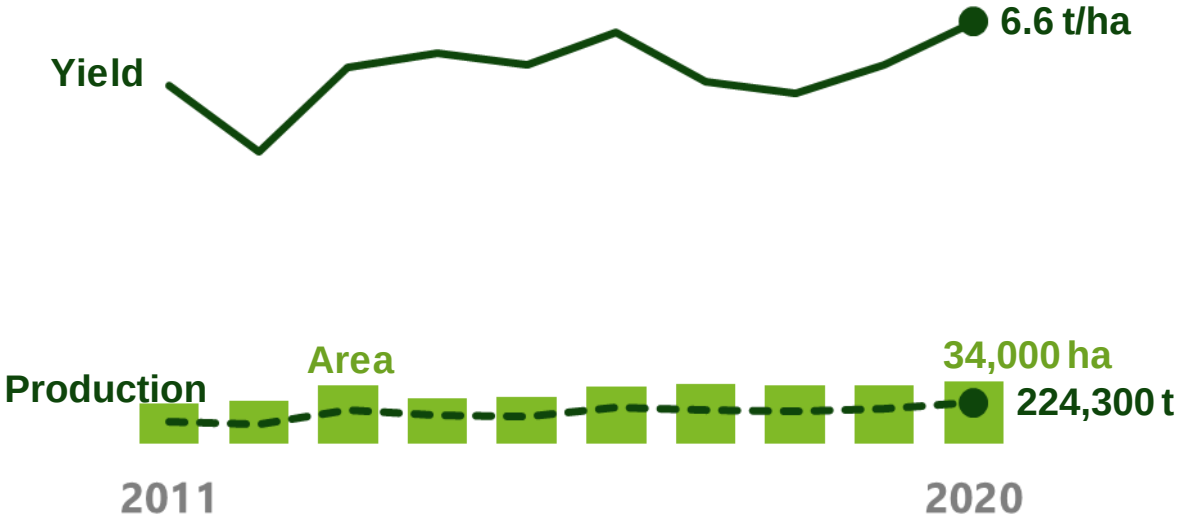
25% Total crop production

Due to wet weather at planting, decreases in wheat have been seen for 2020 compared to the high values for 2019.

Wheat area decreased 13 per cent. A high yield was still achieved overall in 2020, although this decreased 2 per cent from 2019. As a result, production decreased by 14 per cent.

Industry experts indicate that wide variations in yield have been experienced across Scotland, with some farms reporting record yields while others had a poor wheat harvest.

Oats see increase in area, yield and production



Oats account for

7% Total crop production

The area of oats grown increased by 6 per cent. Combined with an increase in yield of 11 per cent, a 19 per cent increase in production has been seen for 2020.

Industry experts have stated that good weights have been obtained this year, and high yields have been experienced in some areas.

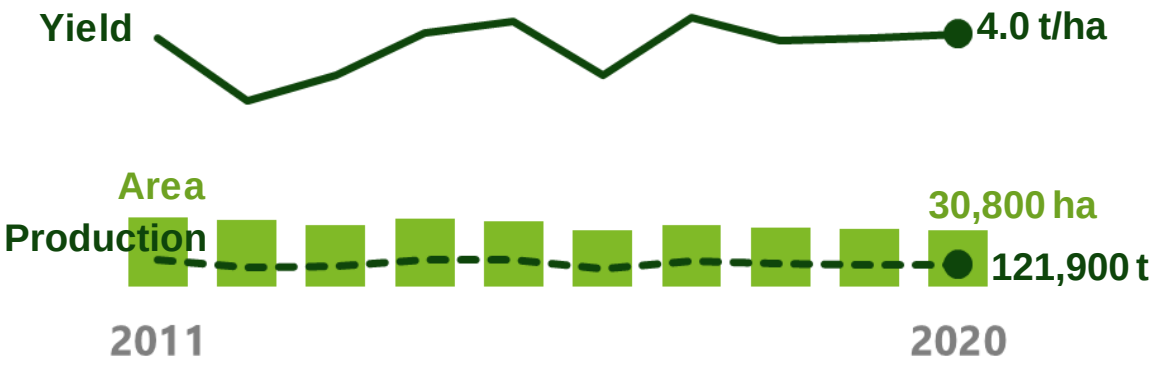
The majority of oats grown in Scotland are sown in the spring and used for milling. In 2019, almost 60 per cent of oats were used for milling.

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

Small changes for oilseed rape

Oilseed rape accounts for

4% Total crop production



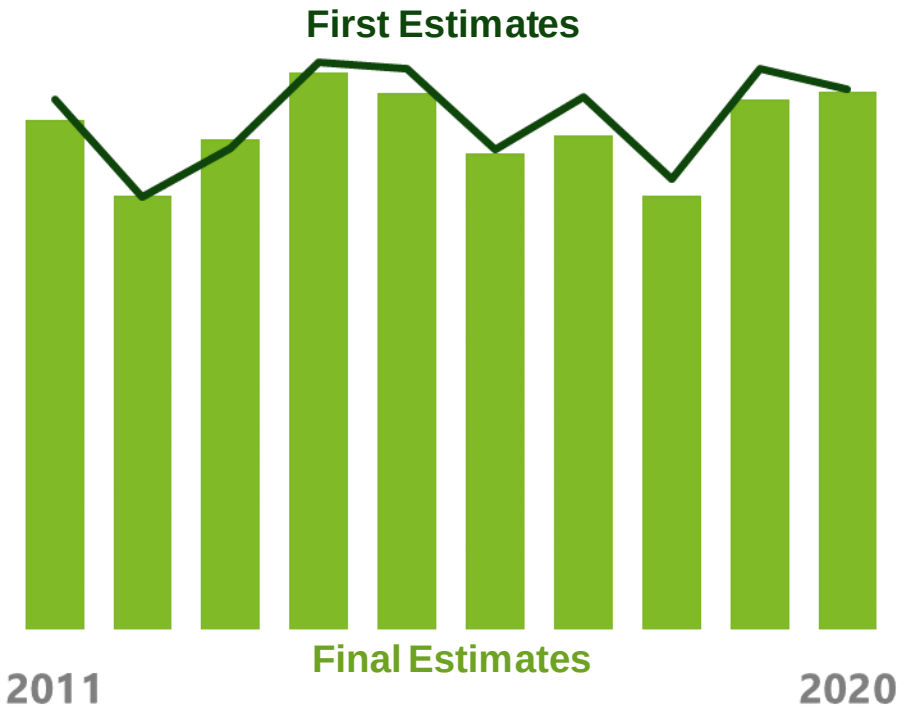
The area of oilseeds grown decreased 3 per cent in 2020. Despite a small increase in yield of 1 per cent compared to last year, this led to a 2 per cent decrease in production.

Oilseed rape estimates are not as reliable as those of other crops due to the small amount grown in comparison to other crops.

Oilseed rape is not a cereal. It 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 and it is mainly used for biofuels.

Initial estimates are generally good predictors of final results



Initial estimates of the cereal harvest are published in October.

In April 2020, it was announced in the RESAS Revised schedule of agricultural surveys and outputs that the Cereal Production Survey would be temporarily stopped. The final 2020 estimate is based on a similar method to the first estimate. Industry intelligence at the end of the Scottish harvest has been combined with information about historic trends.

We are continuing to investigate ways to improve the accuracy of our first estimates, incorporating forecasting techniques to complement information from industry experts.

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 are fairly accurate

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

Cereal and Oilseed Rape Harvest 2020 Final Estimates

Data Sources and More Information

Data Sources

Final estimates of the Scottish Cereal and Oilseed Rape Harvest are used to monitor cereal production and to meet obligations to the European Union, World Trade Organisation and Food and Agriculture Organisation.

In April 2020, it was announced in the RESAS Revised schedule of agricultural surveys and outputs that the Cereal Production Survey would be temporarily stopped. The final 2020 estimate is based on a similar method to the first estimate, using industry intelligence and information about historic trends. Area data is derived from the 2020 June Agricultural Census.

Data Tables and Methodology

The data used to create the charts in this publication and the methodology document are available online at https://www.gov.scot/ISBN/978-1-80004-422-7

If you have any questions or comments about this publication, please email Jay Gillam at jay.gillam@gov.scot

Annex A

Area, Yield and Production – 2011 to 2020

Year	TOTAL CEREALS[1]			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)
2011	446,181	6.60	2,948,871	262,948	5.83	1,532,979	45,477	7.34	333,623
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

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)
2011	115,412	8.29	956,985	21,715	5.61	121,826	38,388	3.90	149,627
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

(1) Includes Triticale up to and including 2016.

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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

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