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Tettnang’s 2026 hop harvest fell 15% below average after a hot, dry summer

Historically low alpha-acid levels could complicate brewers’ purchasing even as growers absorb higher production costs

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The 2026 hop harvest in Germany’s Tettnang growing region came in well below its long-term average after a hot, dry summer cut yields and drove alpha-acid levels to historic lows, adding strain for growers already dealing with higher costs.

Official final weighing figures released on Thursday, November 19, showed the harvest reached about 99.5% of the volume that had been forecast in August, indicating that the earlier estimate was largely accurate. Even so, the final result was about 15% below the region’s long-term average, according to the growing area.

Tettnang is one of Germany’s best-known hop regions, and the shortfall matters beyond local farms because hops are a core brewing ingredient. The weak alpha-acid content is especially important for brewers, since alpha acids help determine bitterness in beer and can shape how breweries buy, blend and use different hop varieties. Combined with uneven availability between varieties, the harvest could complicate purchasing and production planning for beer makers that rely on Tettnang hops.

The region attributed the lower harvest mainly to unusually hot and dry weather during the summer. At the same time, growers faced sharply higher production costs for energy, fuel and fertilizer, worsening the economic pressure from a smaller crop.

The low alpha-acid levels were described as a particular challenge for the brewing industry. By contrast, oil content in the hops remained comparatively stable. Hop oils are another key quality factor because they influence aroma, which means the crop’s brewing performance is not weak in every respect, even as bitterness-related components fell to exceptionally low levels.

The region’s leading variety, Tettnanger, produced 21.2 zentner per hectare, or about 1.06 metric tons per hectare. That was slightly above the original harvest estimate for the variety, but still well below its five-year average of 25.5 zentner per hectare, or roughly 1.28 metric tons per hectare. Tettnanger accounts for about 45% of the region’s planted area and remains the dominant variety in the growing district.

Despite the lower yield, demand for Tettnanger remains strong on the international hop market. That continued demand may offer some support for the region, but market conditions remain difficult overall.

The broader hop market is under pressure from declining beer sales and a global hop harvest that, in total, is sufficient to meet breweries’ needs. Even with overall supply covering demand, the situation is not uniform across all hop types. After the end of the

harvest, the market outlook has increasingly pointed to differences by variety, with some expected to be more readily available than others.

That mix of adequate global supply, softer beer demand and tighter availability in certain varieties means breweries may not face a broad shortage, but they could still see more selective pressure in sourcing. For Tettnang growers, the result is a season marked by lower output, weaker brewing values in a key quality measure and continued financial pressure from rising input costs.