

# Extreme heat reduces sunflower yields

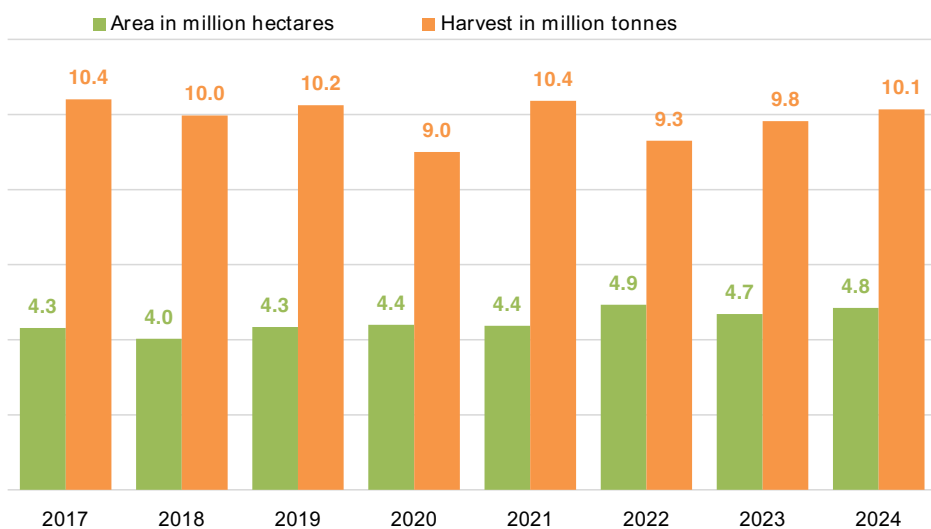
Berlin, 13 August 2024 – Despite an expansion in area planted with sunflowers in the European Union, harvest expectations are fading. The reason is lower yields due to adverse weather conditions.

The unfavourable weather conditions in Europe prompted the EU Commission to lower its harvest estimate for sunflower seed significantly. In the forecast published at the end of July, the harvest is expected at 10.1 million tonnes, 649,000 tonnes lower than the previous month. In other words, the harvest would exceed the 2023 level by only 316,000 tonnes or 3 per cent.

Foreseeable lower production in Bulgaria and Hungary, in particular, motivated the Commission to make this adjustment. At 1.8 million tonnes and 1.9 million tonnes respectively, the estimates are down 278,000 tonnes and 251,000 tonnes respectively on those published in June. Romania, the largest sunflower seed producer in the EU, is currently expected to harvest 2.5 million tonnes, around 147,000 tonnes less. The main factors for the declines are the persistent drought and heat waves that impair the development of the crops. Daytime highs exceeded 40 °C in some places. If the lack of rain continues, more downward adjustments can be expected.

For the 2024 harvest, sunflower seed yield is currently estimated at 20.9 decitonnes per hectare. In other words, the forecast is not just down 1 decitonne per hectare on the previous month. It also falls short of the long-term average of 21.7 decitonnes per hectare.

### Sunflower seed production in the EU-27



Source: EU Commission

Note: 2024 = forecast

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