



A growing season marked by climate change. A marketing season full of question marks!

Gembloux, 14-09-2026

North-western European growers planted 13,7 % fewer potatoes in spring 2026. That is an historical reduction of 82.700 ha to a current 521.500 ha vs 604.000 ha in 2025. The average yields, still to be finalized in the coming days/weeks, will be significantly lower than the 5-year average. Sizes and lengths are far lower than on average. A certain number of growers will have difficulties in delivering the tons they contracted.

NEPG growers again insist on the absolute need to switch to more resilient and robust varieties (vis-à-vis of heat, drought, blight, needing less nitrogen...). We urgently need more research and new farming techniques help us adapt to climate change. Farmers should not be the only ones to bear the brunt of climate change!

EU-04 CONSUMPTION POTATOES (Excl. Seed and Starch)									
14 September 2026 year									
	2018	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	actual vs 2025	5y-avge	2026 vs 5y-avge %
Countries NEPG									
Production (x 000 t) 5y avge	21.490	22.652	22.120	22.730	23.137	23.986			
Annual Variation	(17,7%)	(4,6%)	6,5%	6,9%	12,4%	(25,4%)			
Total crop	20.043	21.682	23.094	24.683	27.750	20.695	(25,4%)	23.986	(13,7%)
BE - Belgium	3.475	3.962	4.428	4.357	5.301	3.431	(35,3%)	4.459	(23,1%)
DE - Germany	7.319	7.995	8.444	9.240	9.967	7.550	(24,3%)	8.795	(14,2%)
FR - France	5.956	6.045	6.863	7.711	8.260	6.485	(21,5%)	7.155	(9,4%)
NL - Netherlands	3.294	3.680	3.359	3.375	4.221	3.229	(23,5%)	3.577	(9,7%)
Hectareage 5y avge	447.357	502.886	508.356	513.753	524.488	540.866	545.555		
Annual Variation	2,5%	2,5%	2,3%	9,0%	6,1%	(13,7%)			
Total	495.338	510.616	522.325	569.216	604.162	521.455	(13,7%)	540.866	(3,6%)
BE - Belgium	94.428	92.355	96.254	101.805	107.962	89.105	(17,5%)	97.605	(8,7%)
DE - Germany	178.500	189.000	191.910	210.000	221.000	188.750	(14,6%)	198.994	(5,1%)
FR - France	145.260	152.590	158.677	178.918	192.100	173.400	(9,7%)	167.240	3,7%
NL - Netherlands	77.150	76.671	75.484	78.493	83.100	70.200	(15,5%)	77.027	(8,9%)
Yield (t/ha) 5y avge	48,0	45,3	43,8	44,6	44,3	44,7	43,6		
Annual Variation	(19,7%)	(5,5%)	3,1%	(2,7%)	8,7%	(13,9%)			
Total	40,5	43,1	44,4	43,2	47,0	40,5	(13,9%)	44,7	(9,4%)
BE - Belgium	36,8	42,9	46,0	42,8	49,1	38,5	(21,6%)	45,6	(15,6%)
DE - Germany	41,0	42,3	44,0	44,0	45,1	40,0	(11,3%)	44,2	(9,5%)
FR - France	41,0	39,2	43,3	43,1	43,0	37,4	(13,0%)	42,5	(12,1%)
NL - Netherlands	42,7	48,0	44,5	43,0	50,8	46,0	(9,4%)	46,4	(0,8%)

This is a first estimation of final yields and production NEPG does following its meeting on the eve of Potato Europe. As usual, NEPG will come up with final figures later in the season. Some growth is still possible in some fields. Potatoes are mostly still in the fields and not behind the planks yet! Nevertheless, the 2026 harvest could be one of the lowest ones of the last 10 years, driven by the decline in area and by the difficult growth conditions. Nevertheless, the weather conditions have significantly affected tuber size, with potential difficulties in achieving sufficient length, which could complicate their use for certain industrial outlets.

Heat and drought : significant impacts on crops

Throughout the NEPG zone, an exception being the northern part of Germany and The Netherlands above the great rivers where rainfall patterns were closer to the average, drought and temperatures far above the normal were common in July and August. Even when irrigation was possible and used intensively – in some regions' irrigation was banned or limited – potato fields could not develop and bulk

normally. Regrowth problems should be globally limited but real, and wireworms are an increasing problem, not to mention the development of Stolbur. Early sprouting will also be an issue for storage during campaign.

A significant part of growers will have problems to deliver their contracted tons, particularly in Belgium and France. Traders and processors must adapt their specifications and be more comprehensive towards growers who face these very important issues of not enough tons and lower lengths and sizes.

Processors are not the only ones in need of potatoes, especially big sizes and long tubers. Demand from fresh markets in southern and Eastern Europe remains strong, while Great Britain will also need potatoes and processed products following drought and heat of summer 2026 on the other side of the Channel and North Sea. In this context, export customers may also need to adapt their usual specifications and expectations, particularly regarding tuber size and length. The availability of the larger and longer potatoes they are accustomed to sourcing will be more limited this season, requiring greater flexibility in terms of product specifications.

A shorter campaign and 2 buyers for the same crop

The new campaign will be shorter than usual: processors used the old crop till beginning of half of September, and early potatoes could, if conditions are favourable, be available earlier (or some could come from Bordeaux or other regions/countries).

Need for new varieties and an open mind concerning farming techniques

Growers are in the forefront of the consequences of climate change and again insist on the need for more resilient and robust varieties of the future. But the whole of our sector is concerned, be it breeders, seed and ware producers, traders, processors and potato scientists and research!

We need to think and make trials on new farming techniques: water reservoirs, better irrigation techniques, agroforestry, stepping up humus concentrations and mulching could be part of the answer alongside better varieties.