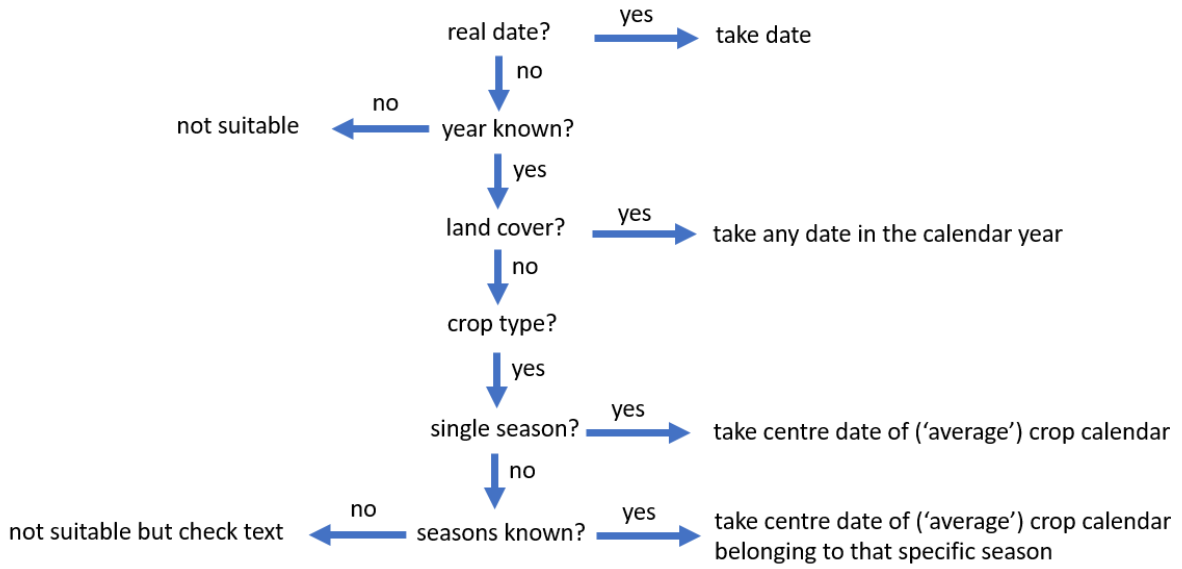
The WorldCereal system needs a date of observation. If you do not have a real date you need to derive the date from the year (and season) of observation. The schema below shows the possible options if the real date is unknown. See also the text below the schema for explanation.



If you know the real date you will obviously that date. Otherwise you need to derive the date from year of observation or even the season of observation. Note that if you do not have any information on the year of observation the data set cannot be used within the WorldCereal system.

In case you know the year of observation you can derive a date. The strategy differs depending on whether you target a landcover map or a crop type map:

- Landcover map: in this case you can select any date within the calendar year as landcover is not linked to a certain crop season within the calendar year.
- Crop type map: in this case you need to have additional information on the governing crop calendars of the crop types observed. If possible and realistic this should be done per crop type, alternatively you could select an 'average' crop calendar representing all the observed crop types. The derived date is then the central date of the selected crop calendar. For example, if the 'average' crop calendar is defined from sowing (1 April) to harvesting (31 August) you would define 15 June as the date. In case of multiple seasons within one calendar year e.g. the long and short rains in western Kenya, you need to know the season of observation too. If not, you cannot use the observations for crop type mapping, unless you are sure that the observed crop type(s) only appear in one specific season.

In case the observations come from a crowd source or expert campaign, in which the crowd and/or experts validate assigned crop types, the date should be taken from imagery time used to produce the landcover or crop type map. Alternatively, the date of submission by the crowd or export could be taken if this does not deviate too much from the imagery time.