

NEWS RELEASE

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 were harvested in 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%).

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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.

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(-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:

Contact person:

*Renata Vodičková, Head of the Agricultural and Forestry Statistics Unit,
phone number (+420) 703 824 173, e-mail: renata.vodickova@czso.cz*

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