

WHEAT RUSTS: FULL 2025 SEASON REVIEW

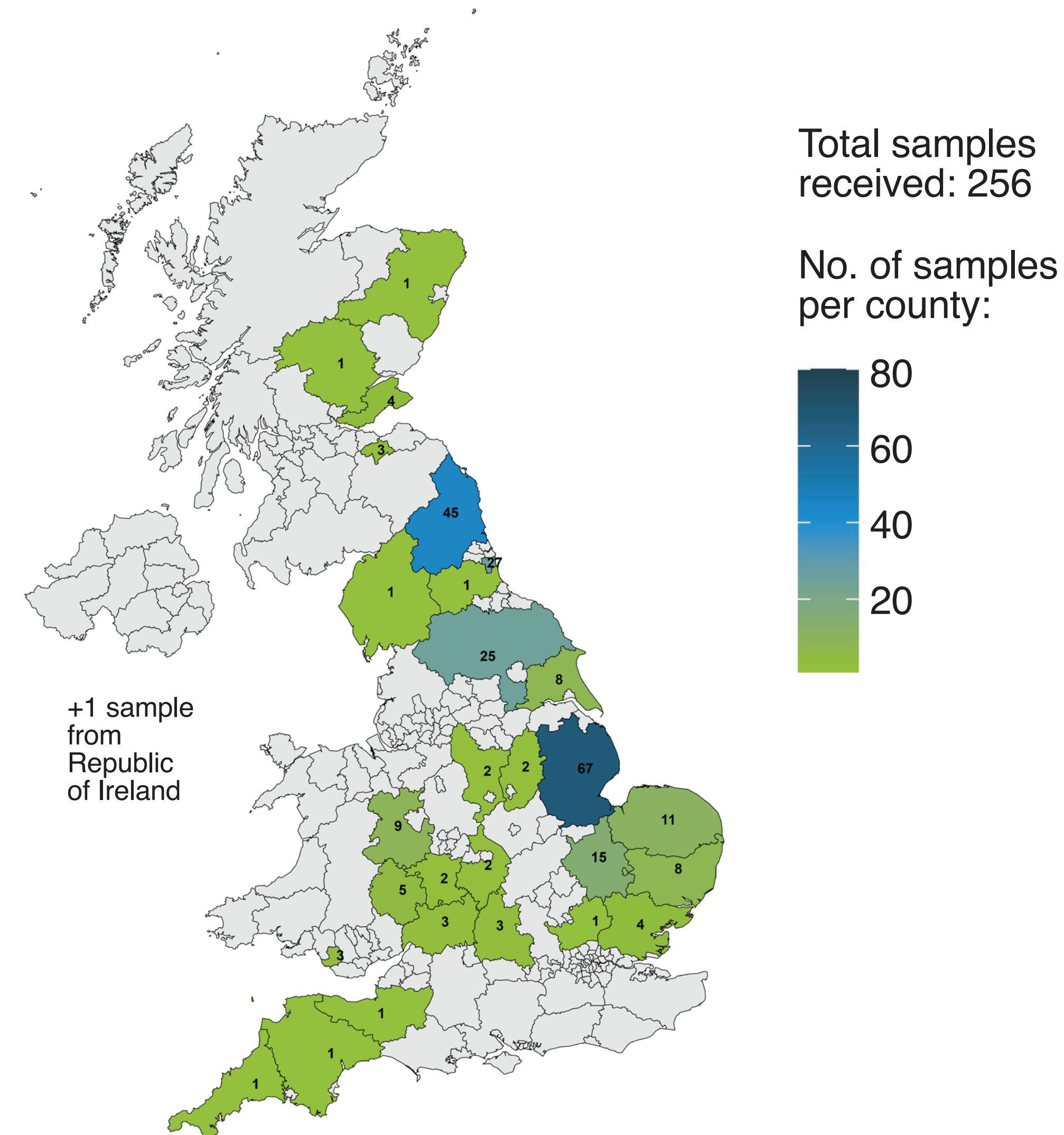


Yellow rust dominated 2025 as Yr15 resistance broke down; brown rust remained minor and late.

Wheat yellow rust

Yr15 resistance broke down at scale in 2025. Severe yellow rust developed in late winter and early spring on winter wheat varieties previously considered highly resistant, with disease observed at both seedling and adult plant stages. Initial cases were identified in Northumberland and Tyne and Wear before spreading more widely. UKCPVS received 257 samples from 28 counties, covering 36 RL and 17 candidate varieties. Of 24 isolates tested in detail, 76% were virulent to Yr15, confirming a major resistance breakdown. Evidence suggests this arose through mutation within the established Warrior(-) population rather than a foreign incursion. Yr5, Yr6, Yr10 and Yr24 remained effective against the isolates tested.

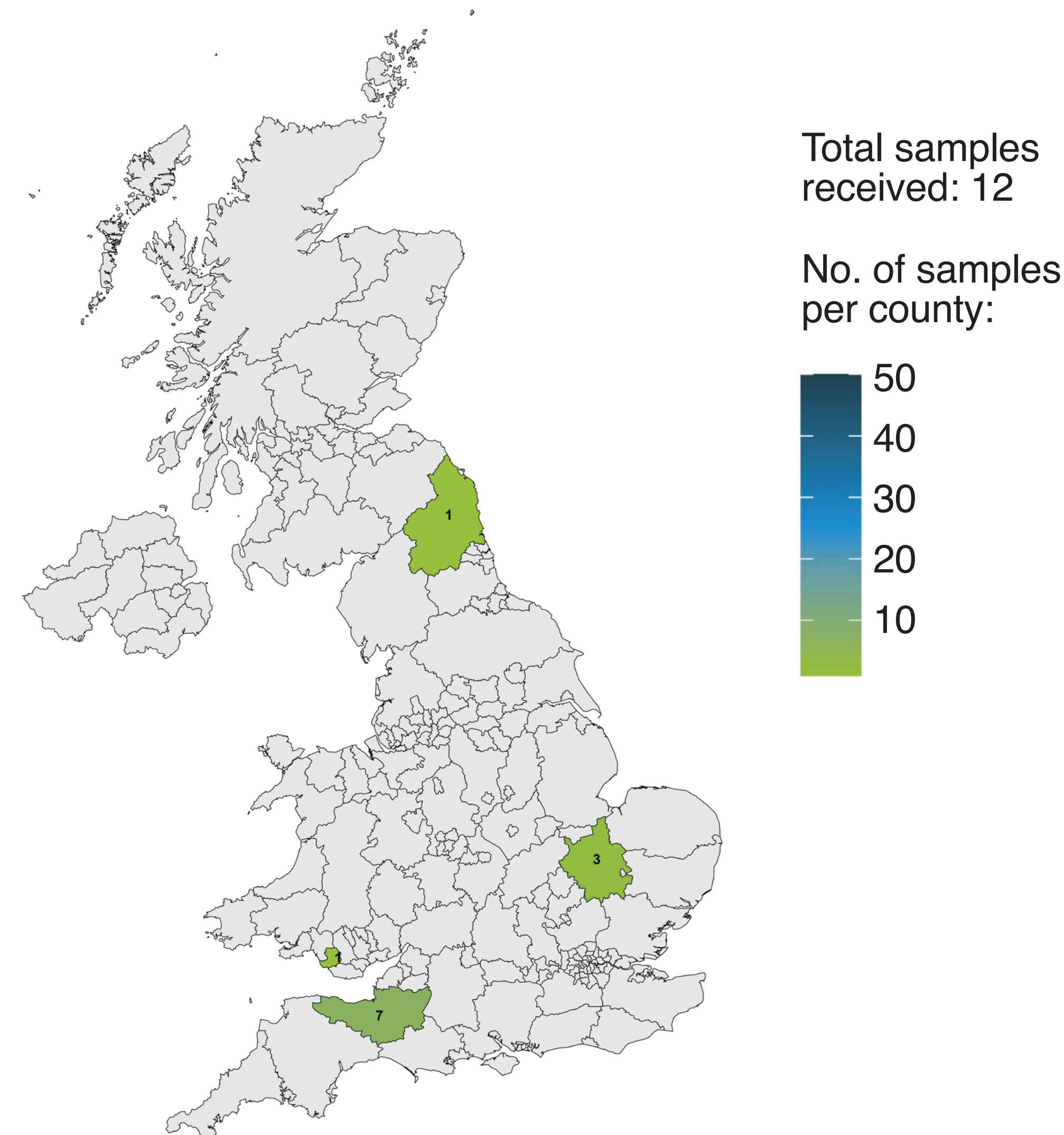
Figure 1.
UK map showing the counties that submitted wheat yellow rust samples in 2025



Wheat brown rust

Brown rust pressure remained low in 2025, with no major shift in population structure. UKCPVS received 12 samples from four counties, covering eight RL and three candidate varieties, with Crusoe most frequently sampled. Of 10 isolates tested, no dominant pathotype was identified. Virulence to Lr24 and Lr28 was present in 40% and 50% of isolates, respectively. Virulence to Lr20 and Lr23 was also detected (60% and 80%). RGT Goldfinch remained resistant to all isolates tested, and no virulence was detected to Lr45, Lr47, Lr51, Lr52, Lr53 or Lr72.

Figure 2.
UK map showing the counties that submitted wheat brown rust samples in 2025.



2026 season – current situation

Yr15-virulent yellow rust is already established early in 2026. UKCPVS has received 56 samples to date, with 34 from Yr15 varieties, most commonly Mayflower, Champion and SY Cheer, confirming continued activity of the virulent strain. UKCPVS is continuing to monitor field reports and test representative isolates against the new extended differential set.

SEND US YOUR RUST SAMPLES!

Samples from any wheat variety can be sent via the FREEPOST UKCPVS service. It is essential to obtain as diverse a set of samples as possible from across the country. Rare and unusual races are often found in only one sample from one location. For more information including sampling instructions and contacts scan the QR code:



The UK Cereal Pathogen Virulence Survey (UKCPVS) monitors cereal rusts in the UK, detecting and warning industry and growers of new races of disease emerging on resistant varieties. It is funded by Defra and AHDB and has been managed by Niab since its inception nearly 60 years ago.