

FWW Prayer Guide: September 2026 – Harvest

Our thoughts will be turning towards Harvest Festivals this month and into October. What has the harvest been like this year? Arable yields are lower in many but not all parts of the country because of the hot summer and drought conditions. Harvest has earlier than in the past because of weather and climate change. There is a sense of a changing of the seasons.

The hot weather has had similar effects on vegetables and fruit, which are important in the County, especially in the Vale of Evesham.

Livestock and dairy farmers have been affected by dried out grass and fodder and needing to use either fodder intended for winter or bought-in food. Animals have struggled with the heat, just as humans have. The warmer conditions are leading to diseases like Blue Tongue that were not normally seen in the UK previously.

All this is leading to anxieties for farming families about livelihoods, finances and the future.

The changing climate also affects the land and nature, soil health, what will grow as the climate changes and weather heats up. There is an effect too on insects, pollinators and the rest of the natural environment that feeds into the productivity of agriculture.

Changes to visas and other regulations have affected who can come into the country leading to labour shortages and pressures, particularly among people coming from overseas to pick and pack, especially fruit and veg. This is intense, pressured work. Harvest, especially cereals and other annually harvested crops, can also be a high-pressure time with long hours to get the harvest in.

In some cases, farmers are turning to mechanisation and technology where labour pressures or costs are greatest. This can be an expensive investment and there are also increased fuel, fertiliser and machinery costs due to global events.

As well as farmers, we also think of others involved, people processing and transporting food – the supply chain

We pray for rural chaplains (including in Worcestershire those from CARL – Chaplaincy for Agricultural and Rural Life), ministers and others who provide listening ear and/or support, and support organisations including the Farming Community Network, the Addington Fund, the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution, Young Farmers Clubs, the Arthur Rank Centre.

A Harvest Prayer

**Eternal God, creator and sustainer of life,
we praise you for the beauty and fertility of the earth.
We praise you also for its complexity and mystery,
before which we bow in wonder and awe.**

**Hear our prayers for all upon whom we depend,
for the production and provision of our food,
for the management of the countryside
and the stewardship of its resources.**

**To those who are suffering in a time of crisis,
bring comfort and hope.
To those entrusted with decision-making
that affects others' lives,
give wisdom and discernment.**

**To your church, in its ministry to all,
grant a watchful eye, a loving heart,
and a prophetic voice
in the service of your kingdom.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.**

(Arthur Rank Centre)

- We pray for farmers, farm workers and their families, giving thanks for the harvest that has been gathered in, animals that have been reared and cared for.
- For care and conservation of the land and natural resources, for good husbandry of flocks and herds of animals and all other living creatures.
- For those thinking about the future, what to grow, what animals to rear in the light of changing conditions and uncertainties about outcomes and markets.
- For those who have come from overseas, perhaps leaving families and friends behind, to come and work on our farms and orchards.
- For those also involved in the agricultural world: vets, advisors, contractors and machinery suppliers, those in livestock markets, abattoirs, transport drivers, those who process and package our food and get it to the shop or supermarket.
- For those who offer support: chaplains, ministers and those on helplines or available in other ways with the organisations listed above.