



# The Barley Forecast

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Rain across key barley growing areas in England has hampered combining progress over the past few weeks. With the winter barley all but tidied up the attention now turns to getting the remainder of the English spring barley in.

The more staggered progress this year in England has caused some growers storage headaches on-farm with winter barley, spring barley and wheat all ready at the same time in some instances.

The barley quality has been variable since the start of harvest and degrees of variability have probably increased as we have progressed through the English crop.

Because the winter barley ripens first it escaped the worst of the rains as it was combined earlier on. Nitrogen level on winters have been reasonable, grain size acceptable (much improved from last year) and moisture level off farm at a manageable level for malting intakes. Important to note that winter barley comprises only about 15% of the English malting crop.

English spring barley, after having one of the driest Apr-June periods in years, has been exposed to a significant amount of rainfall over the past few weeks. As such, the industry has seen a wide range of grain quality on spring barley - across moisture, nitrogen, grain size and germination. Grain nitrogen, which is a key quality determinant for brewers and distillers, is higher overall than the past couple of seasons (0.20-0.25%) but there is considerable variability within it.

In Scotland, despite early harvest predictions growers have begun combining at what would be considered a normal time in an average growing season. Today Scotland is about 10-12% through. Again, similar to England, progress has been hampered so far by the wet weather. However it's fair to say Scottish barley growers are more accustomed to manage these more challenging conditions and quality so far has been reasonable. As normal with Scotland the key will be how the distilling varieties stand up to the Scottish climate.

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