

# EU expects largest EU sunflower seed harvest in three years

**Berlin, 13 August 2026. – The EU Commission expects the sunflower seed harvest in the EU to reach slightly more than 9.5 million tonnes in 2026. This would represent an increase of just over 9 per cent on the previous year and the largest harvest since 2023, confirming the Commission's April forecast. Alongside an approximately 5 per cent increase in sunflower area, higher yields are also contributing to this result.**

At an average of 19.5 decitonnes per hectare, yields are expected to be slightly above the long-term average, compared with 18.7 decitonnes per hectare in 2025 and just 17.4 decitonnes per hectare in 2024. Meanwhile, the EU sunflower area increased around 5 per cent to 4.9 million hectares.

Romania remains the most important sunflower production region in the EU-27 notwithstanding a reduction in area under cultivation to 1.1 million hectares. Yields are projected to increase slightly, potentially raising output to 2.2 million tonnes. This would be slightly above the previous year's 2.1 million tonnes. With an expected harvest volume of nearly 2.1 million tonnes, Bulgaria is set to climb to second place among the EU's major sunflower producers.

According to research by Agrarmarkt Informations-Gesellschaft (mbH), the sunflower area in Germany has been expanded for the second consecutive year in 2026. At 98,000 hectares, it is probably the largest area under sunflower seed cultivation ever. In response to the war in Eastern Europe, producers had already expanded sunflower production significantly in 2022. Given the larger cultivation area in 2026, the German harvest is likely to reach approximately 222,000 tonnes, up around 79,000 tonnes from 2025. Heat stress, combined with water shortage, has also reduced the yield potential of oilseed crops.

According to the Union zur Förderung von Oel- und Proteinpflanzen e. V. (UFOP), the further expansion of sunflower cultivation in Germany reflects farmers' growing interest in diversifying crop rotations, especially by including another summer crop.

By contrast, the development of sunflower crops in France was negatively impacted by persistent drought and heat waves during the summer months. The EU Commission recently projected the French harvest at nearly 1.5 million tonnes, around 60,000 tonnes higher than in 2025. However, this increase should be viewed in the context of an approximately 11 per cent expansion in the area under cultivation. The larger planted area can only partly offset the disappointing yield levels expected this year.



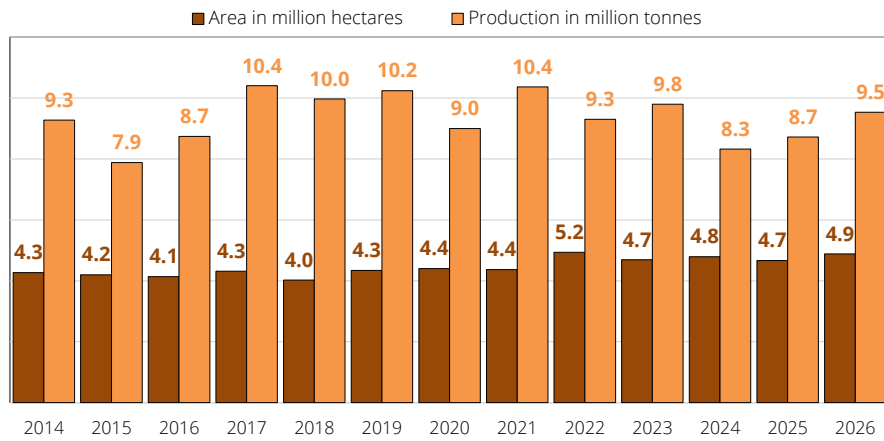
Union zur Förderung  
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INFORMATION  
Union zur Förderung von Oel- und Proteinpflanzen e. V.

## Sunflower seed production in the EU-27



Source: EU Commission

Note: 2026 forecast

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Quick information on UFOP e. V.:

The Union for the Promotion of Oil and Protein Crops e. V. (UFOP) represents the political interests of companies, associations and institutions involved in the production, processing and marketing of domestic oil and protein crops in national and international bodies. UFOP supports research to optimise agricultural production and for the development of new utilisation possibilities in the food, non-food and feed sectors. UFOP public relations aim to promote the marketing of domestic oil and protein crop end products.