



The Barley Forecast

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The recent hot weather has been putting some pressure on the crop. The Winter barleys in England are looking like they may get harvested 5-7 days earlier than normal if the heat continues. It is looking well in the field but may have smaller grain size dependent on how much rain individual farms have seen. It will be interesting to see how the new variety "Craft" has held up to the conditions as this could be one for the future.

The Spring barley is looking variable in quality at the moment in the field. There is a wide spread of sowing dates due to the very wet weather in Feb/March. How the Springs will hold up in this heat remains to be seen but higher proteins could be a feature, particularly with the shortened growth cycle. There is some rain due this coming weekend which would be welcome if it arrives. Growers will be looking at harvesting in the next 3-4 weeks. The main varieties for ourselves will be Propino and Planet into the Witham and Grantham plants.

The increased Scottish Spring barley area (~260kha) has also had its fair share of heat over the last 7-10 days which may impact yields for some of the crop. Scotland will still be looking at a mid-August start at the moment and it remains all to play for weather-wise.

It has been very much a weather-driven market up to now with prices taking a step up over the last 15 days of trading. Concerns coming out of Scandinavia due to the high temperatures has been the main driver, coupled with a strong feed barley base which is in turn driven by concerns over a dry Black-sea region, Australia and Canada. UK farmers have not really been selling and will not tend to come to market until the barley is cut and safe in the barn. A key few weeks ahead of us!

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