26 October 2023

Potato, maize, and poppy harvest will be lower this year

Supplementary information to the News Release on Harvest estimates – September 2023

**According to the latest estimate of this year’s harvest as at 30 September, the total harvest of cereals is by 3.4% lower compared to the last year’s above-average harvest. Harvest of basic cereals was by 2.2% lower, year-on-year (y-o-y), and production of grain maize slumped by 17.7%. Rape production is by 10.9% higher thanks to an increase in its area, whereas the following will be harvested in lower amounts: sunflower (−15.2%), soya (−6.3%), and poppy (−18.8%). Lower production of potatoes and sugar beet is expected (−18.6% and −7.2%, respectively). Harvest of fodder crops is also considerably lower; green maize by 14.3%, lucerne by 22.3%, and clover by 21.8%.**

The total harvest of **cereals including grain maize** in the amount of 7 930 thousand tonnes is by 3.4% lower, year-on-year; however, it slightly exceeds the average of harvests for the last five years (the production +1.3%, the sown area −1.8%; the per hectare yield +3.2%).

**Basic cereals** wereharvestedin the amount of 7 403 thousand tonnes, by 166 thousand tonnes less, year-on-year (−2.2%). Despite this year-on-year decrease, it is the second highest harvest during the last five years. Compared to the five-year average, the production of basic cereals is by 4.1% higher (the sown area −1.0%; the per hectare yield +5.2%). Production of **grain maize** is estimated to be in the amount of 526 thousand tonnes; it is by 113 thousand tonnes less (−17.7%). A smaller sown area of 74 thousand hectares (−8.4% compared to the last year’s harvested area) as well as a decrease in the per hectare yield to 7.14 tonnes per hectare (t/ha; −10.2%) due to dry weather during the last phase of the vegetation period are to be blamed.

**Winter common wheat**, the most important cereal in the Czech Republic, was harvested, according to the estimate, in the amount of 5 034 thousand tonnes, by 95 thousand tonnes more than in the previous year (+1.9%). Also the following were harvested in higher amounts: **winter barley** (802 thousand tonnes; +6.8%) and **triticale** (210 thousand tonnes; +1.1%). On the other hand, lower are harvest estimates of **rye** (122 thousand tonnes; −4.6%) and all types of spring cereals, i.e. **spring barley** (952 thousand tonnes, −15.5%), **spring common wheat** (136 thousand tonnes; −45.6%), and **oats** (128 thousand tonnes; −23.9%).

The production of **potatoes** expected to be in the amount of 533 thousand tonnes is almost by one fifth lower (−18.6%), y-o-y. On average, 25.47 tonnes of potatoes are harvested from one hectare (−15.7%). This year, farmers planted potatoes on 21 thousand hectares (−3.4%). For a long-term, there is a decreasing interest in growing potatoes and areas planted this year are even the lowest in the whole history of the surveys. When compared to the five-year average of harvests, the estimated potato harvest is by 17.4% lower this year (the area planted with potatoes −8.3%; the per hectare yield −10.0%).

The estimated production of **sugar beet** of 3 763 thousand tonnes is by 7.2% lower, y-o-y, owing to a decrease of the per hectare yield to 64.00 t/ha (−8.1%). The results will be further refined during the harvest. The sown area of 59 thousand hectares is almost on the same level, year-on-year (+1.0%). Compared to the year 2017, when the system of the sugar production quotas was terminated, the sown area of sugar beet is by 7 thousand hectares smaller. This year, the estimated sugar beet production is by 2.3% lower compared to the average production for the last five years (the sown area −3.0%; the per hectare yield +0.7%).

According to the latest estimate, the **rape** production was 1 293 thousand tonnes, by 127 thousand tonnes more (+10.9%), year-on-year, thanks to an increase in the sown area by 10.5% to 380 thousand hectares. The per hectare yield of 3.40 t/ha is almost on the same level as last year (+0.4%). This year’s rape production estimate is by 7.7% higher compared to the five-year average of harvests (the sown area +2.9%; the per hectare yield +4.6%).

According to the estimate, **soya** will be harvested in the amount of 61 thousand tonnes (−6.3%). This year, soya is grown on 27 thousand hectares. Despite a year-on-year decrease in the sown area by 7.1%, soya remained the second most spread oil seed crop in the Czech Republic following rape, which is the first one. The per hectare yield of 2.32 t/ha is comparable to that of the last year (+0.9%). In comparison to the five-year average, the estimated soya production is by a half higher (the production +51.2%; the sown area +47.5%; the per hectare yield +2.5%).

The expected **poppy** production of 18 thousand tonnes is almost by one fifth lower (−18.8%), year-on-year, owing to the lower per hectare yield of 0.68 t/ha (−19.2%). The sown area of 26 thousand hectares slightly increased, year-on-year (+0.5%); however, compared to the year 2021, when poppy was grown on 44 thousand hectares, the sown area slumped by 40.2%. Compared to the average of harvests for the last five years, the poppy production this year is estimated to be by one quarter lower (the production −24.2%; the sown area −24.0%; the per hectare yield −0.3%).

The estimated production of **sunflower** of 51 thousand tonnes is by 15.2% lower due to a decrease in the sown area to 20 thousand hectares (−11.9%) as well as the lower per hectare yield of 2.56 t/ha (−3.7%). The estimated sunflower production is by 16.5% higher compared to the average for the last five years (the sown area +18.2%; the per hectare yield −1.5%).

The production of **field peas for grain** of 113 thousand tonnes is by 1.5% lower, y-o-y. The sown area expanded by 15.6%, year-on-year, to 47 thousand hectares; however, the per hectare yield decreased by 14.8% to 2.42 t/ha. The estimate of the field peas for grain production is considerably higher when compared to the five-year average of harvests thanks to an expansion of the sown area (production +28.2%; the sown area +38.4%; the per hectare yield −7.4%).

Expected **green maize** production of 6 527 thousand tonnes is by 14.3% lower, year-on-year. The per hectare yield decreased to 30.56 t/ha (−15.0%). The sown area of 214 thousand hectares compared to the previous year’s harvested area is almost the same (+0.9%). Lower production is also expected as for other surveyed fodder crops. **Lucerne** is estimated to be harvested in the amount of 407 thousand tonnes (−22.3%) and production of **clover** will be 303 thousand tonnes (−21.8%). The production estimate of the surveyed fodder crops is lower than the five-year average; the green maize production is lower by 18.0%, lucerne by 20.8%, and clover by 22.0%.

More detailed information also dealing with estimated harvest of other varieties of field crops and selected varieties of vegetables in the Czech Republic as a whole and broken down by Region is given in the related publication: ‘Harvest Estimates – Operative Report as at 30 September 2023’. The Czech Statistical Office will publish final data on the 2023 harvest as for all surveyed agricultural crops on 23 February 2024.

Notes:

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