

Editorial Manager(tm) for European Journal of Plant Pathology
Manuscript Draft

Manuscript Number: EJPP1954R1

Title: Impacts of climate change on wheat anthesis and fusarium ear blight in the UK

Article Type: Original Research (full papers)

Keywords: Climate change adaptation; Crop-disease-climate models; Food security; Fusarium head blight (*Fusarium culmorum*/*F. graminearum*); Wheat growth model; Weather-based disease forecast

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Abstract: Climate change will affect both growth of agricultural crops and diseases that attack them but there has been little work to study how its impacts on crop growth influence impacts on disease epidemics. This paper investigates how impacts of climate change on wheat anthesis date will influence impacts on fusarium ear blight in UK mainland arable areas. A wheat growth model was used for projections of anthesis dates, and a weather-based model was developed for use in projections of incidence of fusarium ear blight in the UK. Daily weather data, generated for 14 sites in arable areas of the UK for a baseline (1960-1990) scenario and for high and low CO₂ emissions in the 2020s and 2050s, were used to project wheat anthesis dates and fusarium ear blight incidence for each site for each climate change scenario. Incidence of fusarium ear blight was related to rainfall during anthesis and temperature during the preceding 6 weeks. It was projected that, with climate change, wheat anthesis dates will be earlier and fusarium ear blight epidemics will be more severe, especially in southern England, by the 2050s. These projections, made by combining crop and disease models for different climate change scenarios, suggest that improved control of fusarium ear blight should be a high priority in industry and government strategies for adaptation to climate change to ensure food security.

Response to Reviewers: Dear Mike

Thank you for returning our paper. Please thank the associate editor Dr Peter Burt and the referee for their helpful comments. My colleagues and I have now revised the paper in response to those comments. WE are attaching the revised paper.

With best wishes

Bruce

Comments for the Author:

This is an interesting study which, I think, should be published. It is recognised that modelling/forecasting studies of this type are complex and it is almost impossible to cover every

eventuality and component, but I believe the authors have addressed most issues as comprehensively and realistically as they can.

I think there are a few issues of editing/clarification.

Page 2, lines 45-50. I know what you mean, but the sentence is slightly confusing. Crop yields may also be affected by climate change (the text currently implies that yields are only affected by disease changes). A little editing would improve the context.

This sentence has been changed to improve clarity.

Page 2/3 bottom/top. Although CO₂ increases may increase crop yields to a point, there will be a level where such increases start to affect plant physiology adversely (i.e. not all CO₂ increase will be good!). I think some acknowledgement of this is needed, as the text reads it implies that (theoretically infinite) increases of CO₂ will be to the good.

This sentence has been changed to improve clarity.

Is the impact of climate change on winter wheat (page 3, line 24) the primary effect on UK arable crops (i.e. all other crops will be affected to a lesser degree) or a general effect (with all crops being effected equally). The text currently implies the former, but some clarification/clarity would be good.

This sentence has been changed to improve clarity.

I found the text on page 7, lines 28-43 confusing. Initially I was not clear what you mean by 'no correction was made to predicted values'. I had to read the text a few times to get the sense of this (and it wasn't until I looked at the figure that things became clearer). This is really result/discussion material: why not remove this text from here and put it in the results/discussion, where the reader is also pointed to the supporting figure.

This sentence has been moved to the results section, as suggested.

The quality of the figures is poor (I have difficulties reading them in my copy of the MS). They will need to be sharpened up considerably before publication.

Figures 5 and 6 have been redrawn. We suspect that the referee was looking at the low resolution version of the figures, since the originals were of publication quality.

I recognise, and agree, that it is impossible to model all factors in work of this type, but I think a brief note to other possible influences on page 13, line 39 would be helpful to the reader (the text mentions 'factors' but only gives one example ('previous crop')).

This sentence has been expanded, with a ref to the HGCA web-site, which gives more details on other factors.

To remind the reader, I suggest quantifying the 'high' and 'low' CO₂ levels mentioned on line 15 of page 14.

A sentence with this information has been added to the Materials & Methods.

Finally, in a revised MS please remove the flags indicating where the figures should go in the text. The typesetters will position the figures as close to the point of reference that they can.

Done

1 **Impacts of climate change on wheat anthesis and fusarium ear blight in the**
2 **UK**

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49 **Keywords** Climate change adaptation • Crop-disease-climate models • Food security •
50 Fusarium head blight (*Fusarium culmorum*/*F. graminearum*) • Wheat growth model •
51 Weather-based disease forecast
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Abstract Climate change will affect both growth of agricultural crops and diseases that attack them but there has been little work to study how its impacts on crop growth influence impacts on disease epidemics. This paper investigates how impacts of climate change on wheat anthesis date will influence impacts on fusarium ear blight in UK mainland arable areas. A wheat growth model was used for projections of anthesis dates, and a weather-based model was developed for use in projections of incidence of fusarium ear blight in the UK. Daily weather data, generated for 14 sites in arable areas of the UK for a baseline (1960-1990) scenario and for high and low CO₂ emissions in the 2020s and 2050s, were used to project wheat anthesis dates and fusarium ear blight incidence for each site for each climate change scenario. Incidence of fusarium ear blight was related to rainfall during anthesis and temperature during the preceding 6 weeks. It was projected that, with climate change, wheat anthesis dates will be earlier and fusarium ear blight epidemics will be more severe, especially in southern England, by the 2050s. These projections, made by combining crop and disease models for different climate change scenarios, suggest that improved control of fusarium ear blight should be a high priority in industry and government strategies for adaptation to climate change to ensure food security.

41 **Introduction**

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Across the world, climate change is affecting growth of agricultural crops (Metz et al. 2007; Stern, 2007) and the severity of epidemics of diseases that attack them (Chakraborty 2005; Garrett et al. 2006). Whilst there has been much work on the impact that climate change will have on crop yields, little has been done to project how climate change impacts on crop growth will affect impacts on diseases (Gregory et al. 2009). Although elevated CO₂ concentrations under climate change may improve photosynthetic activity and increase crop yields in parts of Europe, including the UK (Ewert et al. 2002), this may be counteracted by

1 increased stress on plants, for example heat or drought stresses (Semenov 2009), or by the
2 increased severity of diseases as a result of climate change (Gregory et al. 2009). As
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4 changing temperature and rainfall patterns may produce serious disease epidemics
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7 (Chakraborty et al. 2000; Evans et al. 2008), detailed analysis of future crop production in
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9 relation to projected effects on the pathogens and their hosts is vital to allow strategic
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11 government planning relating to food security and to enable industry to plan ahead for
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13 adaptation to climate change (Barnes et al. 2010). This requires quantitative crop-disease-
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15 climate models, although much previous work has focused on qualitative impacts of climate
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17 change on crop diseases (Coakley et al. 1999; Anderson et al. 2004) and there have been few
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19 attempts to produce combined crop-disease-climate models (Butterworth et al. 2010; Luo et
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21 al. 1995).
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27 Climate change is predicted to impact on the growth of arable crops, including winter
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29 (autumn-sown) wheat (Semenov 2009), the most important arable crop grown in the UK,
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31 grown over 2M ha in 2008, with a value of £2.2 billion (www.ukagriculture.com). Its
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33 importance continues to grow, as wheat grain is a potential future source of UK-grown bio-
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35 fuels (Tuck et al. 2006). The crop, sown in September/October and harvested the following
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37 August, is mostly grown on arable land in the east of England, due to poor terrain and soil
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39 conditions for arable agriculture in the west (Fig. 1). The wheat crop growth model Sirius
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41 (Jamieson et al. 1998; Jamieson and Semenov, 2000), used to estimate impacts of climate
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43 change on wheat yields (Semenov 2009), can also be used to estimate impacts on crop growth
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45 parameters such as anthesis date. However, it assumes that diseases are controlled and does
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47 not take into account effects of diseases on yield and grain quality.
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54 The timing of wheat anthesis greatly influences the severity of wheat fusarium ear
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56 blight (also known as fusarium head blight or scab), since the disease is monocyclic (one
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58 disease cycle per cropping season) because the wheat is susceptible to infection only for a
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1 short period around anthesis, when weather is warm and wet (Xu et al. 2007). The disease is
2 caused by a number of pathogens (Xu and Nicholson 2009); of particular concern in the UK
3 are *Fusarium graminearum* and *F. culmorum* of which some chemotypes produce
4 mycotoxins that are hazardous to human health if affected grain is consumed
5 (www.hgca.com; Goswami and Kistler 2004; Xu et al. 2008; Madden and Paul 2009). The
6 disease symptoms include ear bleaching, formation of pink/orange conidial masses and dark
7 necrotic lesions on spikelets. Severe fusarium ear blight epidemics have occurred in the USA
8 (Windels 2000; Madden and Paul,2009), China (Yang et al. 2008) and Australia
9 (Chakraborty et al. 2006). In the UK, incidence of fusarium ear blight has increased recently,
10 with widespread epidemics in 2007 and 2008 (80% and 60%, respectively, of crops sampled
11 at GS 75 with symptoms, by comparison with 20-30% in the previous few seasons,
12 www.cropmonitor.com) but it is not clear whether climate change will continue to increase
13 the severity of epidemics, with implications for food safety if mycotoxin production is also
14 increased (Xu et al. 2008; Miraglia et al. 2009). Since associated global threats to food
15 security will mean that there is a need to maximise cereal production in the UK (Stern, 2007;
16 Mahmuti et al. 2009; Hughes et al. 2011), it is essential to project the impact of climate
17 change on severity of epidemics.

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19 For projecting climate change impacts on fusarium ear blight, it is necessary to have a
20 simple weather-based model that predicts fusarium ear blight incidence or severity using only
21 a few weather variables as inputs (e.g. temperature, rainfall), like the statistical model used to
22 describe the disease cycle of another monocyclic disease, phoma stem canker of oilseed rape
23 (Evans et al. 2008). Such a fusarium model can then be combined with the Sirius model
24 predicting wheat anthesis date and with local-scale weather for future climate scenarios to
25 project impacts of climate change on the disease. The weather-based models developed to
26 predict severity of fusarium ear blight epidemics to guide use of fungicides for disease

1 control in Europe, North America and South America (e.g. Moschini et al. 2001; De Wolf et
2 al. 2003; Rossi et al. 2003; Del Ponte et al. 2005; De Wolf and Isard 2007; Prandini et al.
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4 2009; Table 1) all use as an input relative humidity, a parameter that is not always measured
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6 by UK synoptic weather stations and not easily included in projected weather for different
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8 climate change scenarios. This paper describes work to combine a simple, UK
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10 temperature/rainfall-based model for predicting fusarium ear blight with a wheat crop model
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12 and local-scale climate scenarios to project the direct impact of climate change on wheat
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14 anthesis date and incidence of fusarium ear blight epidemics. It does not assess direct impacts
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16 of changes in concentrations of CO₂ (Chakraborty & Newton, 2011) or indirect impacts of
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18 climate change (e.g. through changes in cropping practice such as increasing maize
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20 production) on the severity of fusarium ear blight epidemics.
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28 **Materials and methods**

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32 Collation of the weather, winter wheat date of anthesis and fusarium ear blight severity data
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36 To project the impacts of climate change on the severity of fusarium ear blight epidemics,
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38 observed weather data (daily minimum and maximum temperature (°C), total rainfall (mm)
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40 and solar radiation (MJ day⁻¹)) from synoptic weather stations around the UK (Fig. 2; Table
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42 2) were collated. Observed weather data were supplied by the UK Meteorological Office and
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44 Rothamsted. Rothamsted meteorological data were used for the development of the fusarium
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46 ear blight model. The other weather data, used for validation of the wheat anthesis date and
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48 fusarium ear blight incidence predictions, were from the synoptic weather stations closest to
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50 the locations of trials from which observed data for date of anthesis or fusarium ear blight
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52 incidence were collected.
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1 Data for dates of anthesis for winter wheat cultivar (cv.) Consort were collated from
2 HGCA Recommended List trials, wheat water use efficiency trials and a few other sources
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4 (Table 3) for many locations throughout the UK. Sowing date data for these trials were also
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6 collated. These anthesis date and sowing date data were used for validation of the predictions
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8 of anthesis date made by the wheat crop growth model Sirius for cv. Consort for harvest
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10 years 2004-2008. The model Sirius predicts growth stage 65 (this is mid-anthesis; anthesis
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12 starts at growth stage 60 and ends at growth stage 69 on the Zadoks scale, Lancashire et al.
13
14 1991), but the data sets often differed in the exact growth stage measured (often it was
15
16 growth stage 61 which is usually 2-3 days before growth stage 65) and how often the
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18 measurements were taken (some were taken daily, some every 2-3 days and some weekly).
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20 Cv. Consort was selected for use since it is one of the three cultivars available on the 2009/10
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22 HGCA Recommended List (available from www.hgca.com) for which Sirius has been
23
24 calibrated and its resistance rating (ranging from 1-9, where 1 is susceptible and 9 is resistant)
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26 to fusarium ear blight (rated a score of 6) is intermediate between that of the other two
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28 available cultivars (Claire, rated 7, and Soissons, rated 5).
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39 Fusarium ear blight severity data were collated from the CropMonitor disease survey
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41 of mainly commercial crops and HGCA Recommended List trials, for up to 30 different
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43 winter wheat cultivars (www.cropmonitor.co.uk, Table 2). These data were recorded as
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45 percent plants affected by fusarium ear blight approximately 3 weeks after anthesis.
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47 CropMonitor data over the period with harvest years 1994-2008 for sites within 80 km of
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49 Rothamsted were used in model construction and CropMonitor data from other areas and
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51 HGCA data for 2004-2008 were used for model validation.
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58 Validation of Sirius for prediction of dates of anthesis
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1 Predictions of anthesis date (for growth stage 65) were made with the wheat crop growth
2 model Sirius using observed weather. To predict dates of anthesis using Sirius, it was
3 necessary to input data for the cultivar, sowing date, minimum and maximum daily
4 temperature, total daily rainfall and daily solar radiation. Further parameters such as fertiliser
5 treatment and soil nitrogen distribution were set at default values. The anthesis dates
6 generated by Sirius for cv. Consort were adjusted to fit observed data by adjusting input
7 parameters (e.g. the phyllochron and thermal times between different stages in crop
8 development). To validate anthesis date predictions produced by Sirius, predictions were
9 compared to anthesis dates observed in trials in different areas of England that comprised a
10 data set independent of data used in model construction (Table 3). The predictions were made
11 with observed weather (daily data for minimum and maximum temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$), total rainfall
12 (mm), solar radiation (MJ day^{-1})) and sowing dates as inputs to the model. The deviation of
13 predicted against observed validation data from the 1:1 line was analysed statistically.

34 Construction of a UK fusarium ear blight model

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37 The CropMonitor data used in model construction were for incidence (%) of plants affected
38 by fusarium ear blight for wheat crops located within an region up to 80 km from Rothamsted
39 (Hertfordshire, England, that accounted for c. 15% of the UK mainland arable area and c.
40 33% of the arable land where >25% is sown to wheat) for harvest years from 1994-2008
41 (varying from 13-32 sites per year; total of 322 data points). Disease data for all crops within
42 an area near each of 11 synoptic weather stations (Table 2) were averaged for each year to
43 decrease the overall variability in the data. Daily weather data from these 11 synoptic weather
44 stations for the months April, May and June were summarized as were, separately, data for
45 the first two weeks in June. These data were average temperature and total rainfall and these
46 periods were chosen as those in which the weather was most likely to affect subsequent

1 fusarium ear blight incidence (Xu et al. 2007). This gave a set of 10 weather variables
2 [average temperature for April, May and June, average rainfall for April, May and June and
3 the corresponding weather measurements for the first and second weeks of June] to be tested
4 alone or in combination in relation to disease incidence over the 15 year period.
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9 The main problem with the weather data from the individual stations was that some
10 data sets were incomplete; consequently disease data for some station/year combinations
11 were excluded. With 11 stations and 15 years, there were potentially a maximum of 165
12 weather/fusarium data sets. When data sets with missing disease or weather data were
13 excluded, it reduced the size of the data available to 88 data sets. However, by using weather
14 data from Rothamsted that were complete over the period, the number of data sets increased
15 to 117 (disease data associated with the synoptic weather stations were missing from 48 data
16 sets). One simplification made was to assume that the same relationship between the weather
17 variables and disease incidence was appropriate for all data sets. It was much easier to justify
18 the same form of relationship if data from a single weather station were used. Therefore
19 Rothamsted weather data were selected, since the data were complete and Rothamsted was
20 central to the region used for constructing the model.
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39 Since disease incidence was expressed as a percentage, the association was
40 investigated using a generalized linear model where the logit-transformed incidence was
41 related to a linear combination of the weather variables using principles of step-wise
42 regression. This meant that predictions were naturally evaluated to be between 0 and 100.
43 Weather variables were selected for inclusion in the model on the basis of the percentage of
44 'deviance' accounted for. The single best weather variable was total rainfall from the second
45 week in June, the week at the end of which anthesis was observed, according to data for
46 Rothamsted for 2006-2008. The next best variable was average temperature in May (i.e.
47 from 6 to 2 weeks before anthesis).
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Validation of a UK fusarium ear blight model

Validation was done using independent data for other regions of the UK mainland. Since crops in these areas have different anthesis dates from those near Rothamsted, it was necessary to express the model in a form related to anthesis date. Therefore, incidence of fusarium ear blight was related to rainfall for the week leading up to anthesis and to average temperature for the 4-week period from 6 to 2 weeks before anthesis. It was tested whether the same relationship was reasonable for different arable areas in the UK mainland. This was necessary because there was insufficient information at some weather stations to form separate relationships for different areas. Since the model was going to be used for extrapolation, a model based on averages was likely to be most robust.

Predictions of fusarium ear blight incidence were validated using observed weather data and mean observed dates of anthesis (from trials in corresponding areas of the UK to allow the appropriate weather to be used when producing predictions, Table 3) as inputs to the fusarium ear blight model. As much of the weather data were incomplete, data from several weather stations in a region were collated to estimate missing information. Predictions, in terms of average % plants affected, were compared to observed fusarium ear blight incidence data, from several regions of the UK (Table 2). Data used for model validation were independent of data used for model construction. It was not appropriate to analyse the deviation of validation data from the 1:1 line statistically since the logit transformation used gives a non-homogeneous scale.

Local-scale daily weather for climate change scenarios

1 Daily weather data (minimum and maximum daily temperature, total daily rainfall and daily
2 solar radiation) specific to the 14 sites located in UK mainland arable areas (altitude, latitude
3 and longitude, Table 4) were generated using LARS-WG stochastic weather generator
4 (Semenov 2007), for each of the 14 sites selected from within the UK mainland arable area,
5 for each of the five climate scenarios; baseline, 2020LO, 2020HI, 2050LO and 2050HI. The
6 baseline scenario is based on LARS-WG site parameters derived from observed weather for
7 the period 1960-1990. The other four climate scenarios relate to high (HI) and low (LO) CO₂
8 emissions for the 2020s and 2050s, based on the UKCIP02 projections (Semenov 2007). The
9 values used for the CO₂ concentration in the UK atmosphere were 334ppm (baseline),
10 422ppm (2020LO), 437ppm (2020HI), 489ppm (2050LO), 593ppm (2050HI), taken from the
11 IPCC emission scenarios. These projections are in turn based on the IPCC global emissions
12 scenarios (Nakicenovic, 2000) and the HadCM3 global climate model (Collins et al. 2001;
13 Hulme et al. 2002). For each of the 14 sites used and for each climate scenario, 50 yearly
14 simulations of synthetic daily weather data (minimum and maximum temperature, rainfall
15 and solar radiation) were produced. These data were then used as inputs for the wheat crop
16 growth model Sirius and as inputs for the fusarium ear blight model, to allow average
17 anthesis dates and average fusarium ear blight incidence to be generated for each site under
18 each climate scenario. Only the arable area was included since it is unnecessary to produce
19 projected fusarium ear blight incidence for areas of the UK where no wheat will ever be
20 grown, for example in mountainous regions like the English Pennines or Scottish Highlands.

51 Projection of wheat anthesis dates for the 2020s and 2050s

52 Projected dates of anthesis were generated using projected weather from LARS-WG for all
53 five of the climate change scenarios for each of the 14 sites as inputs into the Sirius model.

54 Maps were drawn to illustrate how anthesis dates will change under the different climate
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1 change scenarios by spatial interpolation between the 14 sites. The changes in the dates of
2 anthesis under climate change were used to define the specific time periods for which
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4 simulated weather (from 6 to 2 weeks before anthesis for average temperature and week of
5
6 anthesis for total rainfall) was required to input into the fusarium ear blight model.
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10 11 12 Projections of fusarium ear blight incidence for the 2020s and 2050s 13 14

15 Using the LARS-WG generated weather for each of the five climate scenarios and the
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17 average anthesis date calculated (averaged over 50 dates projected from the generated
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19 weather data) for each site and each climate scenario, fusarium ear blight incidence
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21 projections were made for each site under each of the five climate scenarios. Maps were
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23 produced by spatial interpolation between the 14 sites.
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30 **Results** 31 32

33 34 Validation of Sirius for prediction of dates of anthesis 35 36

37 The predicted anthesis dates produced by Sirius with observed weather data and sowing dates
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39 as inputs were plotted against observed anthesis dates to show the relationship between them
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41 (Fig. 3). For predicting anthesis dates, since many sets of weather data were incomplete, data
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43 from several weather stations in a region were collated to estimate missing information. Thus
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45 the trial sites (for anthesis dates) and nearest synoptic weather stations were grouped into
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47 three regions; east England, southwest England and northeast England, for use in the
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49 validation. To illustrate the validation data, the east and southwest were then combined into
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51 south England. Although the observed dates of anthesis were not always for growth stage 65,
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53 no correction was made to equivalent predicted values, since the correction needed varied
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55 from site to site and year to year. Generally, the anthesis dates for south England were earlier
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1 than those for north England and there was a reasonable relationship between predicted and
2 observed values. The root mean squared value of deviation of validation data from the 1:1
3 line was 5.75 days. This value is a result of several factors, including variation in the
4 frequency of observations (some daily, some at 2-3 day intervals, some weekly) and in the
5 observed growth stage at which anthesis date was measured (from GS 61 to GS 65, generally
6 about 2-4 days in the UK) when compared to the Sirius model predictions for growth stage
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Construction of a UK fusarium ear blight model

When weather variables were selected for inclusion in the model on the basis of the percentage of 'deviance' accounted for, the single best weather variable was total rainfall from the second week in June (i.e. time of anthesis at Rothamsted) while the next best variable was average temperature in May; they accounted for 22.5% and 19.0% of the deviance, respectively. Regression coefficients were 0.93 (0.199) and 0.08 (0.0133). The remaining 8 variables accounted for much less of the deviance and related to periods of weather that were considered less important to the development of the disease. The final model including these two variables accounted for 36.0% of the deviance and the corresponding coefficients were 0.941 (0.201) and 0.069 (0.012), respectively. This represents a substantial proportion of the variation in fusarium ear blight incidence associated with weather factors (generally estimated at about 50 %). The observation that the coefficients did not differ much if they were fitted separately or fitted in combination suggests that the variables were independent of each other. The relationship determined between the May average temperature (mayavt), rainfall in the second week of June (jwktotr) and fusarium ear blight incidence (feb) is shown in equation 1, which applies to the region within 80km of Rothamsted. Fusarium ear blight incidence is measured as percentage of plants affected. The

1 right hand side of this expression is the back-transformation for the logit transformation used
2 in the model construction.
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$$4 \quad feb = 100 * \frac{\exp(-15.3+0.941mayavt+0.069jwktotr)}{1+\exp(-15.3+0.941mayavt+0.069jwktotr)} \quad \text{(Equation 1)}$$

5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 Validation of a UK fusarium ear blight model

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16 Validation was done using independent data from other regions of the UK mainland (Fig. 4).
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18 Predicted fusarium ear blight incidence, estimated using observed weather data and observed
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20 average dates of anthesis, was plotted against observed fusarium ear blight incidence. The
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22 values were transformed using a logistic function in the same way as the model was
23
24 constructed. The relationship between predicted and observed values was influenced by the
25
26 many factors contributing to variation in the observed data. For example, the outlying point
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28 was for southwest England in 2007, which was very wet in May, June and July
29
30 (www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk) in that region of the UK, accounting for the greater
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32 incidence of fusarium ear blight observed than was predicted by the model. However, this
33
34 simple model, based on a few weather parameters, was suitable for use in work to project
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36 impacts of climate change on fusarium ear blight epidemics. Whilst other factors (e.g.
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38 previous crop, especially if it was maize, and use of fungicides; www.hgca.com) undoubtedly
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40 affected the incidence of fusarium ear blight, it is difficult to model the impact of climate
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42 change on such factors and outside the scope of this paper.
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66 Projection of wheat anthesis dates for the 2020s and 2050s

1 The projections for anthesis dates suggest that as the weather in the UK changes, dates of
2 anthesis will get progressively earlier, by about 11-15 days across the whole country (Fig. 5).
3
4 This effect is slightly greater near the south coast of England than in the north of Scotland.
5
6 The results suggest that the earliest dates of anthesis are expected in the southwest of
7 England; c. 4 June in the 2020HI scenario and c. 28 May under the 2050HI scenario as
8
9 opposed to c. 11 June in the baseline scenario. The results suggest that the latest anthesis
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11 dates are expected in the north of Scotland; c. 18 June for the 2020HI scenario, c. 13 June for
12
13 the 2050HI scenario compared to c. 24 June in the baseline scenario. The anthesis dates are
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15 projected to be earlier in the high CO₂ scenarios when compared to the corresponding low
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17 CO₂ scenarios.
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27 Projections of fusarium ear blight incidence for the 2020s and 2050s

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29 The projections for changes in fusarium ear blight incidence (Fig. 6) are more complex than
30
31 the projections for changes in anthesis dates, since the disease incidence is a function of both
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33 average temperature for the period from 6 to 2 weeks before anthesis and total rainfall for one
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35 week leading up to anthesis. Since the period of weather used to predict the disease incidence
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37 is related to the anthesis date and anthesis dates are projected to be earlier under climate
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39 change, weather at different periods was then used to project fusarium ear blight incidence.
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41 For Scotland and northern and central England, there is projected to be a gradual increase in
42
43 fusarium ear blight incidence with time, with little difference between the HI and LO
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45 emissions scenarios (Fig. 6). If the increase in disease incidence for each climate scenario is
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47 measured as a percentage of the baseline scenario, the greatest increase is for Scotland. For
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49 Scotland, where there is currently little fusarium ear blight, there is a projected 333% increase
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51 in incidence from the baseline to the 2050HI scenario, compared to an increase of 104% from
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53 the baseline to the 2050HI scenario on the south coast of England. The projected increases in
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1 incidence of fusarium ear blight are less for northern and central England. By contrast, across
2 parts of southern England, fusarium ear blight incidence is projected to decrease slightly by
3 the 2020s but then to increase from the 2020s to the 2050s, when compared to the baseline
4 scenario. In both the 2020s scenarios, the areas with the greatest projected incidence of
5 fusarium ear blight are in central southern England, rather than in the south coastal area of
6 England that has the greatest incidence in the baseline scenario. At some sites, the projected
7 incidence is less in the 2050HI scenario than the 2050LO scenario. Since the results are
8 averaged over 50 runs of generated weather, what is not taken into account is the number of
9 extreme values that affect the mean. Most runs have a projected fusarium ear blight incidence
10 of less than 3%, but the mean values are greater because there are a few runs with much
11 greater projected incidences that skew the data. For example, the percentage of runs with
12 projections greater than 10% plants affected increases two-fold between the baseline and
13 2050HI scenarios across nearly the whole of the UK.

34 **Discussion**

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37 The results suggest that climate change induced increases in temperature or rainfall during
38 key periods in the disease cycle will directly increase risk of wheat fusarium ear blight
39 epidemics across the whole of the UK by the 2050s. This suggests that there will be not only
40 increased yield losses due to grain shrivelling but also an increased risk of mycotoxin
41 contaminated grain (Xu et al. 2008; Miraglia et al. 2009). In the UK, there are currently strict
42 limits on the amounts of mycotoxins that are acceptable in grain to be used for human
43 consumption or animal feed, since they are hazardous to health if consumed
44 (www.hgca.com). The results suggest that the number of crops for which permitted
45 mycotoxin levels are exceeded will increase over the whole of the UK by the 2050s. In a
46 world where more than one billion people do not have enough to eat (Anonymous, 2009) and
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1 global food security means that there is a need to grow more food in northern Europe
2 (Mahmuti et al. 2009; Stern, 2007), strategies to decrease the future threat from fusarium ear
3 blight (Goswami and Kistler, 2004) should be a major priority for government and industry,
4 as part of strategies for adaptation to climate change. There is a need to start programmes to
5 breed new UK wheat cultivars that are more resistant to fusarium ear blight, and to optimise
6 fungicide spray treatments to control the disease and decrease mycotoxin concentrations by
7 developing for the UK fusarium and mycotoxin forecasting schemes like those that have been
8 developed for North America (De Wolf et al. 2003; Schaafsma and Hooker 2007; De Wolf
9 and Isard 2007; Prandini et al. 2009; <http://www.wheatcab.psu.edu/>) and some continental
10 European countries (e.g. Rossi et al. 2003; Musa et al., 2007).

24 These projections for fusarium ear blight demonstrate that it is important to combine
25 crop and disease models with climate scenarios to produce more accurate projections of the
26 impacts of climate change. Whilst it is projected that the UK will have drier summer weather
27 (Semenov, 2009) that would not favour fusarium ear blight (Xu et al. 2007), use of the Sirius
28 wheat model suggests that climate change will cause dates of wheat anthesis to occur earlier
29 in the UK. This means that the critical time period when rainfall will favour fusarium ear
30 blight infection (Xu et al. 2007) will be about 2 weeks earlier in the year, when weather is
31 projected to be warmer and of similar wetness to the baseline (Semenov, 2009). This work
32 suggests that incidence of fusarium ear blight can be predicted from total rainfall at anthesis
33 and average temperature for a four-week period before anthesis. The importance of rainfall at
34 anthesis confirms predictions of models produced outside the UK (Table 1; Moschini et al.
35 2001; De Wolf et al. 2003; Del Ponte et al. 2005). The earlier effect of temperature may
36 relate to production of pathogen inoculum, which probably limits epidemics more in the UK
37 than it does in North America, South America and continental Europe where considerably
38 more maize is grown (Paul et al. 2007). This work demonstrates that it is only when crop and

1 disease models are combined that it is possible to project whether severity of epidemics will
2 be increased (Luo et al. 1995), as for phoma stem canker on oilseed rape (Evans et al. 2008;
3 Butterworth et al. 2010), or decreased, as for light leaf spot on oilseed rape in the UK (Evans
4 et al., 2010).
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9 To construct and validate such models, it is essential that long-term data sets for
10 weather, crop growth and disease incidence are collated, as in the CropMonitor disease
11 survey (www.cropmonitor.co.uk). Whilst there will inevitably be uncertainty in such
12 projections of climate change impacts associated with uncertainty in projections of future
13 weather and in the crop and disease models, that is no reason not to make them (Stern, 2007,
14 www.climatecongress.ku.dk). This work demonstrates the importance of assessing impacts of
15 climate change on crop disease epidemics to guide government and industry strategies for
16 adaptation to climate change to decrease future threats to global food security (Chakraborty,
17 2005; Garrett et al. 2006; Gregory et al. 2009).
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34 **Acknowledgments** We thank the UK Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
35 (BBSRC, Rothamsted Centre for Bioenergy and Climate Change ISPG), Department for
36 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra, including the Sustainable Arable LINK programme,
37 CLIMDIS project LK 09111) and HGCA for funding this research. We thank Sarah Holdgate, Rohan
38 Lowe, Jim McVittie, Eric Ober and Aiming Qi for supplying date of anthesis, fusarium ear blight
39 incidence and weather data, and Pierre Stratonovitch for assistance in using Sirius. UK weather data
40 variables were calculated from Crown copyright data supplied by the UK Met Office.
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Figure legends

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5 **Fig. 1** Areas of arable land on the UK mainland, indicating areas where <25% (■), 25-40% (■) and >40% (■)
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7 of the area is currently sown to wheat. The majority of UK wheat is grown in east England, although some is
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9 grown in east Scotland or west England. None is grown in west Scotland, northwest England or Wales, because
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11 the terrain is unsuitable for arable agriculture (■). Also shown are the 14 sites located within the arable area
12
13 included in the modelling exercise for which weather data were generated for the different climate scenarios.
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15 The sites, selected from UK synoptic weather stations (further information at www.bits.bbsrc.ac.uk/metweb) to
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17 give representative weather in different arable regions, are labelled in order of decreasing latitude (Table 4).
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19 Wheat and arable area information were from www.hgca.com/cerealsmap/version9.swf.

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23 **Fig. 2** An illustration of how the different models were combined to produce projections of date of winter
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25 wheat anthesis (growth stage 65) and fusarium ear blight (FEB) incidence (% plants affected) for different
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27 climate change scenarios. (1) Observed data for weather (daily minimum and maximum temperature (°C), total
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29 rainfall (mm) and solar radiation (MJ day⁻¹)), date of anthesis and fusarium ear blight incidence were collated
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31 from a number of sources for different regions of the UK for the years 1994-2008. (2) The dates of anthesis
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33 predicted using the wheat growth model Sirius were validated by comparing predicted anthesis dates for winter
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35 wheat cv. Consort, generated by Sirius using observed weather data, with observed anthesis dates for the same
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37 sites for the period 1997-2004. (3) A fusarium ear blight model was developed from data for fusarium ear blight
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39 incidence from sites within 80km of Rothamsted and observed weather for Rothamsted for the period 1994-
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41 2008; the model related fusarium ear blight incidence to average May temperature and rainfall in the second
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43 week of June (time of observed anthesis dates for Rothamsted) (Equation 1). (4) Predictions of average
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45 percentage of plants affected by fusarium ear blight were validated by comparing predictions made using
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47 observed weather to observed fusarium ear blight incidence data for the period 1994-2008 for different regions
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49 of the UK (northeast, southwest and east England) which were plotted as north (northeast) and south (southwest
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51 and east) England on the validation graph (Fig. 5). (5) Weather data were generated using LARS-WG for each
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53 of the 14 sites (Fig. 1) for each climate scenario; baseline (based on the statistical variability (or patterns) in
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55 observed weather variables in the period 1960-1990) and high CO₂ and low CO₂ emissions scenarios for the
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57 2020s and 2050s (2020LO, 2020HI, 2050LO and 2050HI). (6) The dates of anthesis for cv. Consort were
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59 projected for each site for each climate scenario using Sirius, allowing maps to be generated to show the effect
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1 of climate change on date of anthesis (Fig. 5). (7) Using the weather generated by LARS-WG and average date
2 of anthesis projected using Sirius for each of the sites for each of the five climate scenarios, the fusarium ear
3 blight model was used to project fusarium ear blight incidence for each site for each of the five climate scenarios
4 (Fig. 6).
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10 **Fig. 3** Validation of winter wheat (cv. Consort) dates of anthesis (growth stage 65) predictions made using the
11 wheat growth model Sirius. The predictions made with observed weather (daily data for minimum and
12 maximum temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$), total rainfall (mm) and solar radiation (MJ day^{-1})) and sowing dates as inputs to the
13 model were compared to observed anthesis dates for harvest years 2003-2008 for two regions of the UK; south
14 England (\bullet) and north England (\circ). As many sets of weather data were incomplete, data from several stations in
15 a region were collated to estimate missing information for use in the validation. Predicted anthesis dates (y axis)
16 were plotted against observed anthesis dates (x axis) and the line predicted anthesis date = observed anthesis
17 date is shown for comparison. Sources of data for the date of anthesis and sowing date are listed in Table 3. The
18 root mean squared value of deviation from the 1:1 line was 5.75 days, which can be accounted for by variability
19 in the observed data (differences in the exact growth stage (GS 61-65) at which observations were made, some
20 observations were taken daily, some every 2-3 days and some weekly).
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34 **Fig. 4** Validation of wheat fusarium ear blight incidence (% plants affected) predictions. Predictions made
35 using observed weather (daily data for minimum and maximum temperature ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) and total rainfall (mm)) and
36 observed anthesis dates (from trials in two regions of the UK, north England (\circ) and south England (\bullet), to allow
37 the appropriate weather to be used when producing predictions) were compared to observed fusarium ear blight
38 incidence in the period 2004-2008. Crop fusarium data were divided into three regions, northeast, east and
39 southwest England (the weather data from the nearest synoptic weather stations were combined for these regions
40 in order to estimate missing information and these data were used to make predictions (the east and southwest
41 were combined into south England for plotting the graph)). For each year/region, disease data available were
42 averaged across all trials and cultivars to give one observed value for each year/region. Since the model was
43 developed using approximately 30 cultivars, the validation was also done using an average of all trials and
44 cultivars. The values have been transformed using a logistic function; the same method was used in the
45 development of the model. Sources of fusarium ear blight incidence data used in the model construction and
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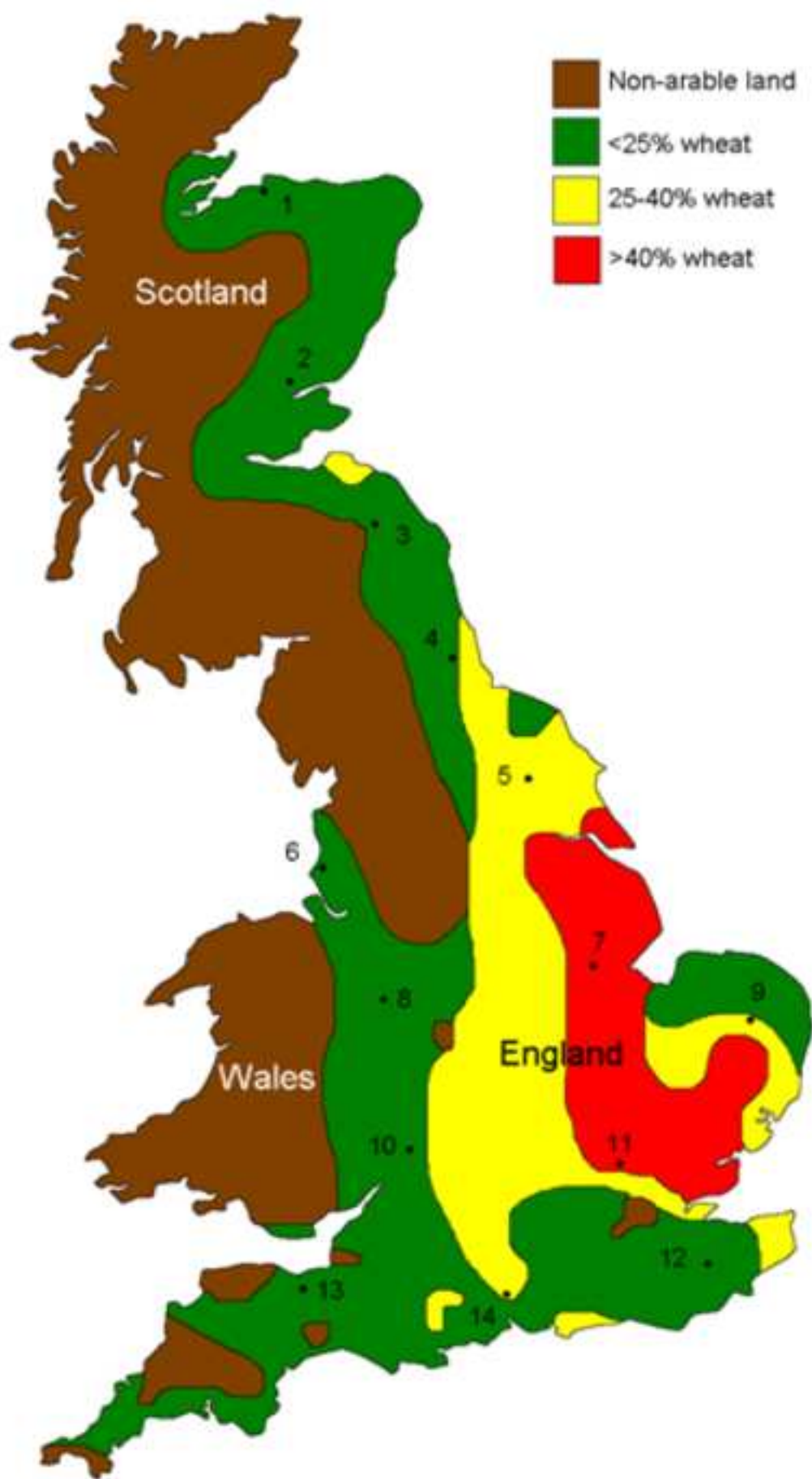
validation are listed in Table 2. It was not appropriate to analyse the deviation from the 1:1 line statistically as the logit transformation used gives a non-homogeneous scale.

Fig. 5 Average dates of anthesis (growth stage 65), for winter wheat cv. Consort projected by the wheat growth model Sirius, for each of the five climate scenarios; (a) baseline, (b) 2020LO, (c) 2020HI, (d) 2050LO and (e) 2050HI. The baseline scenario is based on the patterns in observed weather factors from 1960-1990 and the other scenarios are high CO₂ (HI) and low CO₂ (LO) emissions scenarios for the 2020s and 2050s. The maps were produced by spatial interpolation between the 14 sites.

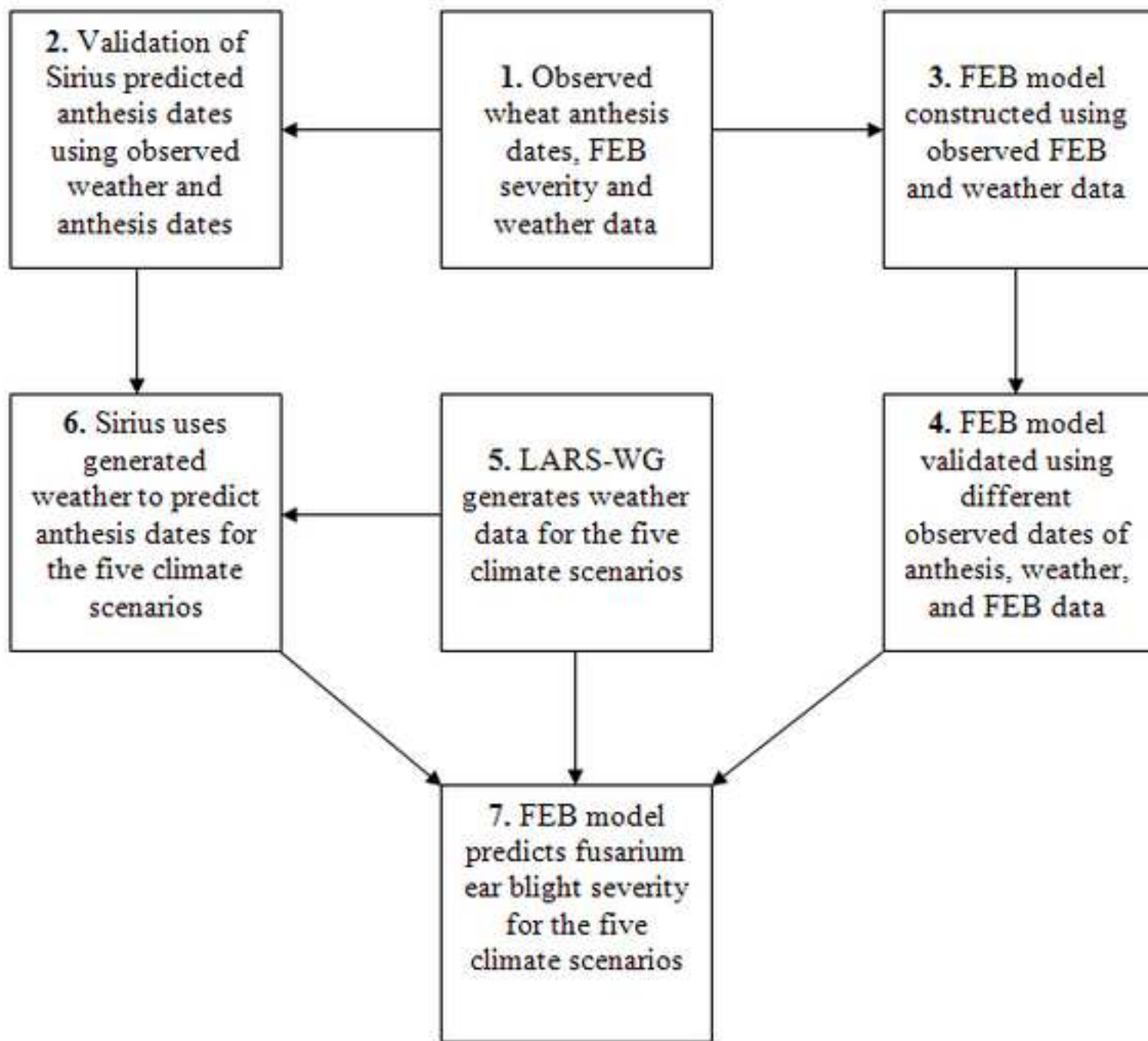
Fig. 6 Maps showing the projected average fusarium ear blight incidence (% plants affected) generated by the fusarium ear blight model using the average anthesis dates shown in Fig. 5 for each of the five weather scenarios; (a) baseline, (b) 2020LO, (c) 2020HI, (d) 2050LO and (e) 2050HI. The baseline scenario is based on the patterns in observed weather from 1960-1990, and the other scenarios are high CO₂ (HI) and low CO₂ (LO) emissions scenarios for the 2020s and 2050s. The maps were produced by spatial interpolation between the 14 sites.

colour figure Fig1

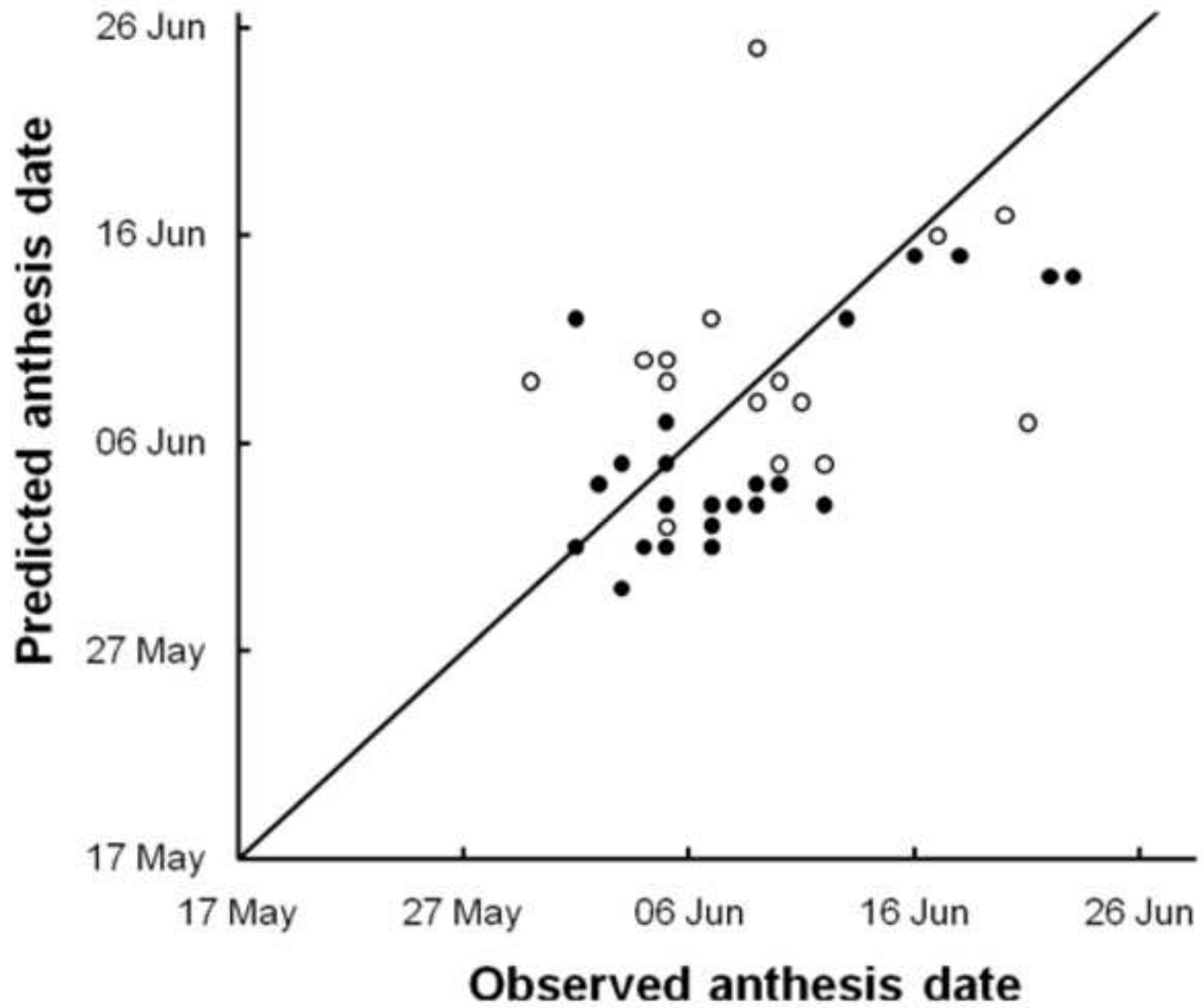
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line figure Fig2
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line figure Fig3
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line figure Fig4
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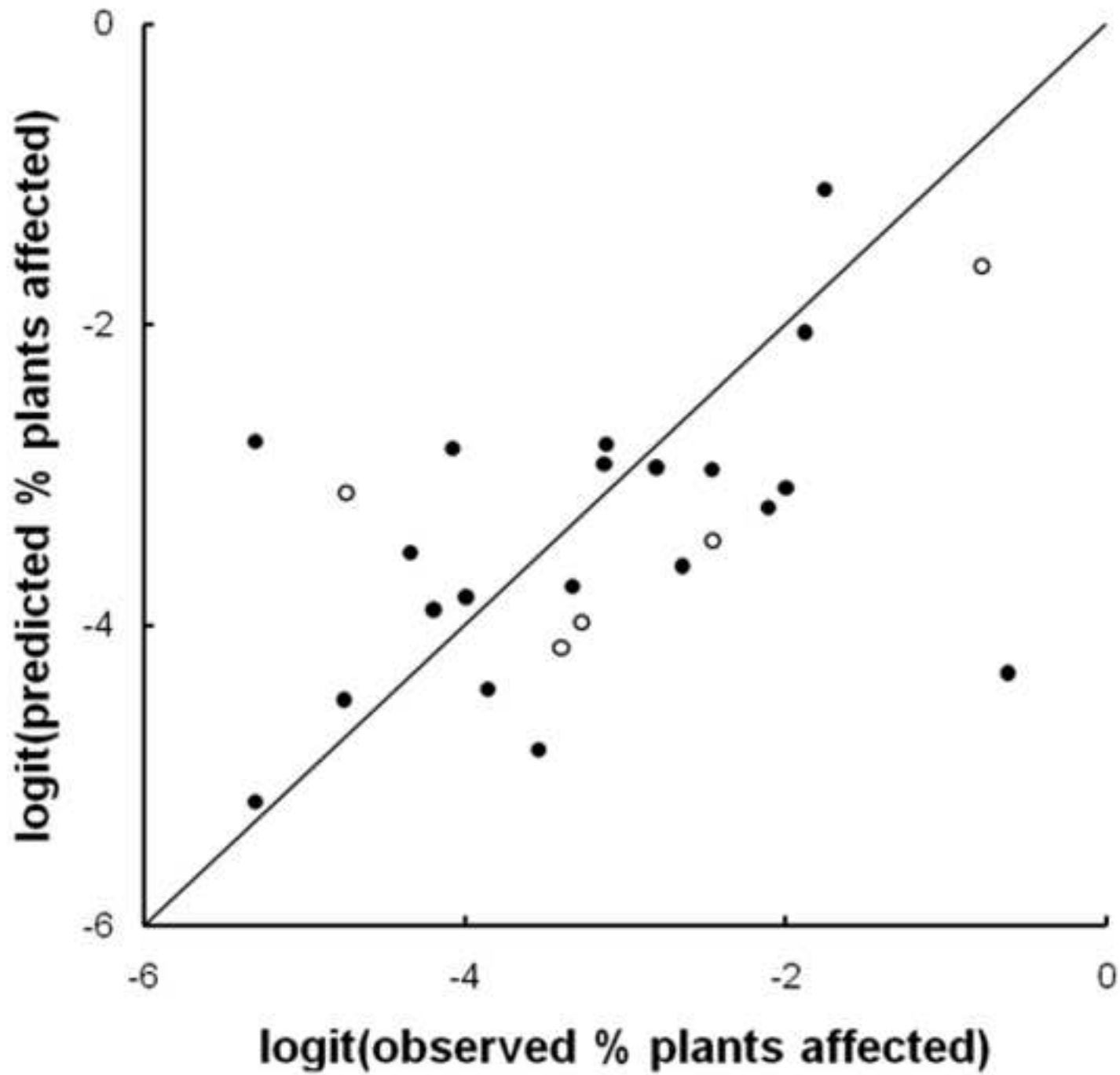


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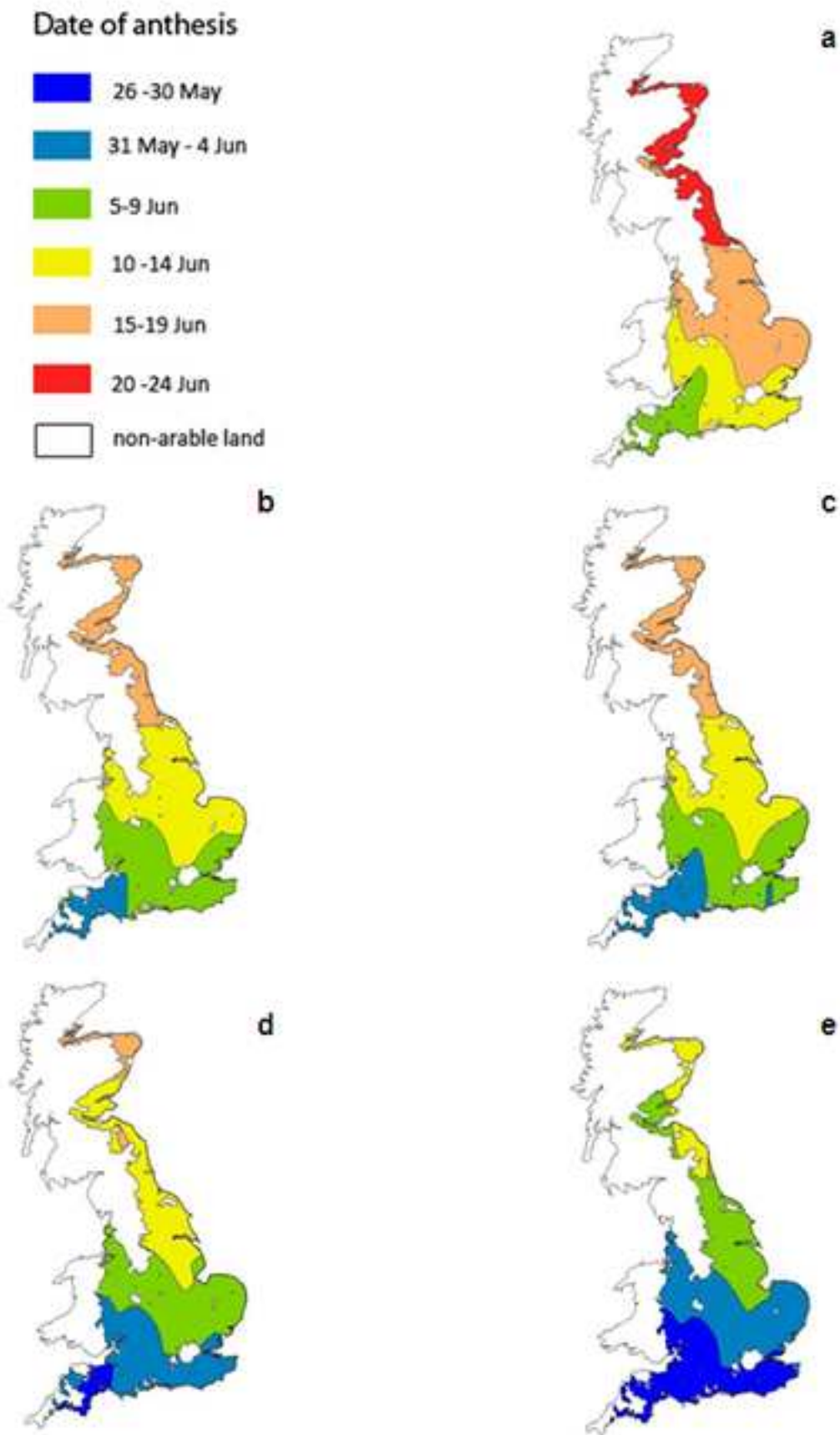


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**% plants with
fusarium ear blight**

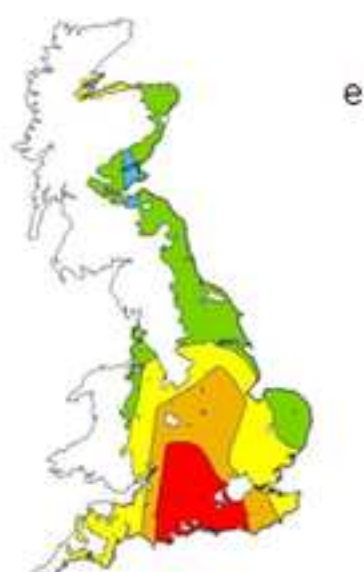
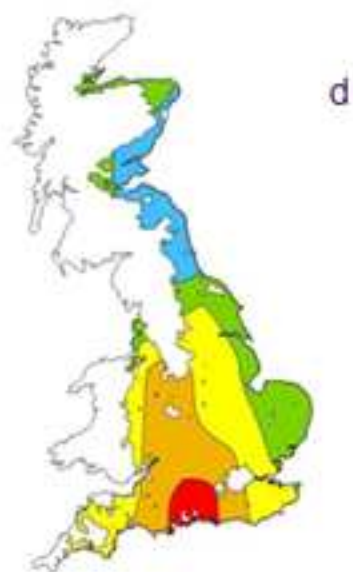
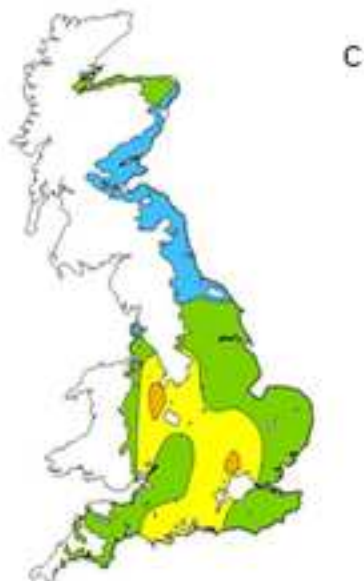
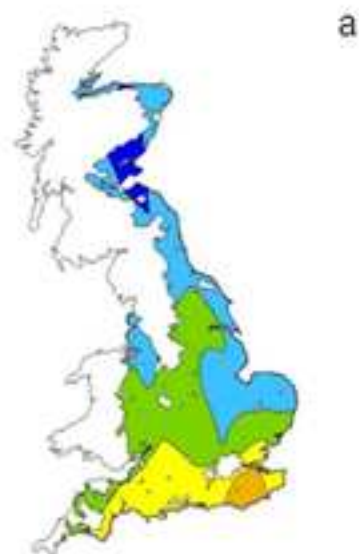
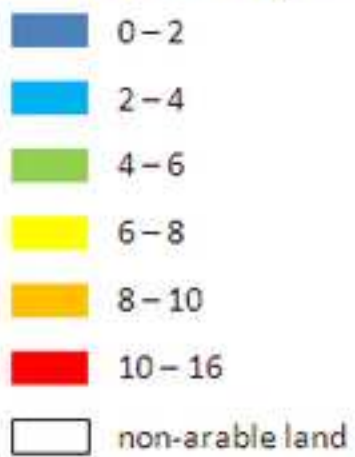


Table 1 Models produced in Argentina, the USA and Italy to predict the severity/risk of fusarium ear blight (FEB) from observed weather variables at critical crop growth stages; relative humidity (RH), daily rainfall, temperature and solar radiation. These two^a models can be used to determine the optimum timing of fungicide sprays for control of FEB.

Reference country	Factor predicted	Weather inputs	Critical weather period (crop growth dependent)	Equations ^g
Argentina ^d (2 models)	Percentage of ears with FEB ^b	RH ^c , daily rainfall, daily temperature	From 8 days before ear emergence (growth stage 50) until 550 degree days have elapsed	$PI\% = 20.37 + 8.63 NP_2 - 0.49 DD_{926}$ $DD_{926} = \sum[(MaxT - 30)] + (9 - MinT)$ $PI\% = 18.34 + 4.12 NP_{12} - 0.49 DD_{1026}$ $DD_{1026} = \sum[(MaxT - 30)] + (10 - MinT)$
USA ^e (4 models)	Risk of a FEB epidemic (field disease severity $\geq 10\%$)	RH ^c , daily rainfall, daily temperature	From 7 days before the start of anthesis (growth stage 60) to 10 days after the start of anthesis	$RFE = - 3.38 + 6.81 TRH9010$ $RFE = - 3.73 + 10.5 T15307 TRH9010$ $RFE = - 1.06 - 14.2 T15307 DPPT7 + 39.5 T15307 DPPT7 TRH9010$ $RFE = - 1.54 + 31.8 T15307 DPPT7 TRH9010 - 5.81 DPPT7$
Italy ^f	Risk of a FEB epidemic (field disease severity)	RH ^c , daily rainfall, daily max./min. temperature,	From ear emergence (heading) until harvest	$FHB_risk = \sum SPO DIS INF GS^h$

^a There is an additional model from Brazil (Del Ponte et al. 2005) that was investigated but it is very complex and requires the calculation or knowledge of many additional factors such as anther extrusion rate (to calculate the area of available tissue for infection), spore cloud density and infection frequency to produce an overall risk of FEB infection.

^b As these models were produced outside the UK, the disease is referred to as fusarium head blight in the original papers (not fusarium ear blight).

^c From a statistical viewpoint, the relative humidity is difficult to work with since it cannot be greater than 100%, so that any formula developed using relative humidity as an input would need to take this into account.

^d Moschini et al. 2001

^e De Wolf et al. 2003. Field disease severity is the mean percentage of ear area with FEB symptoms in the crop (including all plants with/without symptoms)

^f Rossi et al. 2003. Field disease severity is the mean percentage of ear area with FEB symptoms (www.ext.nodak.edu)

^g Notation used in the equations:

DD₉₂₆ – 926 degree days accumulated

DD₁₀₂₆ – 1026 degree days accumulated

DPPT7 – Duration of precipitation (hours) in the 7 days before anthesis

MaxT – Maximum daily temperature >26°C

MinT – Minimum daily temperature <9°C or <10°C

NP₂ – Number of 2 day periods with precipitation ≥ 0.2 mm and RH >81%

NP₁₂ – Number of NP₂ periods plus the total number of days with precipitation ≥ 0.2 mm and RH >83%

PI% – Predictive index

RFE – Risk of a FEB epidemic (epidemic if FEB field disease severity $\geq 10\%$)

T15307 – Duration (hours) of $15 \leq T \leq 30$ °C in the 7 days before anthesis

TRH9010 – Duration (hours) $15 \leq T \leq 30$ °C and RH $\geq 90\%$ during anthesis

^h FHB risk is calculated daily and accumulated until harvest; equations for each of the components (SPO, sporulation rate; DIS, dispersal rate; INF, infection rate; GS, empirical weight) are given in Rossi et al. (2003). The model assumes that inoculum is always present.

Table 2 Sources of the observed fusarium ear blight incidence (% plants affected) data used to construct and validate the weather-based model for predicting the incidence of wheat fusarium ear blight equation. Separate sets of CropMonitor data were used for construction and validation of the model and the HGCA recommended list trial data were used only in model validation. For validation see Fig. 4. The observed data were averaged for areas near each weather station for each year to smooth out the very high and very low levels recorded, even near the same weather station.

Location	Harvest year(s) ^d	No. of points	Source of data	Reference
Data used for model construction:				
Various sites ^a	1994-2008	322	CropMonitor ^e	www.cropmonitor.co.uk
Independent data used for model validation:				
Various sites ^b	2004-2008	165	CropMonitor ^e	www.cropmonitor.co.uk
Various sites ^c	2004-2008	65	HGCA Recommended List trials ^f	www.hgca.com

^a Disease data for sites in a region within 80km of Rothamsted in south England were averaged for groups of sites in areas near each of the synoptic weather stations at Andrewsfield, Bedford, Benson, Bracknall, Brize Norton, Charlwood, High Wycombe, South Farnborough, Wittering, Redhill and Heathrow (i.e. 11 weather stations and 15 years, 165 data sets). For each set of disease data, daily total rainfall and average temperature for April, May and June were collated.

^b Data for sites in southwest and northeast England for which the nearest synoptic weather station was given. Sites in southwest England were near St Mawgan, Dunkeswell Aerodrome, Yeovilton, Chivenor, Camborne, Plymouth and Hurn. Sites in northeast England were near Linton on Ouse, Leeming, Church Fenton, Fylingdales, Bridlington, Boulmer and Loftus.

^c Sites are Cranwell and Binbrook in Lincolnshire.

^d Fusarium ear blight incidence (% plants affected) was assessed approximately 3 weeks after the start of anthesis on a range of winter wheat cultivars.

^e CropMonitor survey sites are mostly commercial farms but some are dedicated trial sites. The survey is coordinated by Fera, with funding provided by Defra, HGCA and Bayer Crop Science.

^f The trials are funded by HGCA for the purpose of selecting cultivars most suitable for planting for the UK Recommended List.

Table 3 Sources of the observed date of anthesis and sowing date data for winter wheat cv. Consort used to validate predictions made using observed weather and sowing date data with the wheat growth model Sirius^a. Some of the observed values were for growth stage 61 rather than growth stage 65 that the model predicts for.

Location	Harvest year(s) ^d	No. of points	Source of data	Reference
Various sites ^b	2003-2007	25	HGCA Recommended List trials ^e	www.hgca.com
Rothamsted	2006-2007	12	PhD thesis, EU project BioExploit	Sarah Holdgate (2009) ^g
Rothamsted	2008	1		Rohan Lowe, personal communication
Various sites ^c	2006-2008	10	Water use efficiency trials (Defra-funded Sustainable Arable LINK project)	www.defra.gov.uk
Rosemaund	2006	1	CropMonitor ^f	www.cropmonitor.co.uk

^a For validation of the Sirius wheat growth model see Fig. 3. The data used for validation of Sirius anthesis data were independent of the data used for model construction.

^b Sites are Dunmow and Stebbing in Essex and Bramham in West Yorkshire, for several different sowing dates.

^c Sites are Shelford, Grantchester and Trumpington in Cambridgeshire, Clopton in Suffolk, Malden in Essex and Riseholme in Lincolnshire.

^d To determine anthesis dates, trials were assessed regularly in late May and June (daily, every 2-3 days or weekly).

^e The trials are funded by HGCA for the purpose of selecting cultivars most suitable for planting for the UK Recommended List.

^f CropMonitor survey sites are mostly commercial farms but some are dedicated trial sites. The survey is coordinated by Fera, with funding provided by Defra, HGCA and Bayer Crop Science.

^g Holdgate, S. (2009). Improving the diversity of race-non-specific resistance mechanisms available in wheat to combat fusarium ear blight disease. PhD thesis, Cranfield University, UK.

table 4

[Click here to download table: Table 4 Site location information for each of the 14 sites selected for generation of simulated weather for](#)

Table 4 Site location information for each of the 14 sites selected for generation of simulated weather for the five climate change scenarios, distributed around the UK mainland in arable areas. Sites were chosen at the location of synoptic weather stations and altitude, latitude and longitude data from each site were obtained from <http://www.bits.bbsrc.ac.uk/metweb/>.

Site ^a	Altitude (metres above sea level)	Latitude (degrees)	Longitude (degrees)
1 Kinloss	5	57.646	-3.562
2 Mylnefield	31	56.457	-3.072
3 Haddington	41	55.580	-2.450
4 Durham	102	54.768	-1.585
5 Askham Bryan	34	53.950	-1.080
6 Crosby	10	53.776	-3.037
7 Cranwell	62	53.031	-0.501
8 Newport Salop	66	52.779	-2.428
9 Morley St Botolph	48	52.550	1.050
10 Cheltenham	65	51.900	-2.050
11 Rothamsted	128	51.806	-0.358
12 East Malling	33	51.287	0.451
13 Cannington	28	51.090	-3.040
14 Porton	111	51.070	-1.420

^aThe locations of sites