



Agriculture, forestry and land

South Africa has a dual agricultural economy: a well-developed commercial sector and a predominant subsistence sector. About 12% of the country can be used for crop production. High-potential arable land comprises only 22% of total arable land. Some 1,3 million ha are under irrigation.

Agricultural activities range from intensive crop production and mixed farming to cattle-ranching in the bushveld, and sheep-farming in the more arid regions.

Economic contribution

Primary agriculture contributes about 2,8% to the gross domestic product (GDP) of South Africa and about 7,2% to formal employment. However, there are strong linkages into the economy, so that the agro-industrial sector actually comprises 15% of GDP.

South Africa is self-sufficient in virtually all major agricultural products, and in a normal year is a net food exporter. However, the country remains vulnerable to drought.

Production

During 2005, the estimated total volume of agricultural production was 4% higher than during 2004. Producer prices of agricultural products decreased, on average, by 5,5% from 2004 to 2005, compared with a decrease of 5,9% during the previous year.

In 2005, producer prices of horticultural products decreased by 0,9% from the figure for 2004. During the same period, the prices of fresh vegetables increased by 3,1%, while the prices of fruit fell by 3,3%.

The producer prices of animal products were only 1,8% higher in 2005 than in 2004. Prices received for slaughtered stock increased by 5,3%. However, prices for pastoral products increased by 4,1%.



The price farmers received for milk was 1,8% lower. Prices received by poultry farmers showed almost no change compared with those of 2004.

Gross value of agricultural production, 2005

Field crops	
Maize	6 908 082
Wheat	2 008 374
Hay	2 018 091
Grain sorghum	140 883
Sugar cane	2 451 628
Ground-nuts	178456
Tobacco	413 001
Sunflower seed	1 018 516
Cotton	119 041
Other	1 091 700
Total	16 347 772
Horticulture	
Viticulture	2 413 544
Citrus fruit	2 617 381
Subtropical fruit	1 528 481
Deciduous and other fruit	4 861 866
Vegetables	4 031 684
Potatoes	3 010 033
Other	1 250 030
Total	19 713 019
Animal products	
Wool	734 955
Poultry and poultry products	14 109 944
Cattle and cattle products	7 959 116
Sheep and goats slaughtered	1 855 458
Pigs slaughtered	1 320 638
Milk	4 799 659
Other	2 059 310
Total	32 839 080
Grand total	68 899 871



Field crops and horticulture

- Maize is the largest crop, followed by wheat, sugar cane and sunflowers. South Africa is the main maize producer in the Southern African Development Community region. In 2004/05, 11,7 million tons (mt) of maize were produced on 3,2 million ha of land. An estimated 3,1 mt maize surplus was carried over to 2005/06.

Maize prices plunged from more than R1 000 per ton in November 2004 to less than R600 during the first quarter of 2005 whereafter they recovered to levels of R1 000 per ton towards the end of 2005.

- Wheat is produced in the Western Cape and the Free State.
- South Africa is the world's 11th-largest producer of sunflower seed. In 2004/05, 620 000 t were produced on 460 000 ha.
- South Africa is the world's 13th-largest sugar producer. Some 2,5 mt of sugar are produced per season. About 50% of this is marketed in southern Africa, while the rest is exported to markets in Africa, the Middle East, North America and Asia.
- South Africa is the leading exporter of protea cut flowers, which account for more than half of proteas sold on the world market.

The multiphase Comprehensive Agriculture Support Programme (CASP) specifically targets emerging farmers, including women, in rural areas. By March 2006, the programme had facilitated the establishment of 12 co-operatives in three rural development nodes, 53 206 farmers had been assisted nationally and 21 017 households had benefited.

The department allocated R300 million to the CASP in 2006/07.

Some other crops:

- The Oudtshoorn district in the Western Cape is responsible for about 90% of the lucerne seed produced in South Africa.
- Deciduous fruit exports represent 16% of the country's total earnings from agricultural exports. In 2004/05, apples made up

the largest percentage of the crop (35%), while pears totalled 24% and grapes 33%. About 75% of the total crop was produced in the Western Cape, 14% in the Northern Cape, 8% in the Eastern Cape and 3% in Limpopo. In 2004/05, income from deciduous fruit decreased by 12% from R5 246 million in 2003/04 to R4 633 million in 2004/05.

- Internationally, South Africa's wines are highly competitive, with the industry showing a sustainable and increasingly positive trend over recent years. The wine industry currently contributes R163 billion a year to South Africa's GDP and employs 257 000 people directly and indirectly, while an additional R4,2 billion is generated annually through wine tourism.
- Citrus production is largely limited to the irrigated areas of Limpopo, Mpumalanga, the Eastern and Western Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal. A total of 1,9 mt of citrus was produced in 2004/05, which was a decrease of 5% from the 2003/04 yield.
- Pineapples are grown in the Eastern Cape and northern KwaZulu-Natal. Other subtropical crops such as avocados, mangoes, bananas, litchis, guavas, papayas, granadillas, and macadamia and pecan nuts are produced mainly in Mpumalanga and Limpopo and in subtropical coastal areas.
- In 2004/05, South Africa produced over 715 755 tons of subtropical fruit.

Rooibos tea is grown only in the Cedarberg area of the Western Cape, about 200 kilometres north of Cape Town. There is no alternative source of supply anywhere in the world. Although there are other places in the world where the tea could be grown, it is unlikely to be cultivated elsewhere because it is an extensive, labour-intensive crop.



Total agricultural exports

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Average: five years					
Total South African products					
R millions	245 448	314 927	273 127	292 079	327 125
Total agriculture products					
R millions	20 075	25 460	22 794	22 074	25 458
Agriculture as % of total exports					
	8,2	8,1	8,3	7,6	7,8

Livestock

Livestock is farmed in most parts of South Africa. Numbers vary according to weather conditions. Stock-breeders concentrate mainly on the development of breeds that are well-adapted to diverse climatic and environmental conditions. The latest estimates for cattle and sheep are 13,8 million and 25,3 million, respectively. South Africa normally produces 85% of its meat requirements, while 15% is imported from Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland, Australia, New Zealand and Europe.

Food security

The Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Programme, adopted in July 2002, aims to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity by 2015.

By mid-2006, provinces were being encouraged to replace the Agricultural Starter Pack Programme with the Sustainable Household Food Production Programme that would distribute starter packs and help to develop and transfer suitable input, technologies and information, training and capacity-building.

Provinces aimed to procure and distribute power hoes worth some R30 million to over 3 000 beneficiaries – mostly women and youth in



predominantly rural areas – to help them improve their agricultural productivity.

Food handlers in schools were trained by 240 master trainers in food safety, health and hygiene and in maintaining food-preparation areas. By mid-2006, the programme was feeding 298 323 learners in 801 ordinary schools and about 1 479 766 learners in 5 902 nodal schools.

Land and Agricultural Development Bank of South Africa (Land Bank)

The bank provides a comprehensive range of retail and wholesale financial products and services designed to meet the needs of commercial and developing farmers and agriculture-related businesses.

The Land Bank, through its Corporate Social Investment Section, has partnered with Roundabout (Pty) Ltd to provide safe drinking water to previously disadvantaged schools and communities in the outlying areas.

Livestock (million)

	2004	2005
Cattle	13,8	13,8
Sheep	25,4	25,3
Pigs	1,7	1,7
Goats	6,4	6,4

The Department of Agriculture has initiated the integrated Soil Protection Strategy in support of growth and sustainable development in the agricultural sector. The purpose of this project is to improve agricultural productivity and contribute to economic growth by focusing on erosion, soil acidity, declining soil fertility and organic matter, and veld rehabilitation.



Forestry

South Africa has developed one of the largest planted forests in the world. Plantations cover about 1,3 million ha of South Africa's land surface. Production from these plantations amounted to more than 22 million m³ of commercial roundwood, valued at almost R5,1 billion, in 2005. Together with processed wood products, total turnover for the industry was about R15,4 billion in 2005, including R9,7 billion worth of wood-pulp.

Forestry provides direct employment for about 107 056 people, of whom 67 556 are in formal employment, 30 000 are contract workers and 39 500 are small growers and their helpers.

The forest-products industry ranks among the top exporting industries in the country, having contributed 2,91% to total exports and 1,74% to total imports in 2005.

Capital investment in the industry amounted to some R35 billion in 2005.

Indigenous forests

There are about 530 000 ha of indigenous or natural forests in the country, which occur mainly along the southern and eastern escarpment, the coastal belt and in sheltered kloofs or ravines.

There has been an increase in the use of natural forests as sources of medicine, building material, fuel wood and food. It is estimated that around 80% of South Africa's population still uses medicinal plants, most of which are sourced from natural habitats.

For the first time, South Africa has a detailed inventory of all its natural forests, which is used to accurately monitor changes in forest areas. The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry has completed a classification of natural forests, represented by 24 broad forest types. The Natural Forests Protected Areas System guides the setting aside and redemarcation of natural forests as protected areas.

Restructuring forests

The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry is pursuing a restructuring programme in the forestry sector, which will eventually see the department becoming a sector leader and regulator of forestry in South Africa.

South Africa's national tree, the yellowwood tree (*Podocarpus*), can grow to a height of more than 40 m with a girth of 8 m, and can live for up to 800 years.

Land affairs

The Department of Land Affairs' responsibilities include deeds registration, surveys and mapping, cadastral surveys, spatial planning and land reform.

A project to upgrade townships surveyed under the apartheid government has made it possible for thousands of people to register properties as freehold where previously they held lesser rights.

The Chief Directorate: Surveys and Mapping will establish real-time base stations in support of surveys for the Communal Land Rights Act, 2004 to enable communities previously excluded from the benefits of land ownership to hold formal title to their land.

Maps of aerial photography coverage in the rural areas, particularly within the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme nodes, will be updated.

The 1:50 000 topographical map series is the largest scale map series, providing full coverage of South Africa.

The popular large-scale 1:10 000 orthophoto map series provides coverage of predominantly built-up areas, areas of economic importance and areas experiencing rapid development.

The Chief Directorate: Deeds Registration aims to maintain a public register of land, as well as an efficient system of registration aimed at affording security of title to land and rights to land.

Of the 1 339 282 ha of plantations in 2004, 51% were softwood species and 49% hardwood species. Some 37% of the plantation area were managed mainly for saw-log production, 54% for pulpwood and 6% for mining timber, while the balance of 3% was grown for the production of poles, matchwood (poplar) and other minor products. Plantation yields vary from an average of 16 m³ per ha per year for softwood, to 21 m³ per ha per year for eucalyptus and 10 m³ per ha per year for wattle (timber and bark).

Land reform

The Land Reform for Agricultural Development (LRAD) Programme aims to give previously disadvantaged people access to land, especially agricultural land. Launched in 2001, the LRAD provides financial support to emerging farmers through a match-funding arrangement in which the beneficiary contributes money, labour (sweat equity) or capital equipment.

Depending on the size of the contribution, the beneficiary qualifies for a grant of between R20 000 and R100 000. The LRAD's target is to redistribute 30% of all agricultural land to previously disadvantaged farmers by 2014.

To achieve this, about 3% has to be redistributed each year. By March 2006, between 13% and 16% had been distributed. Of the 23 520 LRAD beneficiaries, 19% were youths and 34,7% women.

Some 209 000 ha of agricultural land have been transferred to emergent farmers or communities since 1994. By April 2006, over 30 400 ha of land had been leased with an option to purchase.

South Africa has 203 primary wood-processing plants, 198 of which are owned by the private sector and only five of which are owned by local and state authorities. Of these, some 113 are sawmills; 15 mining-timber sawmills; 45 pole-treating plants; 24 pulp, paper and board mills; one match factory; and five charcoal plants. The total roundwood intake into these processing plants in 2004 was 22,2 million m³ valued at R4,2 billion. The value of sales of timber products produced by these primary processing plants totalled R14,815 billion.

In March 2006, government allocated an additional R9,4 million to the Working on Fire Programme, which combines firefighting aircraft with highly trained ground crews drawn from previously unemployed people.

About 46 firebases have been established throughout South Africa, each boasting a 22-member firefighting crew and trained under the Working on Fire Programme.

The programme won an Impumelelo Award for its innovative human resources approach.

Land restitution

By 31 December 1998, 79 696 land claims had been lodged with the Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights. By May 2006, it had settled 71 645 of these. Of the 8 107 remaining claims, 6 975 were rural and 1 132 were urban claims. By May 2006, just over R6,1 billion had been awarded to beneficiaries who selected financial compensation, thus benefiting 986 981 beneficiaries and 194 487 households. During this period, the Department of Agriculture spent R2,4 billion purchasing land and restoring it to claimants.

As part of the Application of Meteosat Second Generation Data in Agriculture Project funded by the European Union, a satellite dish was installed at the Agricultural Research Council, by means of which the whole of Africa, with its adjacent oceans, is receiving data every 15 minutes from the satellite located 3 600 km above the Earth.

The project researches the data received for agricultural purposes like drought monitoring, animal stress and plant pest indices. The control of migratory pests, weeds and diseases is a public good basic to a productive agricultural sector and to risk management in agriculture.