

23 June 2022

General Comments

The weather has been pretty variable across the country and so in some areas it has been tricky to get sprays on to spring barley. Winter crops look well although disease levels are starting to creep up. In winter wheats we have had a few reports of damage to the flag leaf into our crop clinic which we are linking to a mixture of cold wind damage, scorch and Ascochyta. A few reports of aphids.

Regional Comments

ORKNEY

High winds and rain have created difficult conditions of late for those farmers still needing to spray their spring barley. This week should see the last of the herbicides applied – weather permitting. The awns are peeping on the small number of crops which were sown early in March, but the rest are still at various stages between tillering and stem elongation. Damage from geese, rabbits and leatherjackets are detectable in many crops. Silage making on the beef units is beginning to gear up, however the many farmers who are in agri-environment agreements may be cursing the 1 July mowing date in what looks to be an early year

CAITHNESS

Yet another really good growing period with spring and winter crops looking extremely well in the area. Some oats growers are looking to apply regulator. Silage making well under way with producers very happy with bulk. The limited turnips sown in the area are showing good germination with potatoes coming on well, albeit needing some rain. The PPP registration has gone largely unnoticed by many growers, with last minute registrations flooding in.

MORAY

As we get set for another week of dry weather, some spring barley crops are showing signs of stress, especially on lighter land. Some of those crops are at flag leaf stage whilst the furthest on have ears fully emerged. Winter barley crops are looking good at the milky ripe stage and winter wheat crops just about at the end of flowering. Winter oilseed rape pods are all formed but seeds are still green.

INVERNESS

The Inverness area has seen good growing conditions over the past fortnight with warm temperatures and occasional showers. Spring barley is now moving through the ear emergence stages and Rhynchosporium is visible in some crops. Winter barley is at the milky ripe stage. Winter wheat is flowering, with Mildew visible in some crops. OSR seed are now green. Swede crops in the area are moving past the two leaf stage although flea beetle have been damaging some crops. Silaging continues in the area with conditions largely favourable.

BANFF & BUCHAN

No two days seem to be the same in terms of weather at the moment and crops continue to be earlier than normal. Winter barleys are changing colour with crops looking to have good potential – a spell of sunshine to finish the job would be very welcome. After a slow start winter wheats have had a sudden growth spurt with ears now coming out and T3s are about to be applied although little disease is present. Oilseed rapes have lost their flowers and continue to look well as pods begin to fill. Spring barleys resemble a spaghetti western, with plenty examples of the good, the bad and the ugly following the cold, wet spell in April. The earliest spring barleys are at awns peeping and beyond, with the race to apply T2s now on, although the weather has reduced spraying opportunities over the past week. Overall, these crops are shorter than normal and in some cases the flag leaf is smaller than would be liked. Ear length does not appear to be affected too much however and crops remain clean in the meantime. These crops were stressed however and whether the current weather conditions of cold days followed by bright sunshine results in the dreaded Ramularia remains to be seen. Later sown crops are a bit behind but are fairly even and may yet be the better yielding despite their sowing dates. Potato crops have emerged and are starting to grow, with the more forward crops not far from meeting across the drills. Silages continue to be made with good yields being reported. Grass growth is good and grazing cattle and sheep are thriving.

KINCARDINESHIRE

Over the past few weeks, the weather has settled a little and sprayers have been able to catch up. Winter oilseed rape is looking well, and pods are filling. Disease levels seem low, and the crop look to have a good potential currently. Some winter barley crops are looking tall even with full growth regulator programme and heavy at present. Disease levels are low and hopefully there is not too much heavy rain and crops stay standing. Winter wheat is generally looking well with heads now full emerged. T2 spray applications have scorched some crops but they seem to be recovering. There are signs of Septoria on lower leaves and hopefully T3 applications going on now will keep it under control. Spring barley is generally looking well with some lush crops in need of growth regulator. Disease levels are low, and crops are now at ear emergence. Spring oats in the area are looking very lush at present with low disease levels. The area needs some rain as grass growth has slowed. First cut silage is about complete with varying yields.

ANGUS

Crops across Angus generally look good, with farms nearest the coast which have missed the occasional shower in need of some water. Spring barley crops are at awns peeping in, even the latest sown crops and are generally free of disease, with a good level of weed control. Winter wheat T3's are being applied or are about to be applied in most crops. Winter barley is beginning to turn, indicating an early harvest might be on the cards this year.

PERTSHIRE

Crops continue to grow at a pace with most crops now having the gate shut and await the combine. Winter oilseed rape is at the seeds green stage, winter barley is beginning to turn with seeds at soft dough and winter wheat is flowering. Yellow Rust has flared up in susceptible varieties when spray timings have been missed or in parts of fields missed with the sprayer such as those around poles. A few cases of Ascochyta leaf scorch have been seen on wheat crops in the area with the cause as yet to be determined. Spring barley is at ears emerging with the last of the fungicides now being applied and crops are generally free from disease.

FIFE

Crop development has slowed due to lack of rain, however crops are looking well with disease control looking to have been successful in most cases. Where spray intervals have been stretched in winter wheats, Yellow Rust can be found developing. Wheat T3 sprays will be in the process of being applied. Spring barley crops have very low disease levels, but Rhychosporium and net blotch can be found, so a good T2 option should be used to keep them clean. Winter barleys are changing from green in colour to yellow but are showing little sign of disease. Large heads show promise for a good harvest so long as enough moisture allows filling of each grain.

STIRLINGSHIRE

Winter barleys in the area are all into milk development GS73 and are filling well but Ramularia pressure is high in some crops. Winter wheat still very clean and coming to the end of flowering, observed at GS58. WOSR starting seed development widely observed at GS 6.3, all seeds green, but it should be noted that seed weevil has been observed consistently in the crop. SB crops are looking very clean and have tillered well, crops vary from heads halfway out to full heads and starting to flower. Crops have been observed at GS55 – 61 widely. All crops have benefited from extending warm spells and occasionally rainfalls.

LOTHIANS

June so far has seen many areas either receiving no rain at all or at best up to 10mm. Crops on the more gravelly soils are starting to show signs of moisture stress particularly in the shallower-rooting crops such as cereals. Many growers have now completed T2's and T3's in spring barleys and wheats, respectively. Varietal susceptibility to Septoria infection is becoming increasingly apparent and localised reports of additional Ascochyta infections have been reported particularly in the more forward, earlier drilled crops. This aside, yield potential across the majority of arable crops continues to remain on the positive side. Early summer-sown forage crops such as fodder beet however will hopefully get the further rain, they need to bulk up sufficiently. Early hay crops have been taken and others are in the process of making.

BORDERS

It has been a dry June, with only 7mm of rain to date. T2 fungicides are readily being applied to spring barley crops with growth stage ranging from awns peeping in later sown crops to heads emerging in earlier sown crops. Spring barley crops appear clean. T3 fungicides are readily being applied to wheat crops with the majority of crops at flowering. Septoria is variable across crops. Some still have 4 clean leaves others with leaf 10% Sept on leaf 3 and occasional spots developing on leaf 2. There have been some reports of Ascochyta in wheat crops. Winter barley is at early dough stage. There are some incidents of Rhynchosporium in WB and some incidents of Ramularia. Most seeds are now green on oilseed rape crops, with low incidents of disease.

LANARKSHIRE

Early sown winter barley is starting to change colour. Grain is being swelled by adequate rainfall. Awns are visible on most spring barley now. Although completely dry days have been few and far between, overall rainfall has not been excessive, so ground conditions are generally good. Plenty of moisture and higher temperatures has also led to tremendous grass growth. Although, not ideal silage conditions, many multicut silage makers have managed to get a second cut.

AYRSHIRE

The weather here in Ayr this last fortnight has been very mixed, with periods of sunshine and real heat, mixed with heavy showers. As a result, many clients have struggled to find the right window to cut and lift silage and those who have been successful are reporting some real bulk but mixed quality. Some of the spring crops have struggled with manganese deficiency but top dressing seems to have addressed this. Spring barley is sitting around the latter stages of tillering, GS25 – 29. Winter crops are fairly pushing on, just approaching ear emergence at GS51. Despite a challenging growing season, ground conditions are good overall and with some consistent weather, spring crops can turn it around.

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

The weather has been more settled over the past couple of weeks. Spring barley awns are out, and crops have been receiving their T2 fungicide applications. Disease levels are very low, and crops are generally looking good. Winter barley crops are starting to ripen with some advanced crops being ready to harvest within a few weeks. Grass growth continues to be exceptional to a point many grazing paddocks are being topped to get grass back under control. First cut silages are near finished with silage yields exceeding expectations. Dairy farm second cuts are now under way.