

## Large changes in main crop areas in the EU in 2008:

### Increase in cereals area (+5.7%)

### Decrease in rapeseed (-3.1) and sugar beet (-6.8%) areas

### Continuing decrease in area under protein crops (area under peas -13.4%)

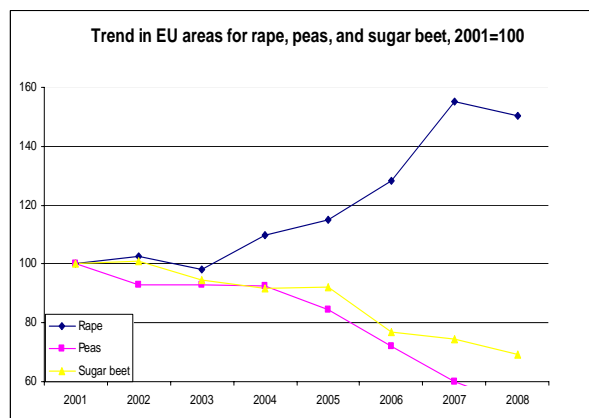
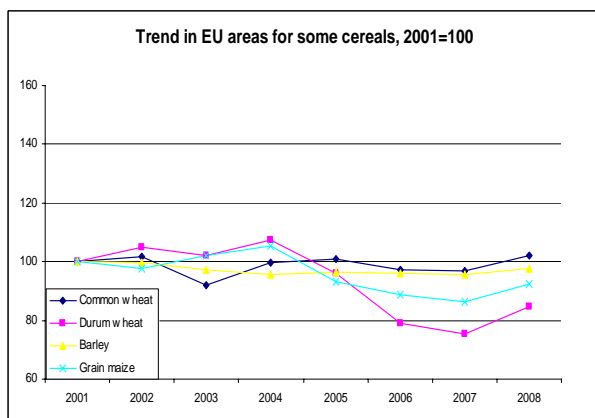
According to Eurostat estimates and those submitted by the Member States in early June, the area under cereals is expected to increase by 5.7% compared with 2007. This is certainly a response to the very high producer price increases for cereals observed in 2007 and the beginning of 2008, due to an imbalance between supply and demand for cereals worldwide. Durum wheat shows a large increase of 12.6%.

In contrast, the rapeseed area decreases (-3.1%) for the first time since 2003, but by different rates across Member States. There is possibly a partial shift from rapeseed area to cereal area.

The area under protein crops, of which peas represents almost half, continue its negative trend (-13.4% for peas area between 2007 and 2008 and -35.5% over the past five years).

The sugar beet area again shows a reduction (-6.8%).

Area yield and production estimates from Eurostat and the Member States are presented in table 1, 2 and 3. **These production and yield estimates are likely to be revised**, given that currently they principally are based on statistical trends (see methodological notes).



### Cereals in EU-27:

#### Increase in area, +5.7%, to 60 million hectares - Estimated harvest of 284.2 million tonnes:

The area under **cereals** should increase significantly: +5.7% in comparison with 2007 (sown area is approximately 60 million hectares) and +2.6% in comparison with the average 2003-2007. This increase is certainly related to high producer prices for cereals and partially made possible by the important reduction of fallow land area.

The production of cereals in the EU is expected to reach around 284.2 million tonnes in 2008, a rise of some 10% in comparison with 2007. The average

yield is expected to reach 47.3 quintals per hectare, compared with 45.3 in 2007.

The area under **common wheat** is estimated to increase (to 23.1 million hectares, +5.4%) in comparison with 2007. France and Germany, the two largest producers of common wheat, increase their areas by 5.3% (to 5 million hectares) and 7.3% (to 3.2 million hectares) respectively. The United Kingdom, the third largest producer, and Romania both increase their areas by around 12% (up to 2 million hectares and 2.2 million hectares respectively).

Common wheat production is forecast to rise to 123.7 million tonnes (+10.5%).

The area under **durum wheat** is expected to show the biggest increase, +12.6% in comparison with 2007, reaching 3.2 million hectares. This increase is mainly due to the two largest producers of durum wheat, Italy and Spain, who see their areas increasing by about 8.6% and 19.6% (1.6 and 0.6 million hectares) respectively. However, the EU-27 area under durum wheat for 2008 remains 7.9% below the average area of the last five years. The total production of the EU-27 for this cereal is expected to reach 9.6 million tonnes (+40.8%)

The area under **barley** is estimated to increase slightly (+2.3% to 14 million hectares). Spain, the third largest barley producer in the EU after Germany and France, has increased its area to 3.4 million hectares (+5.2% in comparison with 2007). Barley area for Germany remains stable (2 million hectares), whereas the area for barley in France increases (+3% to 1.8 million of hectares),

**Protein crops, peas in EU-27:  
Decrease in area, -13.4%, to 556 000 hectares -  
Estimated harvest of 1.4 million tonnes:**

Despite an increasing demand for protein crops (mainly used for animal consumption) since 2001 the area under protein crops such as peas, is constantly decreasing. The area under peas should decline significantly -13.4% in comparison with 2007 (to 556 000 hectares) and -35.5 % in

**Rapeseed in EU-27:  
Decrease in area of 3.1% in comparison with  
2007, i.e. 6.3 million hectares - Estimated harvest  
of 18.2 million tonnes:**

Despite the current increase in crude oil prices, the policy of encouraging the use of biofuel such as biodiesel has been put in question. Biofuels may compete with world food demand. As a consequence, EU-27 area under rapeseed decreases by 3.1 % in comparison with 2007, i.e. 6.3 million hectares in 2008. This area is still significantly above the 2003-2007 average (+23.9%).

**Sugar beet in EU-27:  
Decrease in area of 6.8%, i.e. 1.7 million hectares-  
Estimated harvest of 108.5 million tonnes**

Due to the reform of sugar regime, the area under sugar beet is estimated to decrease by 6.8% within the EU in comparison with 2007 (-19.3% relative to the 2003-2007 average), dropping to 1.7 million hectares.

The decrease relative to the average of the last 5 years (2003-2007) is widespread. Most of the

the Polish area decreases by 7% (1.1 million hectares).

Production in the EU is expected to reach 57.6 million tonnes (stable in comparison with 2007).

The area under **rye and maslin** in the EU is estimated to increase to 2.8 million hectares, +2.8% compared with 2007).

The EU-27 production is also expected to increase to 8.2 million tonnes.

Finally, the area under **grain maize** is estimated to increase by 10%, to reach 8.9 million hectares. Romania, the third largest grain maize producer in the EU-27, after France and Italy, will have the greatest area under grain maize (2.7 million hectares).

Production in the EU is expected to reach 56.7 million tonnes (+17.6% compared with 2007).

comparison with the average observed in the period 2003-2007. For the two largest producers of peas, France and Spain, a large decrease is observed of 17.5% (137 000 ha) and 13.4% (154 000 hectares) respectively.

EU production in 2008 is estimated to reach 1.4 million tonnes (-7.4% in comparison with 2007 and -42.9% in comparison with the average of the last five years.)

Rapeseed remains the fourth most important crop by area in the EU, after wheat, maize and barley. The largest producers of rapeseed, France, Germany and Poland, decrease their area under rapeseed by 7.4% (to 1.5 million hectares), 8.4% (to 1.4 million hectares) and 6.1% (to 748 000 hectares) respectively. However, some other countries seem to continue to devote more area to this crop; the United Kingdom (+9.6%, 605 000 ha), Romania (+21.5%, 382 000 ha).

The EU production of rapeseed in 2008 is estimated to reach 18.2 million tonnes, as in 2007.

Member States see their area under sugar beet decreasing. France, the largest sugar beet producer, decreases its area strongly this year (-10.7% to 352 000 ha). Hungary, Spain and Italy also present severe reductions in their areas (-65% to 14 000 hectares, -26.3% to 54 000 ha and -17% to 71 000 ha respectively).

EU production of sugar beet in 2008 is expected to be 108.5 million tonnes, which represents a fall of 11.8% relative to the 2003-2007 average and a decrease of 5.4% in comparison with 2007.

**Table 1: EU-27 Areas, 1000 hectares**

	Average 2003-2007	2007	2008	% change 2008/2007	% change 2008/2003-2007
Cereals (excluding rice)	58 532	56 819	60 075	5.7	2.6
Common wheat	22 026	21 935	23 115	5.4	4.9
Durum wheat	3 514	2 877	3 238	12.6	-7.9
Rye and maslin	2 655	2 711	2 788	2.8	5.0
Barley	13 814	13 726	14 038	2.3	1.6
Oat and mixed grain	4 596	4 607	4 565	-0.9	-0.7
Grain maize	9 135	8 046	8 853	10.0	-3.1
Triticale	2 464	2 514	2 440	-2.9	-1.0
Rice	419	420	399	-5.0	-4.7
Peas	861	642	556	-13.4	-35.5
Potatoes	2 356	2 222	1 976	-11.1	-16.1
Sugar beet	2 091	1 809	1 687	-6.8	-19.3
Rape	5 053	6 460	6 262	-3.1	23.9
Sunflower seeds	3 790	3 337	3 593	7.7	-5.2

**Table 2: EU-27 Yields, 100 kg/hectare**

	Average 2003-2007	2007	2008	% change 2007/2008	% change 2008/2003-2007
Cereals (excluding rice)	47.1	45.3	47.3	4.4	0.4
Common wheat	54.0	51.0	53.5	4.9	-0.9
Durum wheat	26.3	28.5	29.7	4.2	12.9
Rye and maslin	30.2	29.5	29.4	-0.3	-2.7
Barley	41.8	42.0	41.0	-2.4	-1.9
Oat and mixed grain	28.1	29.0	27.7	-4.5	-1.3
Grain maize	63.5	58.0	64.0	10.3	0.9
Triticale	39.0	38.3	38.1	-0.5	-2.4
Rice	65.4	64.6	65.1	0.8	-0.5
Peas	28.8	23.5	25.5	8.5	-11.5
Potatoes	268.2	286.3	287.6	0.5	7.2
Sugar beet	588.5	633.7	643.1	1.5	9.3
Rape	28.1	30.0	29.0	-3.3	3.2
Sunflower seeds	16.2	14.6	15.5	6.2	-4.3

**Table 3: EU-27 Production, 1000 tonnes**

	Average 2003-2007	2007	2008	% change 2007/2008	% change 2008/2003-2007
Cereals (excluding rice)	276 069	258 384	284 155	10.0	2.9
Common wheat	118 987	111 880	123 665	10.5	3.9
Durum wheat	9 259	6 829	9 617	40.8	3.9
Rye and maslin	8 049	7 993	8 197	2.5	1.8
Barley	57 728	57 697	57 556	-0.2	-0.3
Oat and mixed grain	12 880	13 360	12 645	-5.4	-1.8
Grain maize	58 037	48 171	56 659	17.6	-2.4
Triticale	9 637	9 635	9 296	-3.5	-3.5
Rice	2 740	2 716	2 597	-4.3	-5.2
Peas	2 481	1 531	1 418	-7.4	-42.9
Potatoes	63 208	62 810	56 830	-9.5	-10.1
Sugar beet	123 042	114 648	108 491	-5.4	-11.8
Rape	15 163	18 142	18 160	0.1	19.8
Sunflower seeds	6 159	4 868	5 569	14.4	-9.6

## ESSENTIAL INFORMATION – METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

### 1. EECF - Early Estimate for Crop Production:

Early estimate system for areas, yield and production, based on the exchange of information between the Agromet model (statistical trends) and the advance data provided by the Member States. Estimates using the Agromet model are progressively replaced by estimates sent by the Member States to Eurostat.

Production in a Member State is calculated on the basis of area and yield estimates obtained from the estimates of the Member States and/or Eurostat. EU-27 production and area are the sum of production and area figures from each Member State for a given product.

### Abbreviations:

EU: the current European Union of 27 Member States.

## Further information

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Data: [EUROSTAT Website/Agriculture and fisheries/Crops products \(excluding fruits and vegetables\)](#)

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