

April 19. 2016 Chodosh NEXT season from

Rabbi Y Herman

I have just received the weekly crop report from the US Dep't of Agriculture. An interesting halachic situation seems to be in the making for oats this coming season. As of 2 weeks ago (Apr 10) only 38% of the new oats were planted. As of the end of the past week (Apr 17) 56% were planted! This enters into a halachic dispute. To be Yoshon, the crop must have taken root before the 2nd day of pesach. According to one opinion, this means it should be in the ground at least 3 days before this date. According to this approach, oats will be MAJORITY Yoshon next season. However, according to the other opinion, to be Yoshon, the crop must be in the ground at least 2 weeks before the 2nd day of pesach. Since 2 weeks before, only 38% of the oats were planted, most of the crop would be Chodosh. The next relevant weekly crop report is due on Monday chol hamoed pesach. After pesach this halachic issue will need to be addressed by poskim.

The planting of the other 2 crops, spring wheat and barley is lagging behind. It so far seems unlikely that these will be mostly planted even only 3 days before the deadline.