

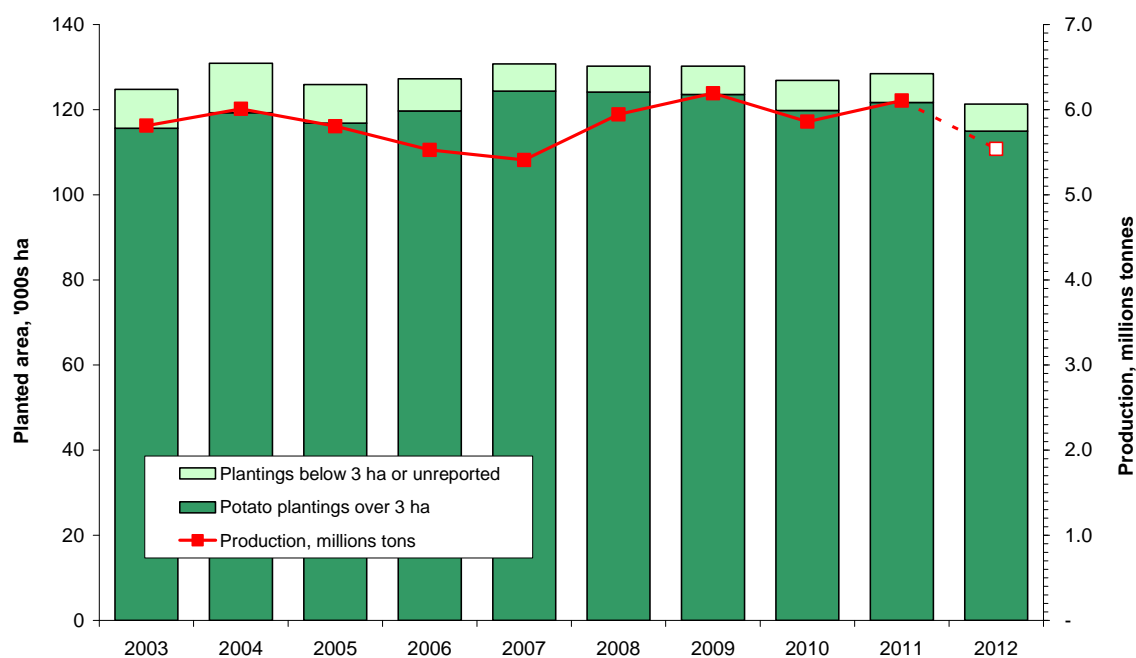
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## FIRST ESTIMATE OF TOTAL POTATO PLANTINGS IN GREAT BRITAIN IN 2012

The Potato Council's first estimate of total potato plantings<sup>1</sup> for the 2012 crop year in Great Britain is **121,307** hectares. This is down 5.5% on the final 2011 planting figure of 128,433 ha<sup>2</sup>. This initial estimate is provisional, being based only on a sample<sup>3</sup> covering 62% of producers by area. As with all estimates based on a sample, results should be treated with caution as, despite every effort to make the sample as representative as possible, there is a possibility that the planting decisions made by those not included in the sample may differ from those who are included.

Figure 1 shows a time series of GB plantings while Table 1 sets out the data underlying Figure 1. The primary source of the area information is Potato Council Planting Returns. This includes all growers with plantings in excess of 3 ha. To this are added an allowance for unregistered areas. This is based on an analysis of the size distribution of plantings and area checks from Potato Council aerial survey. For 2012, unregistered area is estimated to be 5.5%, based on the 5-year average from 2006-2010.

Figure 1 : Potato Plantings in GB 2003-2012



<sup>1</sup> Total potato plantings includes actual planted area, and excludes headlands and other parts of the field not planted with potatoes. When comparing Potato Council statistics with those published by DEFRA, note that the latter are based on field areas and tend to be about 9% higher than Potato Council figures.

<sup>2</sup> Please note that the 2011 planting estimate has increased by over 2000 ha since the previous estimate made in November 2011 to take account of a larger-than-normal number of estimates for unreturned planting information.

<sup>3</sup> The sample comprises Planting Returns entered prior to 02 July 2012 from 1,758 registered producers, including online entries. Statistical 95% confidence limits for the estimate are  $\pm 1.2\%$ , implying that the final figure for 2012 could lie anywhere in the range from 119,800 to 122,800 ha.

**Table 1 : Registered and total plantings by crop year**  
in thousands ha (2012 figures are provisional\*)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Registered area, plantings 3 ha +	115.7	119.3	116.9	119.7	124.4	124.1	123.6	119.8	121.7	114.9
Adjustment for unregistered area	7.9%	9.8%	7.7%	6.3%	5.1%	4.9%	5.4%	5.9%	5.5%	5.5%
<b>Total plantings</b>	<b>124.8</b>	<b>130.9</b>	<b>125.9</b>	<b>127.2</b>	<b>130.8</b>	<b>130.2</b>	<b>130.2</b>	<b>126.9</b>	<b>128.4</b>	<b>121.3</b>
% change on year	-10.0%	+4.9%	-3.8%	+1.1%	+2.8%	-0.4%	-0.0%	-2.6%	+1.2%	-5.5%
Mean GB yield tonnes/ha	46.6	45.9	46.1	43.4	41.4	45.7	47.5	46.2	47.6	45.7
GB Production, millions tonnes	5.81	6.01	5.80	5.53	5.41	5.95	6.19	5.86	6.11	5.54

\* Based on 1758 Planting Returns covering 71,100 ha processed by 02 July 2012, using regression estimator method from 2011 plantings. The 95% confidence limits on the 2012 estimate are  $\pm 1.2\%$  (total plantings between 119,800 to 122,800 ha). Production is estimated as area x 5-yr average yield.

A five-year average figure for 2012 yields is also presented. As the only information used to calculate this figure is yields between 2007 and 2011, this figure should be viewed only as indicative. For instance, the five season average figure is 45.7t/ha but yields over the five year period were as low as 41.4t/ha (over 9% lower) in 2007 and as high as 47.6t/ha (over 4% higher) in 2011. Actual yields for this year will depend on the weather and other factors for the rest of the growing season and will be following on from the high yields recorded in 2011.

The five-season average yield figure and the initial estimate of GB planted are then used to provide a preliminary indication of GB total production<sup>4</sup>. This estimate is likely to change significantly over the course of the year as more information on planted area and yields is received.

The Potato Council's estimate of planted areas for 2012 will be updated at the end of July and provided as a breakdown by varieties at the end of August. A production estimate based on actual 2012 yields will be published in mid-November.

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<sup>4</sup> Total production is net harvested yield, excluding field leavings not picked up during the harvesting process, and greens and other defect that may be discarded at preliminary grading on the field or into store.