



Press release

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Record cereal crop

Dutch cereal crops amount to record 1.7 billion kilo's in 2003, 6 percent more than in the previous record year 1996. Compared with 2002, 17 percent more cereals have been harvested. According to provisional crop estimates of Statistics Netherlands, this increase in production is based on an average higher yield per hectare, on the same total area of land.

Record yield per hectare

Winter wheat is the most grown cereal for Dutch arable farmers, accounting for more than half of the total area of cereals. Winter wheat also has the highest yield per hectare. In 2003 the production was 9,500 kilo's per hectare, double the yield of 30 years ago. It is the highest yield per hectare ever realised and 17 percent more than in 2002. This large increase per hectare combined with a slight decrease in the area of winter wheat resulted in an increase in the total yield of 14 percent.

High yields for summer barley and other cereals

The summer barley crop is also large this year. Just as for wheat, the increase in production was caused by the higher yields per hectare. The area of barley decreased slightly but in spite of this the total yield was 17 percent higher than in 2002. The yield per hectare for summer barley was as much as one fifth higher in 2003 than last year. Each hectare of land yielded an average 6,600 kilo's of summer barley. Most of this barley is used by beer brewers.

According to Statistics Netherlands other cereal crops were also high.

Linseed stable

The total area of flax was nearly 10 percent down on 2002. As well as fax fibre, flax plants yield linseed, which is used for new plants and for oil, while the rest of the plant is used in the textile and paper and construction industries. In 2003 the linseed yield per hectare was about 10 percent higher than last year, but because of the decreased area the total yield was about the same as in 2002. However, as the production of flax fibre was 10 percent lower, the total yield was around one fifth down on 2002.