

09 June 2022

General Comments

Spring barley in particular has leapt through the growth stages and this has left some crops looking a bit stressed and spotted with signs of manganese and magnesium deficiency. We are seeing very little ramularia even in winter barley crops so the spots we have seen to date in the spring crop are not ramularia.

Regional Comments

KIRKWALL

Yellowing is evident in many spring barley crops as a result of heavy rainfall and chilly winds in late May. Thankfully the last 2 weeks have been largely dry and sunny, with crops responding accordingly. Spring barley is now receiving what will typically be its only application of pesticides. Although not ideal for either, the herbicide or the fungicide – this approach is popular with feed barley growers in Orkney in an attempt to control costs. The dairies in the county have all made 1st cut silage in near perfect conditions. Some rain would now be welcome to wash in slurry and for grass reseeds.

CAITHNESS

Yet another really good growing period with spring and winter crops looking extremely well in the area. First cuts of silage have been begun with bulk up on last year. Turnip sowing is well underway, relatively on a par with timings of previous years.

MORAY

These last two weeks have seen some periods of heavy rain followed quickly by a warm and very dry period resulting in “growthy” conditions. Those intermittent and often heavy rain showers have hampered spraying plans for many producers. The most advanced spring barley crops are booting up with flag leaves out on some of the earlier sown crops whilst other crops are around GS32. Most crops are clean with minimal disease but there are some areas of rhynchosporium starting to develop. Heads have emerged on winter wheat crops with some crops just started to flower. Many crops have issues with mildew albeit confined to the lower stem and leaves, and some septoria can be found. Winter barley has now come to the end of flowering.

Petals have fallen from winter oilseed rape crops and pods are now starting to fill. The first silage crops have been secured with most producers commenting on the lack of bulk in the crops.

INVERNESS

The past week has seen a spell of dry weather which has allowed spraying to be tidied up. Winter barley is now beginning grain fill and, on the whole clean. Winter wheat is flowering with some mildew seen on lower leaves. Oilseed rape is looking well at growth stage 6.2. The earliest sown spring barleys are at awns peeping with majority disease free. The dry weather has also seen silaging well underway in the area.

ABERDEENSHIRE

With a period of some lovely weather over the last fortnight, sprayers have had a chance to catch up and get spring barley weed sprays applied and winter wheat flag leaf sprays applied. There is a range of crop stages for spring barley, due to differences in sowing dates (the early vs the lates), but for the most part there is very little disease apparent in spring barleys at present. Most spring barleys appear to be at early stem extension, so flag leaves will be emerging soon, and decisions about whether to apply growth regulators will need to be made soon on the more lush crops. Winter wheat ears are beginning to emerge, so head sprays will be getting applied soon, and the last of the flowers are disappearing on oilseed rape crops. Silage cuts are also starting in earnest now, with mixed reports on yields, so difficult to tell if there are any trends this season yet. Tatties are also emerging and starting their rapid haulm growth phase, so protection from blight will be vital if June becomes more showery, as we approach the summer solstice and the earth starts to tilt in the opposite direction again. Bit of a thought that we are approaching the longest day so quickly, best enjoy the weather and daylength while it's here!

BANFF & BUCHAN

The last fortnight has seen a very welcome settled spell of weather. While this may have meant a great opportunity to enjoy the holiday weekend for much of the population, for arable farmers in the Banff and Buchan area, this represented a great chance to finally catch up with crop spraying. Having had plenty of moisture, the sun and warmth has seen crops catch up and race through the growth stages. Winter Barleys are flowering and barring some rhynchosporium at the base of the plant, are very clean and look to have good potential, Winter Wheats are booting having received their T2 sprays, and are also clean. Oilseed rapes have almost lost all their petals although the last of their flowers seem to be stubbornly clinging on. Spring barleys are more mixed, ranging from the 3-leaf stage to some crops almost at flag leaf. Most crops have tillered well, however there are some exceptions – some earlier sown crops have suffered from capping, most growers will have some small bare areas following the wet spell in April and some later sown crops to the east on clay soils are struggling. Elsewhere potatoes are peeping through the ground and silage making teams are out in full force with good yields being reported- a pleasant surprise after the cold and wet start to the growing season.

KINCARDINESHIRE

A good week of weather has allowed the sprayers to catch up after a prolonged windy spell. Winter barley is at the milky ripe stage and is looking well. Disease levels are low, but crops seem to have stretched even after having growth regulator applied. Winter oilseed rape has now finished flowering and seems to have podded well. Winter wheat is around GS55. Many crops seem to have been scorched a little by the T2 fungicide but flag leaves seem to be relatively unaffected. Spring barley is at flag leaf emergence and is looking thick with low disease levels, apart from some min-tilled crops which are showing signs of rhynchosporium. Spring oats are looking really well with flag leaf emerged and free from disease. Crops could do with some rain to keep things going. Grass silage is being made at the moment with what looks like some good yields.

ANGUS

A spell of warm, calm weather in Angus has given many the opportunity to catch up with spraying. Winter wheat T2 sprays have been applied. Growth stages vary between partly emerged ears and fully emerged ears. Winter barleys generally look very lush and a little on the tall side. Spring barleys have had the T1 applications in most cases, and the herbicides seem to have been effective in many crops, given the early flush of weeds. The last flowers are disappearing from the oilseed rape. Growers are looking to start on blight sprays in early established potatoes, and many have been busy at silage where applicable.

PERTSHIRE

Windy and showery weather over the last couple of weeks made spraying difficult, but the last few days have allowed people to catch up, albeit later than ideal in some cases. Winter oilseed rape is at seeds green and filling well, winter barley is at the cheesy ripe stage and winter wheat is at ear emergence. Yellow rust has appeared in susceptible varieties when spray timings have been compromised. Spring crops are quite varied ranging from awns peeping down to early tillering but generally look clean.

FIFE

The drier, warm days (with colder nights) have slowed up cereal growth over the last week to 10 days but crops are still more developed than last year. Spring barleys range from mid-tillering to awns peeping but are largely disease free. Winter wheats range from booting to head fully emerged, in most cases Septoria control has been good. Yellow rust can be found in fields where susceptible varieties are grown and spray timings have been stretched. T3 head sprays will be applied over the next 7 – 14 days. Oilseed rape crops are looking promising with pod development looking good and low disease levels observed. Irrigation in potato and veg fields is now taking place so a few evening rain showers would be welcome.

STIRLINGSHIRE

Winter barleys in the area have progressed well in the last fortnight with crops mostly finished flowering and well into it GS69–73, but some ramularia is creeping in. Winter wheat still very clean and observed at GS 58–61. WOSR starting seed development widely observed at GS 6.2. SB crops have tillered well (4–6 tillers) having benefited from recent wet weather and are starting to boot. Crops have been observed at GS 41–43 widely. All crops have benefited from extending warm spells and occasionally rainfalls.

LOTHIANS

Spring and winter cereals and oilseed rape continue to show good yield potential. Winter wheats have ears $\frac{3}{4}$ to fully emerged and yet to commence flowering so a T3 fungicide is most likely a couple of weeks off yet. Septoria is mainly confined to the lower leaves and not at yield challenging levels as yet and any yellow rust pustules are difficult to find or absent. A few aphids migrating into the crops with the warmer weather of late. Winter barley remains very clean indeed with ears now at the watery ripe stage, crops are tall which bodes well for straw yield. The more forward spring barleys are at awn-tipping having shifted through the growth stages with intermittent showers and warmer weather of late accelerating growth. Mayweed resistance in spring barleys is apparent in some areas and has been reported in other regions too. Oilseed rape canopies are heavy with a good pod set along the full length of the raceme with no discernible damage from seed weevil larvae.

BORDERS

There has been 21mm of rain over the past couple of weeks and crops look to have good potential. Spring Barley crops are at varying stages with some crops at stem elongation and more advanced crops have awns peeping, little disease can be found in the crops. Winter Barley is coming to the end of flowering with some grains starting to fill, Ramularia can be found in some crops. Winter wheat ears are emerging or fully emerged. Septoria can be found on the lower leaves of the crops. Oilseed Rape pods are filling with seeds developing and reaching their full size.

LANARKSHIRE

Winter crops are still growing well with winter barley mostly in the flowering stages and winter wheat, at least, in the ear emergence stages. Some spring barley has stalled slightly as a result of lower temperatures last month, this will hopefully be rectified by the warmer days in the last week. Rainfall has not been a limiting factor, although ground conditions are still good enough as to not delay any crop protection applications. The changeable weather has not been suiting silage makers, most have managed to get a first cut by now, but not always in ideal conditions. Despite all reasonable efforts being made, there have been a number of incidences of pits slipping.

AYRSHIRE

Some catchy weather again over the last couple of weeks in Ayrshire, although a dry spell over the weekend did allow people to get on with more silage. Spring Barley crops are sitting around GS23 and looking greener. A low level of Ramularia is present. Winter crops continue to look well.

STRANRAER

There have been some bumper crops of silage cut over the last few weeks, albeit in sometimes challenging conditions with the broken weather. Inevitably whilst pits are full, so are the effluent tanks. Grass growth response to Nitrogen applied has been excellent and will provide an opportunity for some to reduce acres cut for 2nd and 3rd silage and to reduce fertiliser use. Spring barleys are racing through growth stages and as an average will be between GS 30 -31. Weed control has been good this year as weeds have germinated early so knockdown applications have been effective. Spring wheat has been slower to establish and for some undersown crops grass is outcompeting the cereal. Winter barley applications are finished for the year and largely pleasing although there are some crops compromised by manganese deficiency and rotations will need to be examined closely in the future. More worryingly there are reports of late yellow rust in winter wheat crops and crops will need to be monitored closely to see if this is going to be a recurring issue. Fodder-beet crops are approaching 6-leaf stage and have had a good start with excellent germinations. Maize is generally around GS15 but the lack of heat and sun may be an issue.