Preliminary assessment of overwintering of crops[1] in 2026

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⇧ 1.1%

increase in the sown area of winter cereals compared to the 2024 sown area

Field studies indicate that in the current year, winter crops overwintered somewhat worse than in the previous year. The main cause of the damage was significant drops in near-ground temperatures recorded in January and February (in some areas down to –25°C and below), accompanied by drying winds. Insufficient snow cover or its absence further limited the natural protection of plants against frost.

In most voivodeships, greater losses in the area sown with winter crops were recorded compared to the previous year. Damage to the plants also resulted from daily temperature fluctuations as well as locally occurring waterlogging in fields during the late winter/early spring period. An additional factor contributing to losses in winter crops was the occurrence of snow mold on plantations. The overwintering of fruit trees and bushes was most often assessed as good or satisfactory. An increased risk of frost damage mainly concerned apricots, sweet cherries, peaches, and some plum varieties.

The onset of vegetation in winter crops and permanent grasslands occurred in the second decade of March. Throughout the month, spring fieldwork was carried out. In a large part ofthe country, sowing of spring cereals and field vegetables began. The persistent shortage of precipitation contributed to a reduction in soil water reserves. In many regions of the country, significant soil drying was observed.

As a result of insufficient rainfall, excessive drying of the topsoil is being observed in many regions of the country

A final assessment of winter losses, as well as spring losses, and an assessment of the state of sowing of agricultural and horticultural crops will be carried out in the second half of May this year.

Assessment of the condition of winter crops sown in the fall of 2025 for harvest in 2026

An assessment carried out in November by Statistics Poland field appraisers shows that winter cereals for the 2026 harvest have been sown about 4.5 million hectares, i.e. approx. 1.1% more than last year, of which:

The area of winter cereals sown in autumn 2025 for harvest in 2026 amounted to about 4.5 million hectares

- winter wheat was sown more than 2.3 million hectares,
- rye more than 0.6 million hectares,
- winter triticale about 1.1 million hectares,
- winter barley more than 0.4 million hectares,
- winter cereal mixtures about 0.05 million hectares.

The area sown to winter rape and turnip rape is estimated at about 1.1 million hectares.

[1] The information contains the results of a preliminary assessment of overwintering of winter crops and orchard plants carried out by Statistics Poland provincial appraisers. The assessment was made on the basis of a monolithic survey conducted in mid-March, as well as an inspection of fields, meadows and orchards conducted at the end of March, and observations of agrometeorological conditions and their impact on the condition of agricultural and horticultural crops.

Within the optimal agrotechnical timeframes, more than 85% of the winter wheat area was sown, over 96% of rye, about 94% of winter barley, more than 93% of triticale, approx. 74% of winter cereal mixtures, and over 91% of winter rape and turnip rape.

The condition of winter cereal crops – namely wheat, rye, barley, triticale, and cereal mixtures – was assessed at the level of the previous year (Table 1). Plantations of winter rape and turnip rape, on average in the country, were assessed at 3.8 qualification degrees, i.e. slightly below last year's assessment.

Table 1. Assessment of the status of winter crops in November in the years 2018-2025

Specification	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	**2025**
	in qualifying grades [a]							
Wheat	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.9	4.0	**4.0**
Rye	3.7	3.6	3.9	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.1	**4.1**
Barley	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.8	4.0	4.0	**4.0**
Triticale	3.6	3.7	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	**4.0**
Cereal mixtures	3.6	3.5	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.9	**3.9**
Rape and turnip rape	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	**3.8**

a) A grade of „5" indicates very good condition, „4" – good, „3" – sufficient, „2" – poor, „1" – bad, disaster.

The course of agrometeorological conditions during the winter of 2025/2026

Agrometeorological conditions in November were highly variable. Frequent rainfall hindered autumn field work and the harvesting of root and fodder crops. At the same time, in regions with a more even distribution of precipitation, adequate soil moisture and positive air temperatures supported the growth and development of winter crops. Cooling in the third decade of the month, combined with diurnal temperature fluctuations, promoted plant hardening.

In December, weather conditions generally did not pose a threat to overwintering crops, despite the continued variability of agrometeorological conditions. Significant drops in air temperature near the ground surface were recorded in the third decade of the month, locally reaching -15°C or lower. Despite the lack of snow cover or its minimal thickness, these conditions did not lead to excessive cooling of the soil at the tillering node depth.

The course of weather conditions during the winter period increased the risk of crop damage

In January and during the first and second decades of February, very large drops in near-ground air temperature were recorded, locally reaching -25°C or lower, which increased the risk of frost damage. In many regions of the country, insufficient snow cover did not provide adequate protection for crops against excessive cooling. In the third decade of February, a warming period occurred, accompanied by rainfall. Locally, waterlogging was observed in fields, which could have negatively affected the overwintering condition of plants.

Weather conditions in March were generally favorable for agriculture. In the second decade of the month, vegetation of winter crops and permanent grasslands resumed. Favorable agrometeorological conditions allowed for the continuation of spring fieldwork, including the sowing of oats, spring wheat, and spring barley over a large part of the country. At the same time, the persistent precipitation deficit contributed to a reduction in soil water resources.

In April, the country's agrometeorological conditions were varied. Cool days and night frosts in the first half of April inhibited the emergence of spring cereals and slowed down the pace of their growth. In many regions of the country, significant rainfall deficiencies were observed, causing soil drying.

Table 2. Air temperature and precipitation from autumn 2025 to spring 2026

Specification	National average air temperature		National average rainfall totals	
	°C	deviation from the norm [a]	mm	% norm [a]
AUTUMN [b] 2025				
September	15.5	1.7	62.9	109.6
October	8.7	-0.1	60.5	129.8
November	4.1	0.1	45.0	113.4
WINTER [b] 2025/2026				
December	2.3	2.0	14.5	37.3
January	-4.1	-3.0	17.2	47.4
February	-1.6	-1.5	22.3	70.6
SPRING [b] 2026				
March	6.4	3.3	10.8	28.6

a) From 2021 IMiGW adopts as the average norm from years 1991-2020.
b) Monthly averages /Statistics Poland calculations based on IMiGW data/.

Preliminary assessment of overwintering of winter cereals and rape and turnip rape

Monolithic and field surveys conducted by voivodeship appraisers in late February and the first half of March this year indicate that winter crops across the country overwintered slightly worse than in the previous year.

The greatest winter losses (plant damage) were recorded in the following regions due to:

- severe frosts in the voivodeships of Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Lubelskie, Lubuskie, Łódzkie, Małopolskie, Podlaskie, Świętokrzyskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie and Wielkopolskie;
- drying winds in the voivodeships of Lubelskie, Lubuskie, Łódzkie, Podlaskie, Wielkopolskie and Zachodniopomorskie;
- snow mold in the voivodeships of Lubelskie, Lubuskie, Łódzkie, Podkarpackie, Pomorskie and Warmińsko-Mazurskie;
- waterlogging in terrain depressions in the voivodeships of Podkarpackie, Pomorskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, Wielkopolskie and Zachodniopomorskie;
- other causes (e.g. forest animals) in the voivodeships of Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Lubelskie, Warmińsko-Mazurskie, and Zachodniopomorskie.

About 8.4 thousand hectares of winter cereals and about 7.0 thousand hectares of rape and turnip rape sown in autumn 2025 were qualified for plowing

According to an assessment by voivodeship appraisers at Statistics Poland, about 0.2% of the area sown to winter cereals and about 0.6% of the area sown to winter rape and turnip rape were qualified for plowing nationwide.

In the surveyed monolithic and field samples, the share of living plants and germinating seeds in the current year amounted to, for:

- winter wheat – more than 95%,
- rye – more than to 96%,
- winter barley – about 96%,
- winter triticale – about 94%,
- winter rape and turnip rape – about 88%.

Moreover, in the analyzed monolith samples, 3% to 7% of plants were classified as doubtful (i.e., their overwintering status and final condition could not be determined). The highest share of doubtful plants was recorded in winter rape and turnip rape plantations, while the lowest was observed in rye and barley fields.

Evaluation of wintering of trees, fruit bushes and berry plantations and the condition of horticultural crops

The course of the winter of 2025/2026 did not cause significant losses in orchard crops, despite considerable drops in air temperature in January and February, locally below –25°C. The overwintering of fruit trees and bushes was most frequently assessed as good or satisfactory. An increased risk of frost damage concerned mainly apricots, sweet cherries, peaches and certain plum varieties. The onset of vegetation of fruit trees, fruit bushes and strawberries was recorded in the second decade of March. However, spring fluctuations in air temperature between day and night contributed to a slowing down of this process. The condition of orchards was also negatively affected by insufficient rainfall and the progressive drying of the soil.

Field strawberry plantations, fruit bushes and other berry crops generally overwintered well, although their condition varied considerably by region. In areas with permanent snow cover, no significant losses were recorded. In regions where temperatures below –10°C occurred in the absence of snow cover, slight damage to parts of shoots was observed, particularly on young plantations and on light soils. The vegetation of strawberries was somewhat delayed compared with the previous year, while an additional factor limiting plant regeneration after the winter period was the progressing deficit of atmospheric precipitation, increasing the need for earlier irrigation.

The progress of fieldwork and sowing of field vegetables in the spring period varied considerably by region. In the southern and western parts of the country, sowing of vegetables had already begun in March. In northern and eastern Poland, low night-time temperatures and cooled soil delayed the commencement of fieldwork and sowing. The precipitation deficit caused uneven and delayed emergence, particularly on light soils. In many farms, agrotextile covers and other protective coverings were used to reduce moisture losses and improve thermal conditions.

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Related information

Production of agricultural and horticultural crops in 2024

Data available in databases

BDL: Sown area

Terms used in official statistics

BDL: Agricultural crops