



Statistics in focus

AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

THEME 5 – 21/2003

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Area under cereals 2001-2002 : almost 38 million hectares

Pierre Bruyas

The 2001-2002 cereal crop year saw the largest area under cultivation in five years. This was the result of an increase in the areas under common wheat and grain maize, while the areas under barley continued to decline. In terms of yield, the result was virtually identical, with common wheat and maize reaching their highest level since 1996. The medium-term outlook is that the composition of the area under cereals in the EU will exhibit great stability, despite a continuing reduction in the areas under barley.

Largest areas under cereals in 5 years

In the 2001-2002 crop year, the areas under cereals in the European Union reached 37.919 million ha. This figure is 2.5% up on the previous crop year. It conceals major differences from one country to another, however:

- the area increased by more than 5% (between 6% and 8%) in Belgium, Portugal and the United Kingdom;
- in Spain, France, Ireland, Italy and Luxembourg the area increased by around 4.5%;
- there was a slight reduction in Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Austria (around 1%);
- there was a substantial reduction in Greece and Sweden (around 5%).

Viewed in the longer term, the figure for the 2001-2002 crop year was the highest since 1997 (38.475 million ha). Since then areas have remained very stable. The change recorded was largely due to the small areas harvested in 2000-2001 because of bad weather.

Increase in areas under common wheat, reduction in areas under barley and maize

Common wheat: +7.9%

The area under common wheat was 7.9% greater than it had been in the 2000-2001 crop year, with 14.056 million ha. This figure is still a little lower than the figure for 1998-1999 (the record year out of the last seven). Here too, developments followed a very different pattern in the various countries.

- Ireland, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom showed increases of more than 20%;
- More moderate increases were recorded in Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, Italy and the Netherlands (between 5% and 12%);
- There were no significant changes in Portugal or Austria;
- There were substantial reductions in Denmark, Greece and Sweden (between 12% and 24%).

Barley: -2.2 %

Unlike the areas under common wheat, those under barley fell by 2.2%. With 10.519 million ha, areas under barley reached their lowest level in the last seven crop years. The areas have been decreasing steadily since 1998-1999 virtually throughout the EU. Only four Member States (Denmark, Spain, Italy and Sweden) recorded an increase in 2001-2002.

Maize: -1.1%

The areas under maize fell by 1.1 % in the 2001-2002 crop year. Maize is grown in ten Member States. There was a substantial increase in Belgium and Austria (+16.9 and +14.3% respectively), while the change in Greece and Italy was more moderate (+7.3 and +3.1%). Areas remained stable in Germany, and fell in the other countries by amounts varying from 31.5% in Luxembourg to 4.2% in France. There has nevertheless been an upward trend overall since 1996 (except in the 1998-1999 crop year).

Sharp increase in the production of common wheat.

Common wheat: +12.8%

With a harvest of more than 94 million tonnes in the 2001-2002 crop year, common wheat almost reached the record level of 95.5 million tonnes achieved in 1999-2000. Production was up by 12.8% on 2000-2001, as a result of the increase in both area (7.6%) and yield (2.8%). Weather conditions caused a reduction in yield in Denmark, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Austria and Finland, but a normal level was regained in the Mediterranean countries, where yields had fallen substantially in 2000-2001. Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Sweden and the United Kingdom recorded increases in yield ranging from 2.8% to 12.5%.

Yields of common wheat (q/ha)								
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Evolution 2001-2002
B	90.2	79.3	80.4	84.4	79.2	80.5	82.7	2.8%
DK	70.6	72.6	72.5	70.1	75.8	74.4	69.5	-6.5%
D	73.0	73.0	72.1	75.5	72.9	78.9	69.1	-12.4%
EL	25.7	25.6	25.9	29.9	25.5	23.5	29.3	24.4%
E	31.9	24.6	31.7	28.0	36.1	24.1	31.9	32.3%
F	72.8	68.1	77.5	74.1	72.6	67.7	76.2	12.5%
IRL	90.0	77.1	80.3	87.7	94.6	90.6	84.5	-6.8%
I	47.2	42.8	49.4	46.4	47.3	44.6	48.1	7.8%
L	66.3	58.9	61.3	59.5	55.8	55.0	59.7	8.5%
NL	89.6	77.3	77.0	83.3	83.6	80.3	78.3	-2.5%
A	50.6	52.6	51.5	54.8	45.6	53.0	50.1	-5.4%
P	17.2	12.0	10.1	16.3	20.9	10.7	18.2	70.0%
FIN	40.8	37.2	29.4	21.6	36.1	33.8	32.0	-5.5%
S	60.7	59.7	56.5	60.2	59.8	58.8	62.3	5.9%
UK	81.5	73.8	75.4	80.5	80.1	70.8	79.6	12.5%
EU-15	66.3	62.2	67.4	66.0	67.1	64.1	67.0	4.6%

Source : Eurostat New Cronos April 2003

Barley: -0.9%

The barley harvest fell by 0.9% in the 2001-2002 crop year, the 1.3% increase in yield being insufficient to offset the 2.2% reduction in areas. The level of production was the lowest in the last seven crop years and almost 9% down on the record year of 1996-1997. The pattern across the Member States was similar to that for common wheat:

- sharp increase in the Mediterranean countries except Greece;
- moderate increase in Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Sweden and the United Kingdom;
- reduction in Denmark, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Austria and Finland;

Yields of barley (q/ha)								
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Evolution 2001-2002
B	75.8	74.0	69.8	73.7	68.6	71.6	75.5	5.5%
DK	51.7	54.0	52.0	50.5	54.4	53.9	49.3	-8.6%
D	54.7	58.9	57.4	60.2	58.6	63.9	55.5	-13.2%
EL	23.4	24.2	24.1	26.9	26.7	19.2	19.1	-0.6%
E	29.9	23.2	30.8	23.9	34.1	20.9	26.9	28.9%
F	62.2	60.2	65.2	62.5	63.3	57.5	66.8	16.1%
IRL	67.5	57.3	56.3	66.5	71.9	70.2	54.7	-22.0%
I	37.6	33.1	38.1	37.2	36.7	33.8	34.7	2.6%
L	56.4	54.5	51.6	53.0	50.8	46.1	54.1	17.3%
NL	66.2	63.9	54.8	62.9	61.0	58.8	55.5	-5.6%
A	41.7	48.3	45.6	47.3	38.2	46.6	42.9	-7.9%
P	15.2	8.8	10.0	11.6	16.7	10.5	18.8	80.0%
FIN	34.3	34.4	23.9	27.0	35.5	32.6	30.4	-7.0%
S	45.1	43.2	37.9	38.4	40.0	41.6	43.5	4.6%
UK	61.4	57.6	51.8	55.8	57.6	53.8	56.2	4.5%
EU-15	46.1	44.2	45.4	44.9	48.2	44.8	45.4	1.3%

Source : Eurostat New Cronos April 2003

Maize: + 1.3%

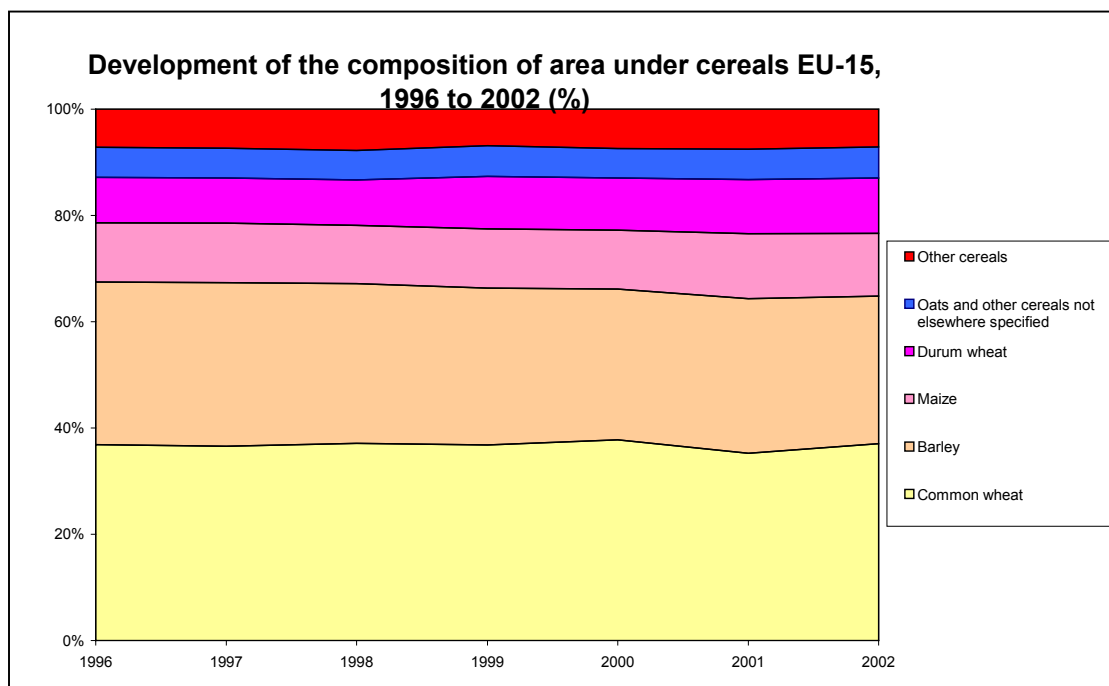
With almost 41 million tonnes, the maize harvest was the biggest since 1996. This figure was 1.3% up on the 2000-2001 crop year. The increase in yield (2.4%) offset the slight reduction in area. Except for Luxembourg, where yield fell by 21.9%, and Austria, where it rose by 14.6%, developments in yield followed a more similar trend than in the case of barley or common wheat.

Yields of maize (q/ha)								
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Evolution 2001-2002
B	89.8	108.2	103.6	121.1	111.1	113.6	112.0	-1.5%
D	78.3	86.6	81.6	87.9	92.1	88.4	93.8	6.1%
EL	99.3	104.0	88.2	85.7	88.9	90.5	88.9	-1.8%
E	85.3	91.5	94.7	94.7	91.7	98.4	96.5	-2.0%
F	83.9	90.7	84.5	89.5	90.8	86.1	89.6	4.1%
I	93.4	96.3	93.3	97.5	95.3	95.1	94.6	-0.6%
L	0.0	50.0	85.0	62.0	80.0	91.0	71.1	-21.9%
NL	80.0	125.2	110.2	70.0	110.0	88.1	82.9	-5.9%
A	96.9	97.8	96.1	96.0	98.6	87.1	99.8	14.6%
P	46.2	49.1	53.0	57.0	57.2	58.1	57.9	-0.4%
EU-15	85.5	91.1	86.8	90.8	91.4	89.4	91.5	2.4%

Source : Eurostat New Cronos April 2003

Composition of the area under cereals¹ relatively unchanged

There have been no major changes in the composition of the cereals area in the last seven years. The proportion accounted for by common wheat increased only slightly from 35.2% to 37.8%. The areas under barley are falling, while those under durum wheat are slowly increasing. There are significant differences between the north and south of the EU, however.



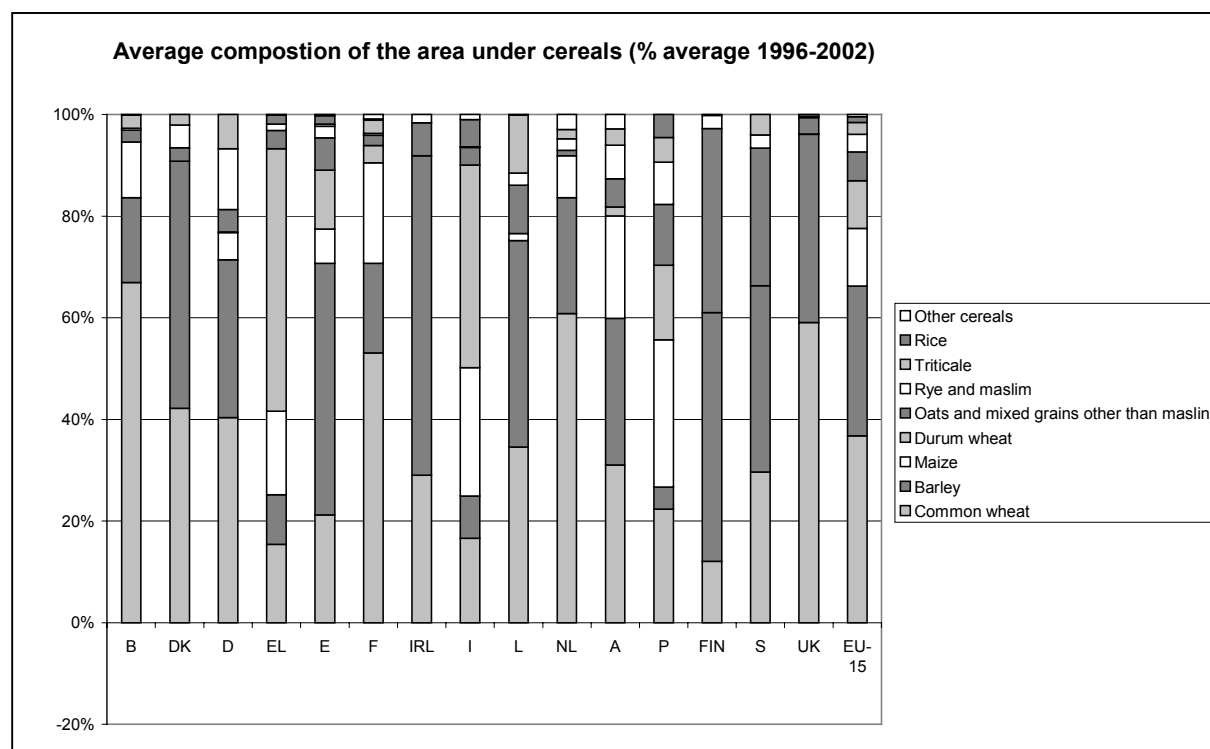
Common wheat continues to dominate, accounting for 37% of the total areas under cereals. The figure is above this average in six countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France, Denmark and Germany), with 55% in France and Germany. Common wheat accounts for the smallest proportion of the total area under cereals in the extreme north and south of the EU (Greece and Finland).

¹ Each country's share of cereals is the recorded average from 1996 to 2002

Barley is the second most important cereal crop, accounting for 29% of the total area. Barley is the main cereal in the northern countries and in Spain, which has one-third of the total area under barley in the EU. Ireland, Finland, Denmark, Luxembourg and Sweden have larger areas under barley than under common wheat.

With 11% of the total area, grain maize is the third most important cereal crop in the EU. It is grown in ten countries and its importance increases from north to south, accounting for 1% of the area under cereals in Luxembourg and 29% in Portugal.

Other cereals account for more than 20% of the total area in eight countries, with more than 50% in Greece and Italy, where the other main cereal crop is durum wheat. This accounts for 52% in Greece and 40% in Italy, where an average of 40% of the total area in Europe is concentrated. In the northern countries, other cereals mainly comprise oats or mixtures. Almost 40% of the areas under cereals in Finland and Sweden are used for growing oats, rye and triticale. In Germany, rye, maslin and triticale together account for nearly 20% of the total.



The acceding countries²: +44% of areas under cereals

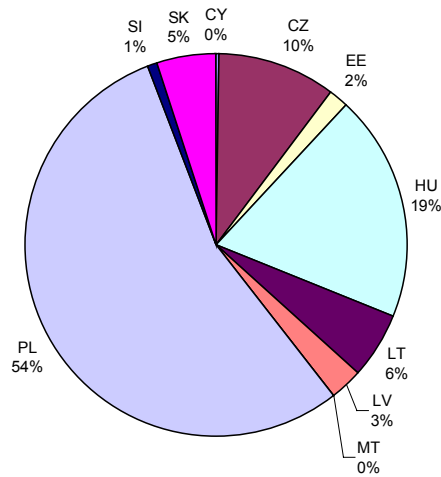
If the acceding countries had been members of the EU in 2001, the area under cereals would have reached 53.2 million ha - an increase of 43.8%.

Poland accounts for most of this with 8.8 million ha, or 55% of the total area in the acceding countries. The contribution differs widely from one type of cereal to another and a great deal is made up of cereals that are not produced on a large scale in the existing Member States (oats: +100%; rye: +200%). The areas under durum wheat would remain unchanged, while those under maize and barley would increase by 38% and 26% respectively.

Because of structurally lower yields, the acceding countries would contribute substantially less to production. Production of common wheat and maize would increase by around 25%, and oats, rye and triticale by 66% to 91%.

² Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia

**Share of the acceding countries contribution
to area under cereals in 2001 (%)**



Contribution of the acceding countries production 2001

	All Acceding Countries	EU-15	EU-15 + Acceding Countries	Increase (%)
Common wheat	22 515	83 496	106 011	27.0
Barley	8 647	48 228	56 875	17.9
Maize	10 502	40 483	50 985	25.9
Oats	5 995	6 666	12 660	89.9
Rye and Maslin	5 779	6 329	12 108	91.3
Triticale	3 505	5 273	8 779	66.5
Other	218	12 001	12 220	1.8
Total	57 160	202 477	259 637	28.2

Source : Eurostat New Cronos April 2003

Contribution of the acceding countries to area under cereals 2001

	Cereals	Common wheat	Barley	Maize	Durum wheat	Oats	Rye and Maslin	Triticale	Other
CY	56	0	50	0	6	0	0	0	0
CZ	1 624	923	495	62	0	50	44	37	12
EE	274	60	134	0	0	54	21	4	1
HU	3 081	1 192	367	1 258	15	58	44	83	64
LT	915	338	331	0	0	56	133	51	7
LV	444	167	130	0	0	60	55	6	26
MT	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
PL	8 872	2 627	1 071	224	0	2 043	2 167	695	44
SI	105	39	13	48	0	2	1	1	1
SK	819	402	195	140	3	20	38	18	2
Total Acceding Countries	16 193	5 750	2 788	1 732	24	2 344	2 502	896	157
EU-15	36 978	13 031	10 755	4 527	3 765	2 118	1 250	1 017	516
EU-15 + Acceding Countries	53 171	18 781	13 543	6 260	3 789	4 462	3 752	1 913	672
Increase	43.8	44.1	25.9	38.3	0.6	110.7	200.1	88.1	30.4

Source : Eurostat New Cronos April 2003

Animal feed: main use

The supply balances³ drawn up by the Member States under a gentlemen's agreement provide a picture of the use of cereals produced in the EU.

The main use is for animal feed, which accounted for 62.8% of the 2000 harvest. Human consumption, in all the various forms of foodstuffs, takes up 24.3% and industrial uses 8.1%. This breakdown differs from one cereal to another:

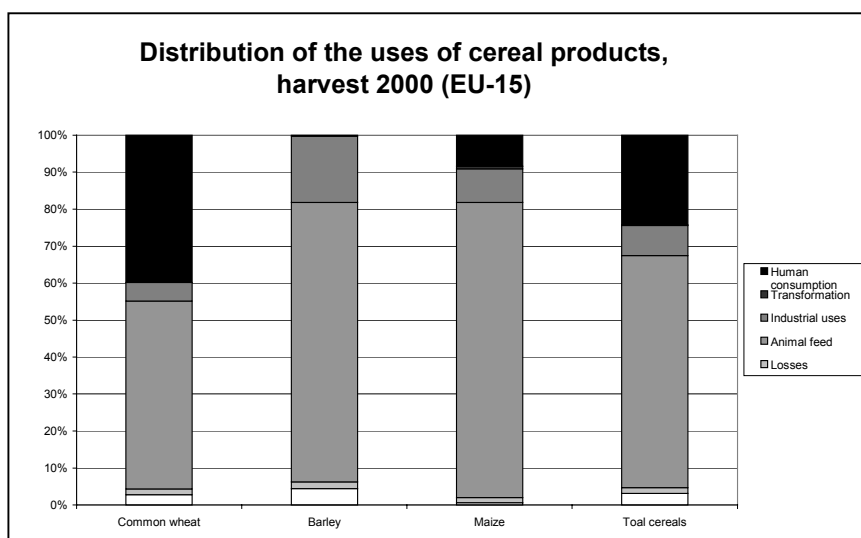
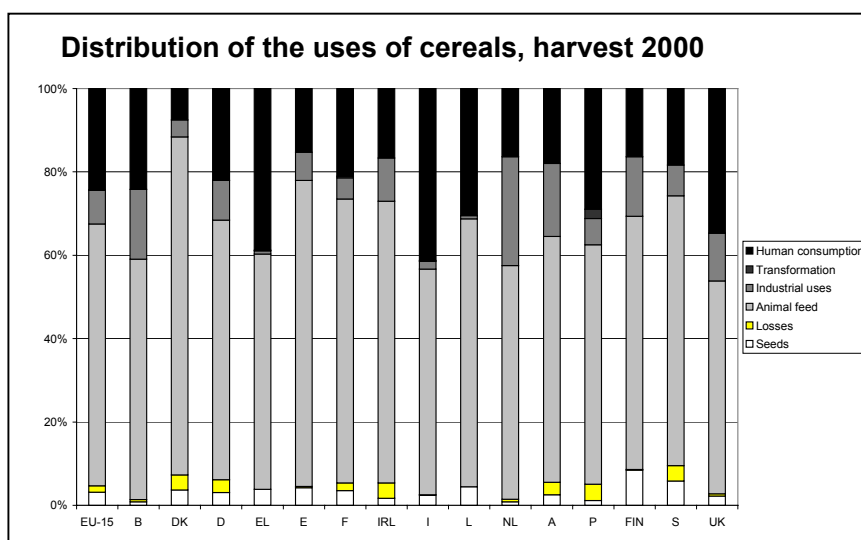
Only 51% of the total wheat is used for animal feed and almost 40% for human consumption;

75% of barley is used for animal feed and almost 18% for industrial purposes;

almost 80% of maize is used for animal feed.

The differences in use between Member States can be explained by the relative prevalence of animal husbandry and different eating habits. Industrial use is above average in the northern Member States because of the large brewing industry (16.7% in Belgium, 26.1% in the Netherlands).

The importance of pig-farming explains the large proportion used for animal feed in Denmark. By contrast, human consumption is as high as 41.2% in Italy because of the amount of durum wheat used for making pasta.



➤ ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Methodology box:

Cereals statistics in the EU are governed by Council Regulation No 837/90 of 26 March 1990, which stipulates that, for all cereals of which production exceeds 50 000 tonnes per year, the Member States must provide Eurostat with annual data on:

- areas under cultivation,
- average yield, and
- production harvested.

The data are to be sent on the following dates:

Areas	Yield and production
Provisional data: 1 October of the harvest year	Initial estimates: 15 November of the harvest year
Definitive data: 1 April of the year following the harvest year	Provisional data: 1 February of the year following the harvest year Definitive data 1 October of the year following the harvest year:

"Cereals" are:

- Common wheat
- Durum wheat
- Rye
- Barley
- Oats
- Grain maize
- Cereals not elsewhere specified
- Maslin
- Sorghum
- Triticale
- Buckwheat
- Canary seed
- Mixed grains other than maslin
- Rice

Further information:

➤ Databases

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