



# Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries



The mandate of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) includes supporting and promoting agricultural, forestry and fisheries resources management through policies, strategies and programmes to enhance sustainable use, and achieve economic growth, job creation, food security and rural development.

The department has prioritised improving food security, creating jobs and increasing the contribution of the agriculture sector to the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

The department promotes food security by supporting food producers through the:

- Micro-Agricultural Financial Institutions of South Africa (MAFISA), which provides agricultural production loans to smallholder operators in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors.
- Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) grant, which provides post-settlement support to targeted beneficiaries of land reform and redistribution, as well as to other producers who have acquired land privately and are engaged in domestic value-adding enterprises or exporting agricultural produce.
- Ilima/Letsema projects grant, which provides production inputs to subsistence and smallholder farmers.
- The 2012 – 2017 food security initiative, Fetsa Tlala, which is aimed at the production of staple foods on fallow land that has the potential for agricultural production.

Some of the animal improvement schemes to be implemented include *Kaonafatso ya Dikgomo*, a programme that assists poor farmers; and the poultry scheme, which assists poor poultry farmers to identify and manage risks associated with poultry diseases by 2018.

## Drought

In addition to the devastating effect of dry weather conditions on field crops as well as animal and horticultural production, South Africa also experienced record-high temperatures in the final quarter of 2015, further scorching arable land.

According to the South African Weather Service, 2015 was the warmest year in recorded history.

The DAFF had reprioritised about R502 million in 2015/16 for drought relief activities, which included procuring water tankers, delivering water, protecting springs, and refurbishing and drilling boreholes.

## Creating jobs

The Agricultural Policy Action Plan, approved by Cabinet in March 2015, is expected to promote the revitalisation of agriculture and agro-processing value chains in priority commodities such as maize, soyabeans, poultry and red meat.

These commodities have been identified in the national development plan as having high growth potential and high labour absorption capacity, hence contributing to creating one million jobs by 2030.

The LandCare Programme aims to promote sustainable land and soil management practices, prevent land degradation and desertification in rural areas and contribute to job creation.

Planned work also includes reducing the spread of invasive alien plants, fencing and protecting agricultural land against degradation, conserving water resources and combating the loss of topsoil.

The Expanded Public Works Programme's Working for Fisheries projects encourage communities to responsibly manage and conserve aquatic environments through, for example, cleaning fishing harbours and conducting harbour patrols.

## Agricultural production by households

Less than one-fifth of South African households (16,9%) were involved in agricultural production activities in 2015, according to the results of the General Household Survey released by Statistics South Africa in June 2016.

Of these, 11,8% cultivated farmland while 91,3% created backyard gardens.

Food production consisted of grains (51,6%), fruit and vegetables (50,8%), livestock farming (34,3%) and poultry (33,7%). Only 12,1% of the households involved in agriculture reported getting agricultural-related support from the government.

Nationally, 2,1% of the households reported receiving training and 6,8% received dipping/livestock vaccination services.

## Role players

### Credit and assistance

The six major sources of credit for farmers are banks (56%), agricultural cooperatives and agribusinesses (9%), the Land and Agricultural Development Bank of South Africa (the Land



Bank) (30%), private creditors (3%), and other creditors and financial institutions (2%).

### **Land and Agricultural Development Bank of South Africa**

The Land Bank is a specialist agricultural bank guided by a government mandate to provide financial services to the commercial farming sector and agribusiness, and makes available financial products to new entrants to agriculture from historically disadvantaged backgrounds. Today, the bank is a true South African development finance institution that serves all farmers equally.

## **Micro-Agricultural Financial Institutions of South Africa**

MAFISA is a scheme that provides production loans to small-holder operators within the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors.

The maximum loan size offered by MAFISA is R500 000 per client with special provision for up to R1 million for special projects.

The loans are solely for use in agriculture, forestry or fisheries enterprises. They are also for purposes of covering production input, small equipment, livestock purchase, harvesting (in the case of fruit, forestry, aquaculture and artisanal fisheries) and agro-processing.

## **AgriBEE Fund**

The AgriBEE Fund was established to provide support to businesses owned by black South Africans to advance the transformation agenda in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors.

The objective of the fund are to promote entry and participation of black people in the entire value chain by providing funding for equity deals, to acquire interest in existing commercially viable and sustainable enterprises and advance enterprise development through agro-processing and value-adding activities.

For the maximum loan of R5 million, applicants are required to contribute 10% to demonstrate their level of commitment. However, the Land Bank and DAFF may approve applications of more than R5 million and applicants will be required to contribute 20%.

## **Agri South Africa (AgriSA)**

AgriSA promotes the development, profitability, stability and sustainability of agriculture in South Africa by means of its involvement and input on national and international policy, and the implementation thereof.

## **Agricultural Business Chamber (ABC)**

The ABC is a voluntary, dynamic and influential association of agribusinesses. Its mission is to negotiate and position for a favourable agribusiness environment where members can perform competitively and profitably.

The ABC is the only organisation that serves the broader and common business interests of agribusinesses in South Africa. The chamber facilitates considerable networking

opportunities so that South African agribusinesses can play an active and creative role within the local and international organised business environment and be closely involved in the legislative and policy environment on many fronts.

### **Transvaal Agricultural Union South Africa (TAU SA)**

TAU SA renders services to its members in terms of property rights, economic issues, and safety and security.

### **National African Farmers' Union of South Africa (NAFU)**

The aim of NAFU is to create a "home" for thousands of black farmers who had previously been excluded from the mainstream of agriculture. It focuses on advocacy and lobbies for access to critical resources such as land, credit, information, extension and other support services.

### **African Farmers' Association of South Africa (AFASA)**

AFASA's aim is to promote competent and successful commercial South African farmers, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of the agricultural sector. Its values are to facilitate the development of African farmers to increase their meaningful participation in the agricultural sector.

### **Agricultural Research Council (ARC)**

The ARC contributes to improved productivity, competitiveness and sustainability for animal and crop production; national biodiversity and the integrity of the ecosystem; and an increased number of smallholder farmers who have access to agriculture technologies and extension services.

## **Forestry**

Forestry contributes a modest 0,7% to the GDP and supports manufacturing subsectors such as sawmilling and paper and pulp production, as well as mining and construction. Of the total land area of 122,3 million ha in South Africa, only (1% or 1,273 million ha) is used for forestry.

The forest products industry ranks among the top exporting industries in the country. Paper and paper board, wood pulp, wood and articles of wood, and charcoal are some of the leading export products.

There are 47 protected tree species in terms of the National Forests Act of 1998, which may not be cut, destroyed, damaged or removed. Neither may the trees or their products be

collected, removed, exported or donated, unless the DAFF has granted a licence. The Act also protects live trees occurring in natural forests.

National Arbor Week, which is celebrated annually in September, serves to promote awareness for the need to plant and maintain indigenous trees throughout South Africa. Every Arbor Week celebration highlights two specific trees – one common and one rare species. The theme for the 2015 Arbor Week Campaign was: “Forests and People: Investing in a sustainable future”.

## Woodlands

The woodlands, also known as savannas, constitute a forest resource of major importance in South Africa. It is the most accessible forest resource for poor communities and contributes in the region of R2 000 to R5 000 to poor households annually. While natural forests cover less than one million ha of land in total, and plantation forestry covers less than 1,3 million ha and the woodlands collectively cover about 29 million ha to 46 million ha.

Several protected tree species of the savanna, such as camel thorn and leadwood, contribute substantially to the lucrative braai wood market, and guidelines have been set for licensing processes to assist with the control of their use.

Kathu Forest in the Northern Cape is the first woodland area to be declared protected woodland under the National Forests Act of 1998.

The woodlands are a valuable source of fuel, building material, craft timber and a variety of non-timber products. These include fruit, fodder, medicinal compounds, honey, meat and mushrooms. They form the backbone of the livelihoods of millions of people.

## Fisheries

The fisheries industry is estimated to provide about 27 000 direct jobs in the industry (16 000 in the primary sector and 11 000 in the secondary and tertiary sectors), while an additional 81 000 people are indirectly employed in industries that are at least partially dependent on the fishing sector.

Fisheries output is determined by catch volumes, which, in turn, depend on the health and management of fish stocks, varying according to ecological changes and subjected to overexploitation through illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities.



The aquaculture (fish farming) sector is considered underdeveloped and as a result has been prioritised due to declining wild stocks.

Government aims to ensure the conservation, protection, rehabilitation and recovery of depleted and degraded natural resources by, among other things, developing recovery plans in prioritised areas of fish stocks such as abalone, west coast rock lobsters and deep water hake by 2018/19.

Inshore species are especially vulnerable to stock depletion, as they are easily accessed, especially illegally. The DAFF seeks to prevent overexploitation by assigning total allowable catch and/or total allowable effort per species, which are adjusted regularly, depending on the estimated state of the resource.

The DAFF has also sought to promote transformation in the sector by including small-scale fishing communities.

## Aquaculture

Aquaculture incorporates the breeding, trading or rearing of aquatic organisms in a controlled or selected aquatic environment for recreational, commercial or subsistence purposes. It is divided into fresh-water culture and mariculture.

South Africa's aquaculture sector has been given a boost through its inclusion in Operation Phakisa (Big Fast Results programme) in 2014, and R40 million of the R125 million budget will fund 24 aquaculture projects over the medium term.

The projects are expected to increase current production of 4 000 tonnes of fish per year to 20 000 tonnes per year over the period, significantly contributing to food production. In addition, 210 000 jobs are expected to be created by 2030.

Species being farmed include dusky kob, abalone, Pacific oysters, Mediterranean mussels and black mussels, among others. Abalone fishing is severely restricted in South African waters, however, poaching is rife, as it is a lucrative trade.

Poaching has caused the decline in abalone numbers over the years. The species is highly coveted and fetches high prices, especially in the Far East.

In South Africa, marine and freshwater aquaculture presents a good opportunity to diversify fish production to satisfy local demand; contribute to food security, job creation, economic development and rural development, and improve export opportunities.