

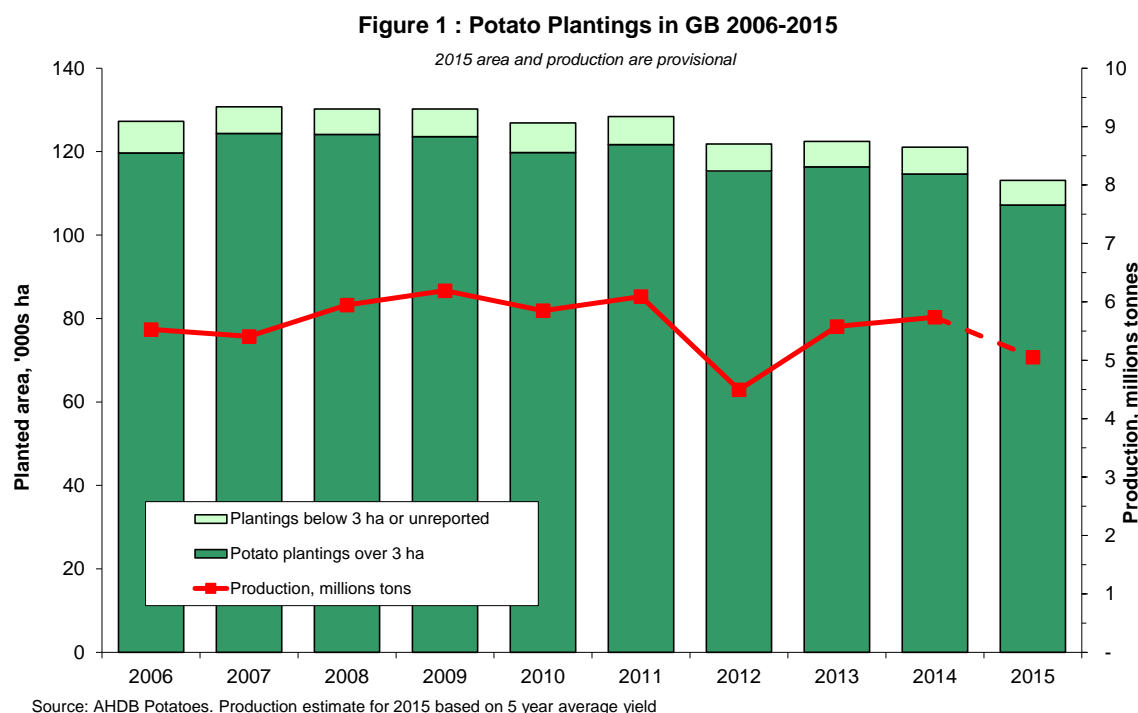
PRESS INFORMATION

2 July 2015

FIRST ESTIMATE OF TOTAL POTATO PLANTINGS IN GREAT BRITAIN IN 2015

The first estimate of total potato plantings¹ for the 2015 crop year in Great Britain from AHDB Potatoes is **113,100** hectares. This is down 6.6% on the final 2014 planting figure of 121,100 ha. This initial estimate is provisional, being based on a sample² covering 64% 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 AHDB Potatoes' 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 the analysis of results from aerial survey and Planting Return audits.



¹ Total potato plantings includes actual planted area, and excludes headlands and other parts of the field not planted with potatoes. When comparing AHDB Potatoes statistics with those published by DEFRA, note that the latter are based on field areas and tend to be about 9% higher than AHDB Potatoes figures. DEFRA figures will also tend to cover the UK as a whole, including Northern Ireland, rather than GB.

² The sample comprises Planting Returns processed prior to 15 June 2015 from 1,591 registered producers, including finalised online entries. Statistical 95% confidence limits for the estimate are $\pm 1.1\%$, implying that the final figure for 2015 could lie anywhere in the range from 111,800 to 114,400 ha.

**Table 1 : Registered and total plantings by crop year
in thousands ha (2015 figures are provisional*)**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Registered area, plantings 3 ha +	119.8	121.7	115.3	116.3	114.6	107.2
Adjustment for unregistered area	5.9%	5.5%	5.6%	5.2%	5.6%	5.5%
Total plantings	126.9	128.4	121.8	122.4	121.1	113.1
% change on year	-2.6%	+1.2%	-5.1%	+0.5%	-1.1%	-6.6%
Mean GB yield tonnes/ha	46.1	47.4	36.9	45.6	47.4	44.7*
GB Production, millions tonnes	5.85	6.09	4.49	5.58	5.74	5.05*

Source: AHDB Potatoes. *Production estimate for 2015 based on 5 year average yield

A five-year average figure for 2015 yield is also presented. As the only information used to calculate this figure is yields between 2010 and 2014, this figure should be viewed only as indicative. For instance, yields over the five year period were as low as 36.9 t/ha in 2012 and as high as 47.4 t/ha in 2011 and 2014. If 2012 is excluded, on the basis that unusual weather conditions created an outlier, the average yield over the period would be 46.6 t/ha, giving a production figure of 5.27 million tonnes in 2015. Actual yields for this year will depend on the weather and other factors for the rest of the growing season.

The five-season average yield figure and the initial estimate of GB planted area are then used to provide a preliminary indication of GB total production³. This estimate is likely to change significantly over the course of the year as more information on planted area and yields is received.

AHDB Potatoes' estimate of planted area for 2015 will be updated at the end of August when a breakdown by variety will also be provided. A production estimate based on actual 2015 yields will be published in mid-November.

For further information contact:

David Swales ☎ +44 2476 478 854
E-mail: david.swales@ahdb.org.uk
Website : <http://potatoes.ahdb.org.uk>

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³ 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.