

Yield plateau in winter wheat and spring barley in N Ireland?

Ethel White, AFBI Crossnacreevy, Plant Testing Station, Crossnacreevy, Belfast BT6 9SH

Yields of cereal crops on farm across the UK have stagnated since 1996 (Source: HGCA Project Report 502)

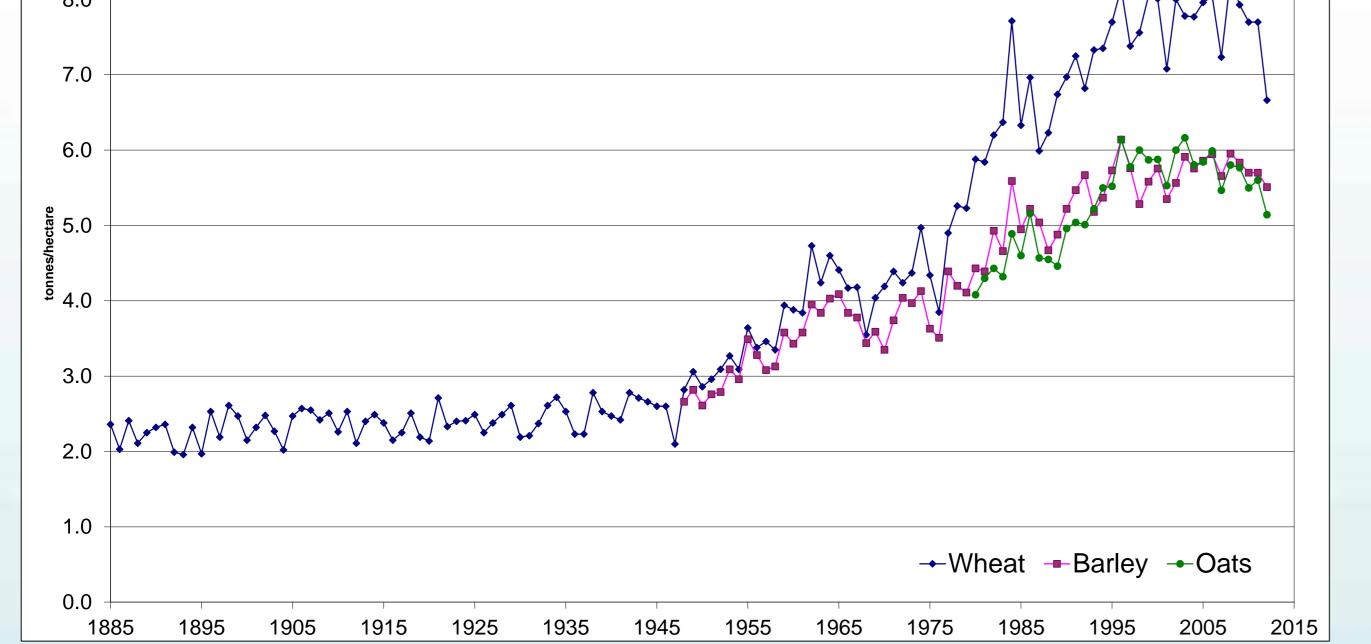
How true is this in N Ireland?

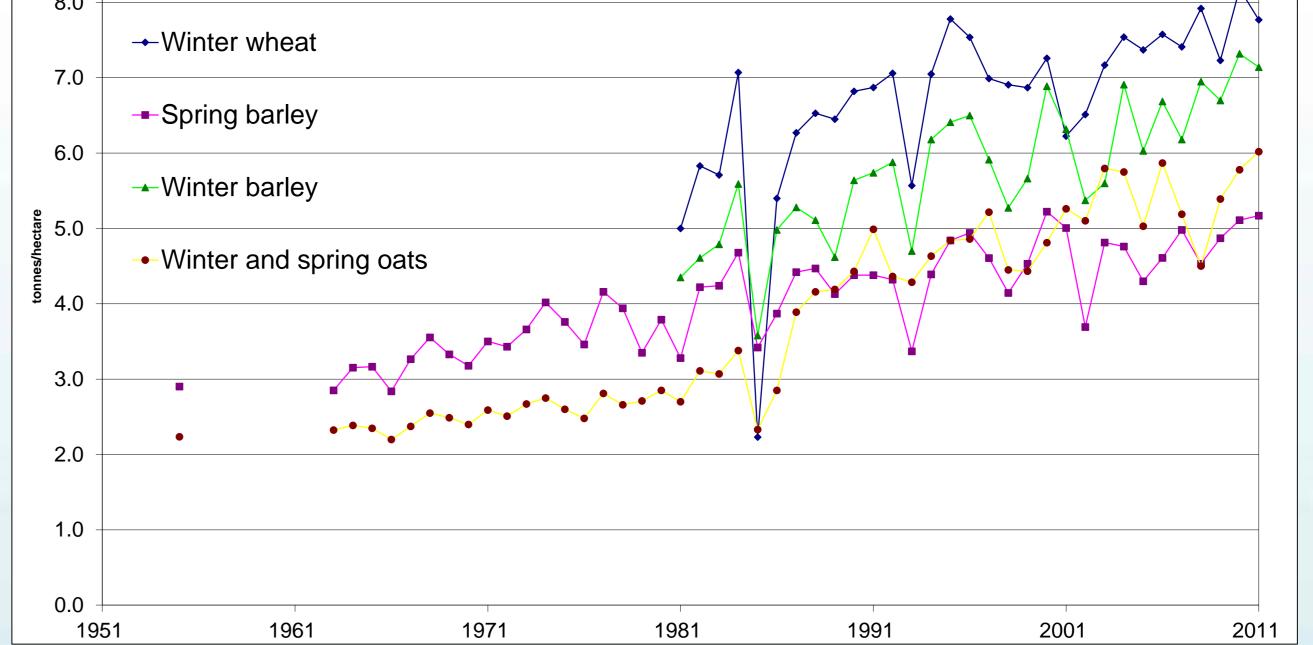


Yields of all cereals on farm in the UK and N Ireland

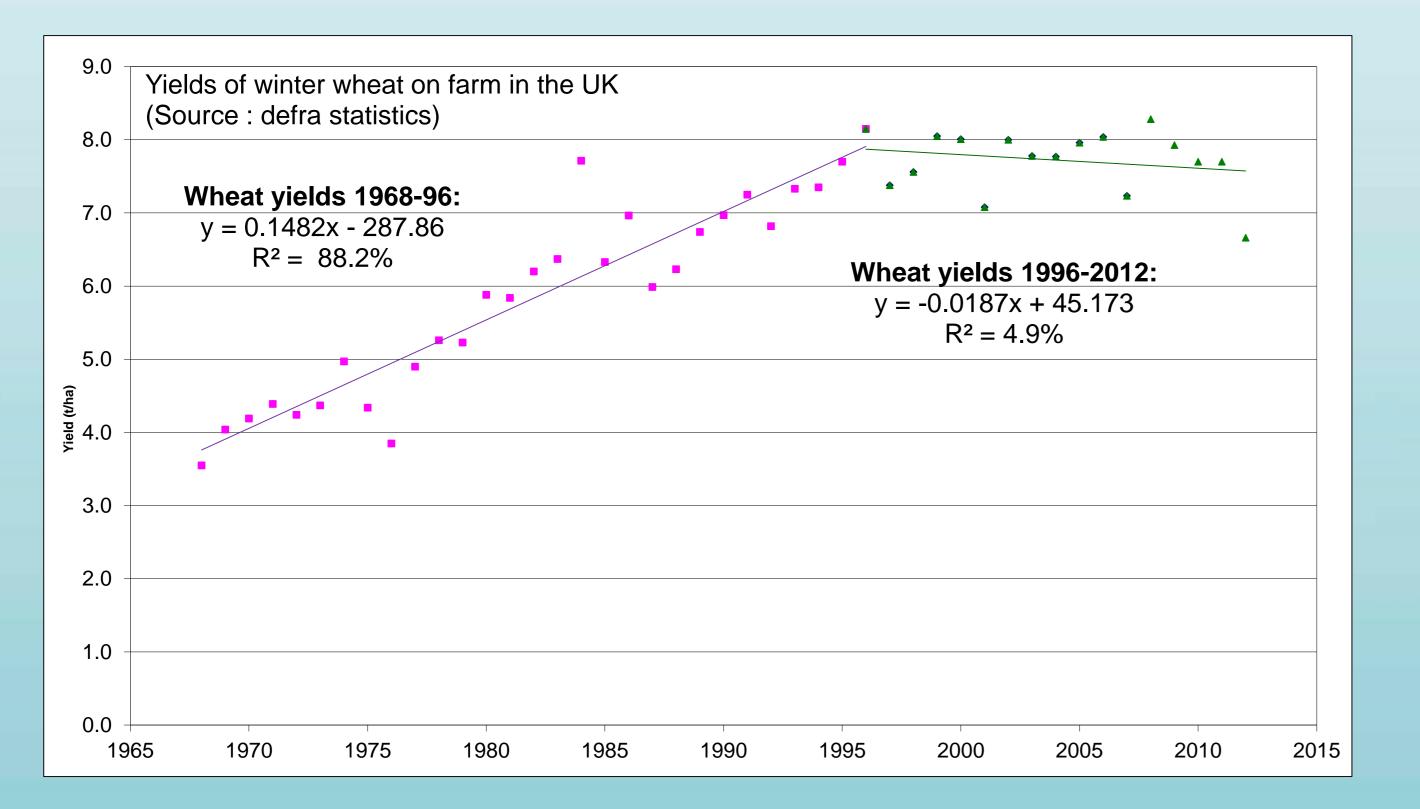
9.0 -		
0.0	Yields of cereals on farm in the UK	
	(Source : defra statistics)	•
80 -		

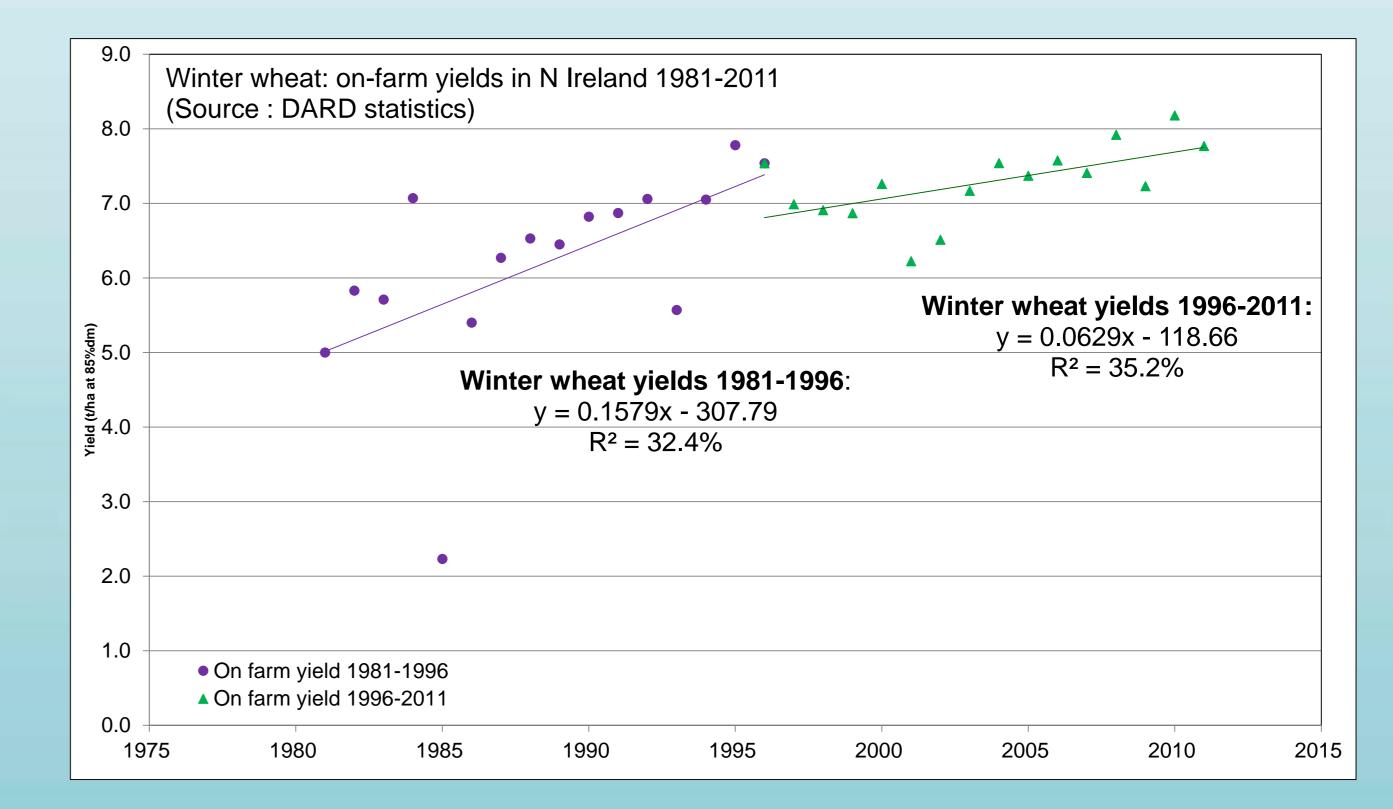
0.0		
9.0 -	Cereal yields on-farm in N Ireland 1981-2011	
	0	
	(Source : DARD statistics)	
80-		



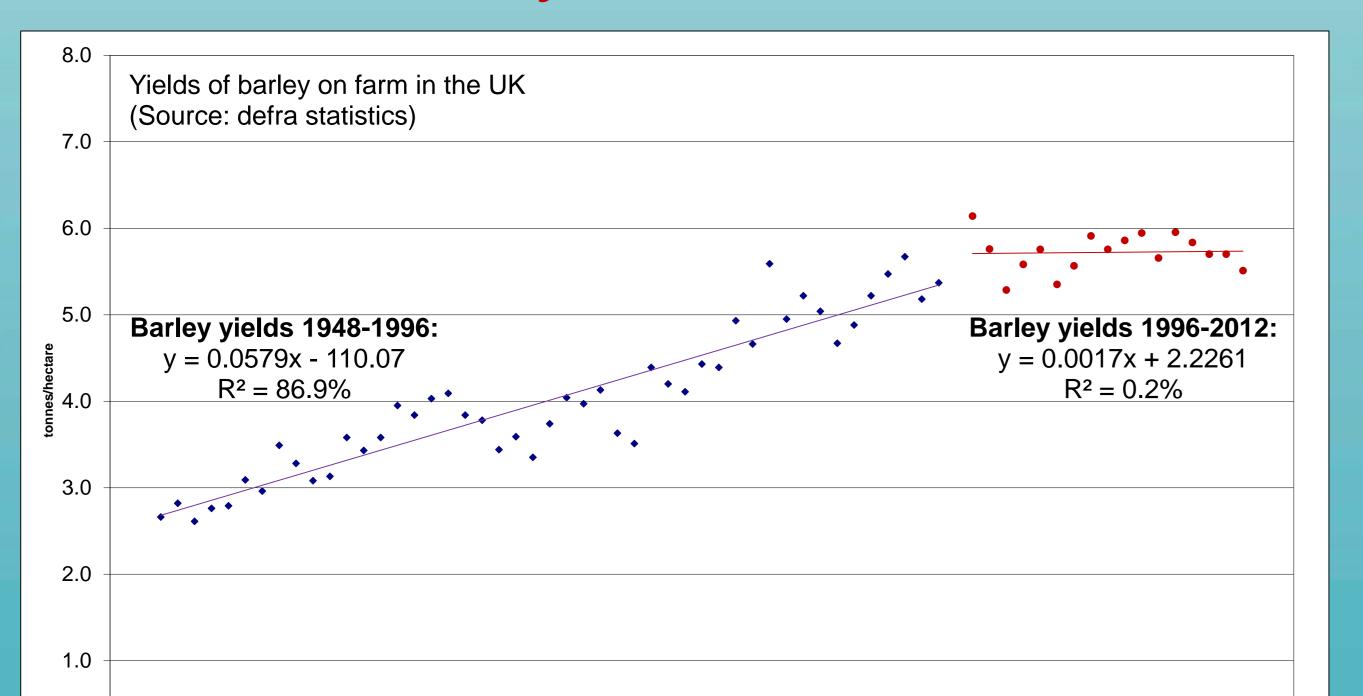


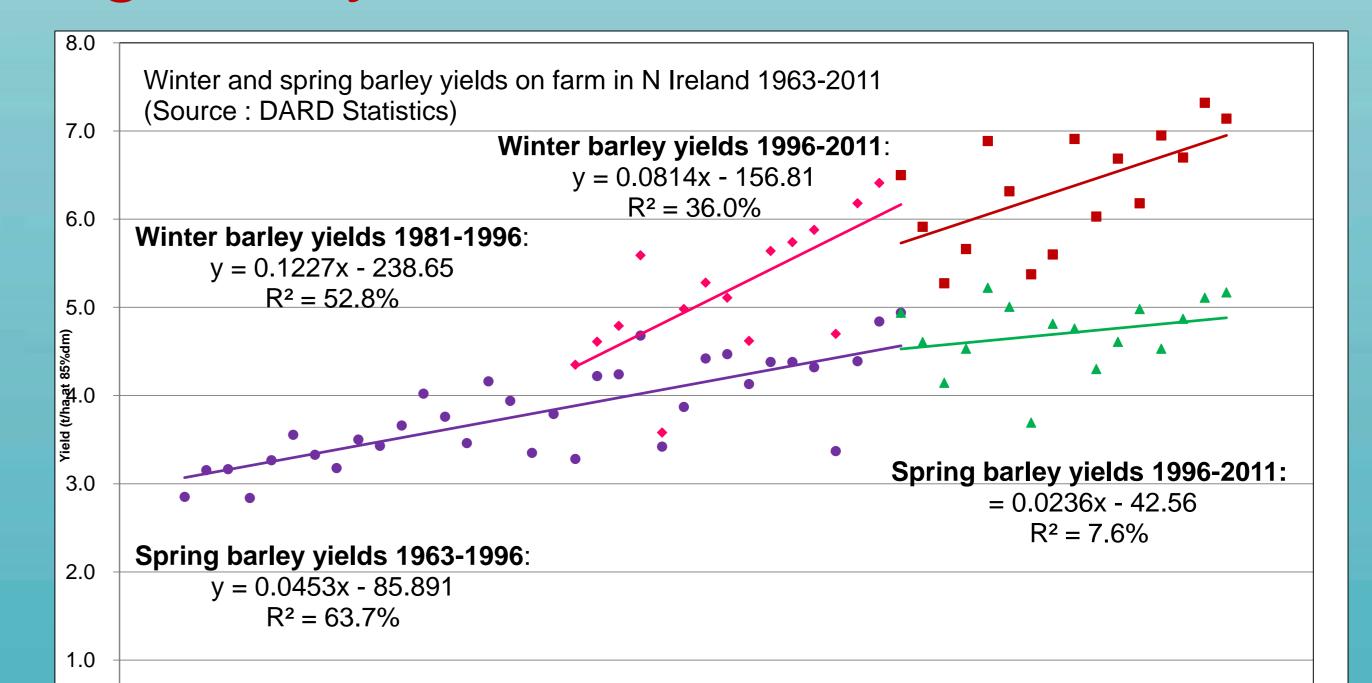
Yields of winter wheat in the UK and N Ireland





Yields of barley in the UK and winter and spring barley in N Ireland





0.0							
0.0							1
1945	1955	1965	1975	1985	1995	2005	2015

0.0	 Spring bar 	96 ▲ Spi	Spring barley 1996-2011			 Winter barley 1981-1996 			Winter barley 1996-2011		
1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015

Conclusions about causes of variation in wheat yield on farm in the UK included in HGCA Project Report 502:

- Varieties have contributed to increases in yield
- Weather influences annual variation in yield
- Increased crop protection and earlier sowing have contributed positively to yield
- Reduced tillage may have reduced yield in the short-term and reduced crop nutrition has limited yield
- Deep soil compaction may be having a longer-term impact

Cereal yields on farm in N Ireland are still increasing, but for how long? Analysis of causes of variation has yet to be done.