SOUTH AFRICA YEARBOOK 2023/24

Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development

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The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) is mandated to regulate agricultural production while creating opportunities for comprehensive farmer development. The department further fosters the development of agricultural value chains, and monitors the impact of legislation and policies on the performance of the entire sector.

The department's legislative mandate is derived through the following key pieces of legislation, which broadly deal with regulating production development and support services:

- Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 1983 (Act 43 of 1983), which makes provision for control over the use of the country's natural agricultural resources to conserve soil, water sources and vegetation
- Agricultural Product Standards Act, 1990 (Act 119 of 1990, which makes provision for control over the sale and export of certain agricultural products, and the sale of some imported agricultural products
- Provision of Land and Assistance Act, 1993 (Act 126 of 1993, which makes provision for the designation of certain land, the regulation of the subdivision of such land and the settlement of people on it. It also provides for the acquisition, maintenance, planning, development, improvement and disposal of property, and the provision of financial assistance for land reform purposes
- Restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994 (Act 22 of 1994), which makes provision for the restitution of land rights to people or communities dispossessed of such rights after 19 June 1913 because of racially discriminatory laws or practices. To administer this task, the act established a Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights and a Land Claims Court
- Land Reform (Labour Tenants) Act, 1996 (Act 3 of 1996), which makes provision for security of tenure for labour tenants and people occupying or using land as a result of their association with labour tenants. It also makes provision for labour tenants to acquire land and land rights
- Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013 (Act 16 of 2013), which seeks to enable the transformation of South Africa's settlement patterns by adopting an innovative approach to spatial planning and land use management.

Over the medium term, the department will continue to focus on improving agricultural production and revitalising infrastructure, accelerating land reform and finalising land restitution claims, and increasing research and development capacity to improve agricultural outputs.

Transfers and subsidies account for an estimated 47.7 per cent (24.9 billion) of total expenditure over the MTEF period. These include transfers to provinces for conditional grants (the comprehensive agricultural support programme grant, the land care programme grant and the Ilima/Letsema projects grant), transfers to public entities, and land reform and restitution grants.

Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 24.8 per cent (12.9 billion) of total spending, increasing at an average annual rate of 2.1 per cent, from R4.2 billion in 2023/24 to R4.5 billion in 2026/27. Total expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 2.6 per cent, from 16.8 billion in 2023/24 to 18.1 billion in 2026/27.

An amount of R750 million over the medium term is reprioritised from the Administration programme, the Agricultural Production, Biosecurity and Natural Resources Management programme, the Food Security, Land Reform and Restitution programme, and the Rural Development programme to the Presidential Employment Stimulus, which broadly aims to support livelihoods and employment, including in the agricultural sector.

Cabinet has approved reductions to the department's budget amounting to R4.3 billion over the MTEF period.This includes a R1.8 billion reduction in funding for the restitution discretionary grant, and a R387.5 million reduction in transfers to the agricultural land holding account.

As a result, the number of land claims to be settled is expected to decrease from 459 in 2023/24 to 446 in 2026/27, while the number farmers supported through the land development support programme is expected to decrease from 66 in 2023/24 to 27 in 2026/27. To mitigate against the impact of these reductions on the department's performance, it will seek to contain costs on non-essential line items and reprioritise funds where necessary to meet contractual commitments.

Improving agricultural production and revitalising infrastructure

The department continues to work on implementing the agro-processing master plan over the MTEF period. The plan has received buy-in from various constituents across the agricultural value chain, including the South African Grain Farmers Association, the Grain Farmer Development Association, the South African Sugar Association, the South African Pork Producers' Organisation, the South African Poultry Association, the National Emergent Red Meat Producers' Organisation, and the South African Mohair Growers' Association.

The operationalisation of the plan is expected to give rise to an investment-friendly environment for small, medium and micro enterprises, mainly those owned by black women, in agro-processing value chains. In its efforts to improve rural employment, support industrialisation efforts by smallholder farmers and support economic development in rural areas, the department will continue to implement the agri-parks model, which includes creating farmer production support units, agri-hubs, irrigation schemes and other similar socioeconomic infrastructure. In line with the master plan, the model seeks to create capacity in agro-processing and industrialisation value chains for broad-based job creation and market access opportunities.

As part of the agri-parks model, the department plans to coordinate 212 infrastructure projects at an estimated cost of R2 billion over the period ahead. This allocation is in the Rural Infrastructure Development subprogramme in the Rural Development programme.

An estimated R5.3 billion over the medium term is made available through the comprehensive agricultural support programme grant to fund activities aimed at improving agricultural production. The grant is funded through allocations to the Food Security and Agrarian Reform and National Extension Support Services and Sector Capacity Development subprogrammes in the Food Security, Land Reform and Restitution programme.

Accelerating land reform and finalising land restitution claims

Land reform programmes play a critical role in government's response to the triple challenges of inequality, poverty and unemployment. To support farmers and fast-track land reform, the department uses a blended finance model comprising grants and loans.

The department funds the grant component and prospective applicants are expected to source funding for the loan component. To fulfil this responsibility, an amount of R1.3 billion is allocated over the MTEF period in the Food Security and Agrarian Reform subprogramme in the Food Security, Land Reform and Restitution programme.

This programme is also allocated R2.8 billion over the MTEF period in the Agricultural Land Holding Account subprogramme to procure 102 025 ha of strategic land for redistribution. This forms part of the department's efforts to change land ownership patterns in the country through its land acquisition strategy.

The department also plans to settle 1 234 land claims at a projected cost of R11 billion over the MTEF period. These funds are made available in the Restitution subprogramme in the Food Security, Land Reform and Restitution programme.

Increasing research and development capacity to improve agricultural outputs

Over the period ahead, the department plans to enhance capacity in research and development to improve market access and the safety and quality of agricultural products. This entails streamlining the policy and legislative framework in an effort to improve sanitary and phytosanitary activities related to biosecurity and associated animal diseases, plants pests and disease surveillance.

These activities are, in turn, expected to improve market access through export certification and thereby foster agricultural economic growth. For this, R1 billion is allocated over the MTEF period in the Inspection and Quarantine Services subprogramme, Plant Production and Health subprogramme and Animal Production and Health subprogramme, all of which are in the Agricultural Production, Biosecurity and Natural Resources Management programme.

Agriculture's role in creating employment

According to the Quarterly Employment Statistics (QES, Q2:2024) survey released by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA), total employment in the formal non-agricultural sector increased by 42 000 in the second quarter of 2024, bringing the level of employment to 10,7 million.

According to the survey 144 000 jobs were lost between June 2023 and June 2024. The total number of employees grew by 42,000 (0,4%), with employment rising from 10,67 million in March 2024 to 10,72 million by June 2024.

Volume of agricultural production

The agricultural production in South Africa is valued at R408 463 million for the period ended June 2023, compared to R387 275 million in the previous corresponding period, which is an increase of 5,5%. The nominal growth in primary agriculture increased by 8,9% per annum since 2010, while the entire South Africa's economy increased by 6,3% over the same period, resulting in an increase of agriculture's share to the GDP from 2,0% in 2010 to 2,7% in 2022.

Despite its relatively small share of the total GDP, primary agriculture is an important sector in the South African economy. Agriculture remains a significant provider of employment, especially in the rural areas and a major earner of foreign exchange. Gross farming income from all agricultural products increased by 17,3% to R445 450 million for the period ended 30 June 2023, as compared to R379 864 million in the previous period, mainly due to the increase in income from field crops, animal and horticultural products by 39,0%, 9,4% and 8,8%, respectively.

The average prices received by the farmers for their agricultural products increased by 10,7%. This was the result of the increase in prices of field crops by 15,6% and animal and horticultural products by 9,2% each. The increase of 15,6% in average price of field crops was the result of the increase in prices of summer grains by 21,9%, winter grains (17,9%), dry beans (14,5%), sugar cane (11,3%) and cotton (2,5%). The decrease in the price of oilseeds decreased by 13,1%.

The increase of 9,2% in average price of animal products was driven by the increase in the prices of poultry meat by 16,0%; dairy products by 15,1% and slaughtered stock by 2,5%. The price of pastoral products decreased by 8,9%. The weighted average price of horticultural products increased by 9,2% as a result of the increase in prices of vegetables by 19,2%, viticulture (4,5%), and fruit (2,7%). The prices paid for farming requisites, including machinery and implements, material for fixed improvements as well as intermediate goods and services, increased by 7,9% for the period ended June 2023. The reason was mainly the result of the increase in prices of feeds by 18,5%, fuel (10,9%), building material (8,3%), animal health and crop protection (8,2%), fencing material (7,8%), trucks (7,4%), irrigation equipment (7,3%), seeds (6,9%), maintenance and repairs of machinery and implements (6,4%), packaging material (4,7%), tractors (4,5%) and fertilisers (1,9%).

The domestic terms of trade increased by 3,0% from 1,00 to 1,03 due to improved prices received by the farmers for the products. The net farming income increased substantially by 33,8% to R122 732 million for the period ended June 2023, from R91 752 million in the previous corresponding period. The estimated volume of agricultural production in 2022/23 was 2,0% more than in 2021/22.

The field crop production volume for 2022/23 increased by 5,0%, mainly as a result of increases in the production of summer crops (maize) and oilseed crops (soya beans and groundnuts), as well as other food crops (sugar cane) and hay. Maize production increased by 881 000 tons (5,5%), soya beans by 525 300 tons (23,6%) and groundnuts by 3 756 tons (7,0%) from 2021/22.

Sugar cane production increased by 712 230 tons (4,1%) as compared to the previous season. Furthermore, the production of hay (lucerne, teff and other hay) also increased by 327 000 tons (6,0%) as compared to 2021/22. Horticultural production for 2022/23 increased by 2,8% from the previous season, which can mainly be attributed to increases in the production of citrus and subtropical fruit.

The production of oranges increased by 172 820 tons (10,7%), lemons by 122 808 tons (18,7%) and grapefruit by 71 073 tons (20,2%), which all led to an increase in the production of citrus fruit from the previous season. Furthermore, increases in the production of bananas by 137 777 tons (34,6%) and avocados by 26 450 tons (30,3%) contributed to an increase in the production of subtropical fruit as compared to the previous season.

Animal production decreased by 0,6%, mainly as a result of decreases in the production of eggs, pastoral animal products (wool) and the production of stocks slaughtered for 2022/23. The production of eggs decreased by 2 534 tons (0,4%) and the production of wool decreased by 5 166 tons (20,2%) as compared to 2021/22. Furthermore, the production of stock slaughtered for cattle and calves decreased by 11 541 tons (1,4%), as well as sheep and lambs by 5 479 tons (5,5%) as compared to 2021/22.

Producer prices of agricultural products

The average prices received by the farmers for their agricultural products increased by 10,7%. This was the result of the increase in prices of field crops by 15,6% and animal and horticultural products by 9,2% each. The increase of 15,6% in average price of field crops was the result of the increase in prices of summer grains by 21,9%, winter grains (17,9%), dry beans (14,5%), sugar cane (11,3%) and cotton (2,5%). The price of oilseeds decreased by 13,1%.

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Gross value of agricultural production

The total gross value of agricultural production (total production during the production season valued at the average basic prices received by producers) for 2022/23 is estimated at R426 440 million, compared to R404 062 million the previous year; an increase of 5,5%.

This increase can mainly be attributed to an increase in the value of animal products and horticulture.The gross value of animal products, field crops and horticultural products contributed 42,8%, 29,3% and 27,9%, respectively, to the total gross value of agricultural production. The poultry meat industry and maize made the largest contribution with 14,7% and 14,0%, respectively followed by cattle and calves slaughtered with 11,2%.

Farming income

The gross income of producers (the value of sales and production for other uses, plus the value of changes in inventories) increased by 17,3% to R445 450 million for the year ended 30 June 2023, compared to R379 864 million the previous year. This was influenced by the increase in income from field crops, animal and horticultural products by 39,0%, 9,4% and 8,8%, respectively.

The gross income from field crops increased significantly by 39,0% to R143 455 million for the year ended June 2023, compared to R103 208 million of the previous period. This was mainly due to the increase in income from maize (105,8%), sugar cane (65,4%), canola (26,6%), groundnuts (21,2%), soya beans (10,4%) and wheat (10,2%). Income from dry beans and sunflower seed decreased substantially by 84,4% and 16,6%, respectively.

The gross income from horticultural products increased by 8,8% to R119 432 million for the year ended June 2023, compared to R109 820 million the previous period. This can be attributed to the increase in income from vegetables by 15,9%, subtropical fruits by 14,3%, deciduous and other fruits by 5,0% and citrus fruit by 5,5%. The income derived from viticulture decreased slightly by 2,3%.

The gross income from animal products increased by 9,4% and amounted to R182 563 million for the year ended June 2023, compared to R166 836 million the previous period. This was due to the increase in income from milk by R3 798 million (17,2%), poultry meat by R8 697 million (16,1%), eggs by R1 540 million (13,4%), pigs slaughtered by R898 million (9,5%), cattle and calves slaughtered by R1 331 million

(2,9%). The income derived from sheep slaughtered decreased by R305 million (3,4%).

The net farm income (after the deduction of all production expenditure, excluding expenditure on fixed assets and capital goods) increased significantly by 33,8% and amounted to R122 732 million for the period ended on 30 June 2023.

Payments for salaries and wages, which represented 16,0% of the total farming costs, amounted to R52 850 million. Interest paid by farmers to banks and other financiers during the 12 months up to 30 June 2023 is estimated at R14 763 million, or 4,0% of the total farming costs.

Expenditure on intermediate goods and services

Intermediate expenditure refers to the value of goods and services that were purchased for consumption as inputs during the production process. Expenditure on intermediate goods and services increased by 13,5% to R248 726 million.

This was due to the increases in expenditure on fertilisers by 22,0%, farm feeds by 20,0%, seed and plants and building and fencing material by 10,0% each, animal health and crop protection by 8,8%, maintenance and repairs of machinery and implements by 8,0%, packing material by 7,8%, fuel by 7,0% and farm services by 6,0%.

Farm feeds was the largest expenditure item and accounted for 38,8% of the total expenditure, followed by fertilisers (11,6%), farm services (9,6%), fuel (8,1%), maintenance and repairs of machinery and implements (6,5%), seed and plants (6,4%), animal health and crop protection and building and fencing material (3,9%) each and packing material (3,8%).

Prices of farming requisites

The prices paid for farming requisites, including machinery and implements, material for fixed improvements as well as intermediate goods and services increased by 7,9% for the period ended June 2023.

This was mainly caused by the increase in prices of feeds (18,5%), fuel (10,9%), building material (8,3%), animal health and crop protection (8,2%), fencing material (7,8%), trucks (7,4%), seeds (6,9%), maintenance and repairs of machinery and implements (6,4%), packaging material (4,7%), tractors (4,5%) and fertilisers (1,9%).

The combined price index of materials for fixed improvements increased by 8,2%, intermediate goods and services increased by 7,9% and machinery and implements by 7,0%.

Domestic terms of trade in agriculture (2015 = 1)

The terms of trade indicate the extent to which producer prices received by farmers kept pace with the prices paid for farming requisites. The domestic terms of trade increased by 3,0% from 1,00 to 1,03 as a result of improved prices that were received by farmers for their products. The terms of trade for field crops increased by 8,0 (from 1.03 to 1,11) and horticultural and animal products by 1,0% each from 0,94 to 0,95 and 1,03 to 1,04, respectively.

Contribution of agriculture to value added at basic prices

Value added is the value of total output less the value of intermediate consumption during the production period. The contribution of agriculture to value added for the year ended 31 December 2022 is estimated at R159 465 million, which presents 2,7% of the total value added to the economy, the highest since 2002.

Capital assets and investment in agriculture

The value of capital assets in agriculture showed an increase of R53 250 million (8,7%) to R662 336 million for the period ended June 2023, compared to R609 087 million the previous corresponding period. The proportion of land and fixed improvements to the total value of capital assets was R407 603 (61,5%), livestock (R137 623 million or 20,8%) and machinery and implements (R117 111 million or 17,7%).

The gross investment in machinery, implements and vehicles increased by 19,2% (R19 336 million) for the period ended June 2023. Implements increased by 20,6% (R17 205) and transport vehicles by 8,9% (R2 131). Fixed improvements increased by 5,8% (9 967). The livestock inventory was estimated at 22,0% (R101 million) more than in the previous period.

Farming debt

The total farming debt has increased by 6,1% and is estimated at R200 931 million for the year ended June 2023, compared to R189 331 million at the end of June 2023.

Cash flow of farmers

The farmers' cash flow also increased significantly by 34,3% to R119 737 million for the period ended June 2023, from R89 187 million in the previous corresponding period due to better prices received by farmers for their products.

Consumer prices

The consumer prices of all agricultural products showed a slight increase of 0,8% for the period ended June 2023. The consumer prices of milk, eggs and cheese increased by 6,7%, non-food (6,4%), grain products (4,6%), food (2,0%) and meat (1,2%). The consumer prices of fats and oils increased by 17,4%, coffee and tea (11,8%), fish (10,5%), sugar (10,2%) and fruit (1,3%).

Products

Crop estimates

According to the sixth production forecast for summer crops by the Crop Estimates Committee (CEC) for the 2023 production season, the expected South African maize crop was 16,354 million tons, which was 5,7% more than the 15,470 million tons of the 2022 season and 15,4% or 2,180 million tons more than the five-year average of 14,174 million tons up to 2022.

The estimated area that South African commercial producers planted to maize during the 2023 season was 2,586 million ha. This was 1,4% or 36 900 ha less than the 2,623 million ha planted in the previous season. Of this area, 1,181 million ha (45,7%) were in the Free State, 556 000 ha (21,5%) in the North West and 508 500 ha (19,7%) in Mpumalanga.

The plantings of maize in the Free State decreased by an estimated 3,6%, from 1,224 million ha in 2022 to 1,181 million ha in 2023 and in the North West, it increased by 2,2%, from 544 000 ha to 556 000 ha. Plantings in Mpumalanga decreased by an estimated 1,3%, from 515 000 ha in 2022 to 508 500 ha in 2023. The ratio of white to yellow maize plantings for 2023 is 59:41, as against 60:40 the previous season.

The estimated white maize plantings were 1,521 million ha, which were 3,4% less than the previous season's 1,575 million ha, while the yellow maize plantings were estimated to be 1,065 million ha—1,6% more than the 1,048 million ha for 2022. Most of the country's maize crop was produced in the Free State (44,2%), Mpumalanga (21,8%) and the North West (16,9%).

The production forecast for white maize was 8,638 million tons, which was 10,0% or 787 950 tons more than the 7,850 million tons of 2022 and 1,221 million tons more than the average of the five years up to 2022. The expected yield for white maize was 5,68 t/ha, as against 4,98 t/ha the previous season. In the case of yellow maize, the production forecast was 7,716 million tons, which was 1,3% or 96 150 tons more than the 7,620 million tons of the previous season and 958 650 tons more than the five-year average up to 2022. The yield for yellow maize was expected to be 7,25 t/ha, as against 7,27 t/ha in 2022.

The expected sunflower seed crop was 758 610 tons, which was 10,3% less than the 845 550 tons of the previous season and 1,5% less than the average of 770 410 tons for the five years up to 2022. The area planted to sunflower seed was estimated at 555 700 ha, which was 17,2% less than the 670 700 ha planted in 2022. The expected yield was 1,37 t/ha, as against 1,26 t/ha the previous season. The production forecast for soya beans was 2,755 million tons, which was 23,6% more than the 2,230 million tons of the previous season.

The estimated area planted was 1,148 million ha, which was 24,1% or 223 000 ha more than the 925 300 ha planted in 2022. The expected yield was 2,40 t/ha, as against 2,41 t/ha in 2022. The expected groundnut crop was 51 910 tons, which was 7,0% or 3 410 tons more than the 48 500 tons of the 2022 season and 4 054 tons less than the five-year average of 47 856 tons per annum up to 2022. The area planted to groundnuts was an estimated 31 300 ha, which was 27,9%

or 12 100 ha less than the 43 400 ha planted the previous season. The expected yield was 1,66 t/ha, as against 1,12 t/ ha in 2022.

The production forecast for sorghum was 100 525 tons—2,5% less than the 103 140 tons of the previous season. The area planted to sorghum was estimated to be 34 000 ha, which was 8,6% or 3 200 ha less than the 37 200 ha planted in 2022. The expected yield was 2,96 t/ha, as against 2,77 t/ha the previous season.

The production of dry beans was expected to be 48 560 tons, which was 7,7% or 4 030 tons less than the 52 590 tons of the previous season and 13 595 tons less than the five-year average of 62 155 tons per annum up to 2022. The estimated area planted was 36 650 ha, which was 14,6% less than the 42 900 ha planted the previous season. The expected yield was 1,32 t/ha, as against 1,23 t/ha for 2022.

Grains

South Africa will continue to export agricultural commodities and products, including grains, which are crucial for generating foreign exchange.

Maize

Maize is the most important grain crop in South Africa, being both the major feed grain and the staple food of the majority of the country's population. The maize sector comprises both commercial and non-commercial farmers; the latter mostly in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and northern KwaZulu-Natal.

Sorghum

Sorghum is an indigenous crop in Africa, and is regarded as the fifth most important cereal in the world. There are two types of sorghum, namely bitter and sweet sorghum cultivars. Preference is given to the sweet cultivars. Bitter sorghum is planted in areas where birds are a problem because it contains tannin, which gives a bitter taste and consequently birds tend to avoid feeding on it.

Sorghum for commercial purposes is mainly produced in the western Free State, Mpumalanga, the drier parts of the North West and Limpopo provinces. Sorghum, like other grains, has two basic markets that it serves – the human component and the animal feed component. It is consumed mainly in the human food market and, as in the case of maize, consumers tend to replace sorghum-based products with preferred products as the household income increases.

Wheat

In terms of value of production, wheat is the fourth most important field crop produced in South Africa and plays an important role in national food security. Most of the wheat produced in the country is bread wheat. Small quantities of durum wheat, used to make pasta, is produced in certain areas. In South Africa, wheat is mainly used for human consumption (including bread, biscuits, breakfast cereals and rusks) and the remaining as seed and animal feed.

Other non-food uses include the reduction of alcohol for ethanol, absorbing agents for disposable diapers, adhesives and industrial uses, such as starch on coatings. Wheat is mainly planted between mid-April and mid-June, in the winter rainfall area, and between mid-May and the end of July, in the summer rainfall area.

The crop is harvested from November to January. Wheat is generally classed as hard or soft. Hard wheat tends to have higher protein content than softer wheat and is used mainly for bread. Soft wheat, on the other hand, is more suitable for confectionery.

Barley

Barley is one of the most important grain crops in South Africa, surpassed only by wheat and maize, and is following wheat, the most important small grain type. The cultivation area for malting barley under dryland conditions is at present restricted to a very specific region, namely the southern Cape, which stretches from Bot River in the west to Heidelberg in the east.

It would not be economically viable to cultivate malting barley on dryland in an area that does not receive 350 millimetres of well-distributed rainfall during the growing season (April to October). Currently, five varieties are recommended for malting barley production in the Southern Cape, viz., SabbiErica, SabbiNemesia, Disa, Agulhas and Hessekwa.

The concentration of the production of a relatively minor commodity, for instance malting barley, in a specific area, has various advantages, for example, it facilitates transport, storage, control, extension and research, which also implies cost advantages.

However, because of the risk of unpredictable weather conditions in the southern Cape, barley production has also been introduced to the cooler central irrigation areas in the Northern Cape. There are also farmers in other areas of South Africa, such as North West, Limpopo and the Free State, who plant small quantities of malting barley under irrigation.

Malting barley under irrigation has a higher yield and is more stable than in the southern Cape, where the crop is dependent on rainfall. Barley is mainly used for the production of malt (for brewing beer), animal feed and pearl barley.

Dry beans

Dry beans are warm-season annual legumes. Gross returns from dry beans can easily be higher than for soya beans. While yields are typically lower, dry beans fetch a relatively higher price. South Africa has a dry bean deficit and relies on imports. This provides an opportunity for the whole of southern Africa to increase production. The crop is mainly produced in the Free State, KwaZulu- Natal, Limpopo, North West and the Northern Cape. Producers sell directly to the trade or to wholesalers and cooperatives.

Oilseeds

Groundnuts

The normal planting time for groundnuts is mid-October to mid-November. Groundnuts are a high value crop produced mainly in the north-western regions of South Africa, particularly the western and north-western parts of the Free State, in North West and in the Northern Cape.

Groundnuts are also produced in Limpopo, KwaZulu- Natal and Mpumalanga, but to a lesser extent. Oil made from groundnuts can be used for cooking and to make peanut butter. It can also be used to manufacture soap, massage oil, and shaving and hair creams. In South Africa, groundnuts are mainly consumed in two forms – as edible nuts and processed peanut butter.

Sunflower seeds

Sunflower seeds can be planted from the beginning of November to the end of December in the eastern parts of the production areas, and up to the middle of January in the western parts. Sunflowers grow best when planted in midsummer, to ensure that less moisture is lost from the soil during the crucial growing phases.

The Free State and North West are the major producers of sunflower seeds, followed by Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Gauteng. The seed is used for the manufacturing of sunflower oil and oilcake. The oil is marketed in the form of refined oil for domestic and industrial cooking and baking purposes and is also processed into margarine and other consumer products.

Compared to other crops, sunflower performs well under dry conditions. This is probably the main reason for the crop's popularity in marginal production areas in South Africa. A close link exists between the area planted to maize and the area planted to sunflower seed because farmers can easily switch to sunflower if the normal period for maize planting has passed.

Major exporters of sunflower seeds to South Africa are Romania, Botswana, Bulgaria and Argentina. Importing from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries uses the SADC Free Trade Agreement, which facilitates the flow of commodities among countries in the region at no tariff charges. The sale of sunflower seeds is mostly to the domestic market, with very small quantities destined for the export market. Mostly, South Africa remains a net importer of sunflower seeds.

Soya beans

Soya beans are produced mainly in Mpumalanga, the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal. Small quantities are also produced in Limpopo, Gauteng and North West. Various soya bean cultivars have adapted quite well to South African conditions. Depending on prevailing local conditions, soya beans are usually planted in November and December. In South Africa, soya beans are mainly used for animal feed.

The local demand for soya bean meal, as the preferred source of protein for animal feed, has increased in correlation with the increase in poultry production in South Africa and more than doubled over the past decade. From being one of the most dynamic sectors in the South African agriculture sector over the past decade, the soya bean industry is now maturing and further expansion is expected to occur at a much slower rate.

Total soya bean processing capacity in South Africa (crush and full fat) is derived from a combination of dedicated soya bean processing facilities, as well as plants with the ability to switch between soya beans and sunflower seeds.

Canola

Almost the entire canola crop in South Africa is produced in the Western Cape. Over time, farmers in areas such as the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and North West also started to plant small quantities of canola. Canola competes on the local market with other oilseeds, such as sunflower seeds and soya beans.

Local and international investors in the oilseed crushing sector are boosting South Africa's capacity to process oilseed crops, such as soya beans, canola and sunflower seeds. This forms part of efforts to meet growing domestic demand for proteins and to be less dependent on imports of these crops.

Canola is primarily used for the manufacturing of canola oil and oilcake. It is the healthiest commodity oil available to consumers, the food service industry and food processors. Canola meal is used as an animal feed for dairy cows, pigs and poultry. Its unique characteristics are especially valuable in the dairy industry, where it has been shown that by including 20% canola meal in a feed ration improves milk production by one litre per cow per day.

Cotton

In South Africa, cotton is grown in the warm regions of Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West and KwaZulu-Natal, where minimum night temperatures are at least 15 °C during the growing season. The cotton industry is labour-intensive and provides work for roughly one worker per hectare of cotton planted.

Oil extracted from cotton seed can be used for cooking and salad dressings. Extracted seed can also be used as a fertiliser or as feed for livestock, poultry and fish. As part of the cotton industry's objective to broaden participation by emerging farmers, a training programme has been established by Cotton South Africa and other stakeholders, including the private sector and government. Lack of knowledge and expertise among smallholder cotton farmers are among major constraints that impede success in the emerging cotton farming sector.

Tobacco

Tobacco is tropical in origin, but is grown successfully under tropical, subtropical and temperate climates. Normally, it requires about 100 to 120 days, in a frost-free climate, with an average temperature of 20 °C to 30 °C between transplanting and harvesting.

In South Africa, tobacco is grown in five provinces – Limpopo (Lephalale, Mokopane, Mookgophong and Sterkrivier); North West (Brits, Groot Marico and Rustenburg); Mpumalanga (Loskop, Groblersdal and the Lowveld: Mbombela and Barberton); the Eastern Cape (Gamtoos Valley); and the Western Cape (Oudtshoorn).

The areas are classified according to the production of different types of tobacco. Flue-cured tobacco is produced mainly in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West, while air-cured tobacco is produced in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Limpopo and North West.

Sugar

Sugar cane is a ratoon crop, which means that after cropping, new shoots emerge from the roots. It yields up to 10 crops from the original rootstock, after which it is uprooted and the field is replanted. This is done on a rotational basis, with approximately 10% of the area under cane being replanted each season. Planting usually coincides with the first spring rains.

South Africa produces cost-competitive, high-quality sugar. The sugar sector is a diverse industry, combining the agricultural activities of sugar cane cultivation with the industrial factory production of raw and refined sugar, syrups and specialised sugars, as well as a range of by-products. The R14-billion South African sugar industry is cost-competitive, consistently ranking in the top 15 out of approximately 120 sugar producing countries worldwide.

The industry makes a positive difference to the lives of more than one million people and is a catalyst for economic growth and development. Sugar cane is a strategic crop for Kwazulu-Natal and Mpumalanga, where sugarcane production is located, comprising nearly 50% of field crop gross farming income across the two provinces.

Sugar cane is grown by registered growers, farming predominantly in KwaZulu-Natal, with substantial operations in Mpumalanga, and some sugar cane production in the Eastern Cape. Government and stakeholders in the sugar industry have signed the Sugar Industry Master Plan, which seeks to take urgent action to protect thousands of jobs, rural livelihoods and businesses.

The plan also aims to create a bold new ambition for the future, which seeks to create diversified revenue streams for sugar producers and create new job opportunities.

As part of the master plan, industrial users and retailers agreed to a minimum offtake of sugar for a period of three years; with at least 80% of sugar consumption to come from South African farms and millers during the first year, increasing to 95% by 2023. During this period, the sugar industry has agreed to price restraint, and to begin a process of managed restructuring for the industry to help diversify revenue sources.

Deciduous fruit

The deciduous fruit industry in South Africa, including fresh, dried and canned fruit for local consumption and export, is a multimillion-rand industry. The exporting of deciduous fruit is a major earner of foreign exchange for South Africa. Deciduous fruits grown in South Africa include apples, pears, apricots, nectarines, peaches, plums, grapes, olives, figs and cherries.

Although some producers grow fruit both for processing (canning, juice and drying) as well as fresh consumption, it is estimated that in South Africa there are about 1 152 producers of fruit for fresh consumption, 1 066 producers of dry and table grapes, 887 producers of stone fruit and 624 producers of pome fruit. The main deciduous fruit producing areas in South Africa are situated in the Western Cape and Eastern Cape, mostly in areas where warm, dry summers and cold winters prevail.

Dried fruit

Dried fruit is produced mainly in the western and southern parts of the Western Cape and the Lower and Upper Orange River areas in the Northern Cape. Tree fruit, as opposed to vine fruit, is dried mainly in the Western Cape. The most important dried fruit products in terms of volume are Thompson seedless raisins, golden sultanas, unbleached sultanas, currants, peaches, pears, apricots and prunes.

Apricots are grown mainly in the Little Karoo and prunes are produced almost exclusively in the Tulbagh District in the Western Cape. Most raisins are produced in the area along the Lower Orange River and currants are mainly from the Vredendal District in the Western Cape.

Honeybush and rooibos tea

Honeybush production is a young, growing industry that is unique to South Africa. Honeybush is part of the fynbos that grows wild in the Western Cape and is not produced anywhere else in the world. The plant grows naturally on the wetter and cooler southern slopes of mountains. Some species are mostly harvested in the wild, while others are cultivated commercially.

The cultivated tea comes from a few farmers who have established successful honeybush plantations, as well as a handful of community-based projects. Rooibos tea is exclusively farmed in the Cederberg and Sandveld areas of the Western Cape.

On average, South Africa produces about 15 000 t of rooibos tea a year. According to the South African Rooibos Council, out of the 15 000 t of rooibos tea produced a year, 50% of it is consumed in South Africa.

Wine

South Africa is the eighth-largest wine producer in the world, with a contribution of 4.0% to the world's wine production. The wine industry is labour intensive and provides employment to approximately 300 000 people directly and indirectly. The number of primary wine grape producers in South Africa is estimated at more than 3 000.

Wine is produced mainly in the Western Cape and along parts of the Orange River in the Northern Cape.The traditional wine-growing areas along the coastal zone benefit from its cooling breezes that moderate the summer temperatures. The Cape mountain ranges from a backdrop to what is internationally recognised as one of the most beautiful wine-producing areas of the world.

The vineyards lie in valleys and mountain foothills in some areas, and in flatter plains in others. One of the potential competitive advantages of the Cape winelands is a great variety of soils. Nietvoorbij, the internationally acclaimed research farm of the ARC, is synonymous with quality research in oenology and viticulture.

Annually, 1 000 different wines (10 – 20 l) are made for research purposes in the modern experimental cellar. Next door, in the old, thatched roof cellar, traditional and modern winemaking methods are combined to create unique wines for enjoyment.

Citrus and subtropical fruit

Citrus is one of South Africa's most important subsectors in the agricultural sector. It provides a significant contribution to job creation and economic activity in South Africa's rural communities. Government is committed to working with the industry and other stakeholders to expand market access to destinations such as the United States of America, China and India, and the EU and other countries that already enjoy South African citrus.

The growth projections for soft citrus, lemons and Valencia oranges alone indicate an expected additional R6.8 billion in foreign exchange earnings and the creation of 22 250 sustainable jobs over the next three years. Citrus fruit is grown in Limpopo, the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, in areas where subtropical conditions (warm to hot summers and mild winters) prevail.

The area under citrus production is estimated at 81 638 ha. The Western Cape and Eastern Cape are considered cooler citrus growing areas and production is focused on Navel oranges and lemons. The cooler climate enables farmers to respond to consumer demand for easy peelers like clementines and satsumas.

Farm sizes are also smaller and most citrus in the Western and Eastern Cape is packed by privatised cooperatives in facilities that are amongst the largest in the world. In Mpumalanga, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal, the climate is warmer and better suited to the cultivation of grapefruit and Valencia oranges. Farms in these regions are larger and many farmers pack in smaller privately-owned facilities.

Pineapples are grown mainly in the Eastern Cape and northern KwaZulu-Natal. Subtropical crops, such as avocados, mangoes, bananas, litchis, guavas, papayas, granadillas and macadamia and pecan nuts, are produced mainly in Mpumalanga and Limpopo, as well as in the subtropical coastal areas of KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape.

The largest contributors to the sales of subtropical fruit on the major fresh produce markets are bananas, pineapples and avocados, followed by mangoes and papayas. The cultivation of some types of subtropical fruit is only possible in specific areas of the country because of particular climatic requirements.

In general, subtropical fruit types need warmer conditions and are sensitive to large temperature fluctuations and frost. Fruit types such as granadillas and guavas are also grown in the Western Cape, while pineapples are cultivated in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

Vegetables (excluding potatoes)

Vegetables are produced in most parts of the country. However, in certain areas farmers tend to concentrate on specific crops, such as green beans that are grown mainly in Kaapmuiden, Marble Hall and Tzaneen; green peas, grown in George and Vaalharts; and asparagus, grown mainly in Krugersdorp and Ficksburg.

Tomatoes are produced countrywide, but on the largest scale in Limpopo, the Mpumalanga Lowveld and Middleveld, the Pongola area of KwaZulu-Natal, the southern parts of the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. In Limpopo, South Africa's main tomato-growing area, most of the crops are found in Letaba, Mooketsi and Musina.

Onions are grown mainly in Mpumalanga, certain areas of the Western Cape and the southern Free State and in all areas of Limpopo, with the main production areas being Polokwane and Mokopane. Cabbages are grown countrywide, but the largest crops are in Mpumalanga and the Camperdown and Greytown districts of KwaZulu-Natal.

Potatoes

There are 16 distinct potato-production regions in South Africa, which are spread throughout the country. The main regions are situated in the Free State, Western Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. Potatoes are planted at different times because of climate differences in the production areas, resulting in fresh potatoes being available throughout the year. In the early 1990s, there was a major shift in production from dryland to irrigation and, currently, almost 80% of plantings are under irrigation.

Livestock

Extensive livestock farming is vast in the country, appropriating four-fifths of the agricultural land in South Africa. However, livestock is also found in areas where there is a combination with other farming enterprises. Below normal rainfall over recent years has meant that the area involved in cattle, sheep and goat farming, which is approximately 590 000 square kilometres, has been negatively affected. Representing 53% of all agricultural land in the country, this badly affected grazing area has not recovered in the past year as near normal to normal rainfall has not been recorded in most provinces. Livestock conditions recorded were reasonable to good in most provinces over the same period.

Commercial sheep farming also takes place in other areas, such as Kgalagadi, the winter rainfall area and the grasslands of Mpumalanga, as well as the eastern Free State and KwaZulu-Natal, with challenges of wild animals and stock theft threatening the successful farming thereof.

Foot-and-Mouth disease is still prevalent in some parts of KwaZulu-Natal, as of October 2021, with movement restrictions in place for identified locations. As such, practices for biosecurity are encouraged in order to curb further spread of the disease. Other diseases that continue to affect the industry are African Swine Fever and Brucellosis.

Cattle

Cattle are found throughout the country, but mainly in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, the Free State and North West. Herd sizes vary according to type of cattle, ranging between less than 50 and 300 for dairy cattle, while beef cattle herds range from fairly small (less than 20 head of cattle) to large farms and feedlots (more than 4 000).

Some farms in North West and Gauteng have been found to have some of the largest cattle herds in in the country. The production of weaners for the feedlot industry is the main form of cattle farming – feedlots account for approximately 75% of all beef produced in the country. Cattle in South Africa comprises various international dairy and beef cattle breeds, in addition to indigenous breeds such as the Afrikaner and the Nguni.

Beef cattle contribute approximately 80% to the total number of cattle in the country, while dairy cattle make up the remaining 20%. Holstein-Friesian, Jersey, Guernsey and Ayrshire are the four major dairy breeds found in South Africa. Although milk is produced in all the areas of South Africa, the coastal areas are the most suitable because of their mild temperatures and good rainfall conditions, which lead to improvements in animals and pasture conditions.

The industry comprises various economic activities, with significant differences in farming methods, and the processing of dairy products, including the production and marketing of raw milk, pasteurised milk and cream, fermented milk, long-life milk and cream, yoghurt, and cheese and its by-products.

Sheep

Although sheep farms are found in all provinces, these are concentrated in the more arid parts of the country. Flock sizes vary between less than 50 and 1 800 animals. Sheep flocks in the Eastern, Western and Northern Cape provinces tend to be much larger than those in other provinces. The animals are kept mainly for wool and mutton production and the industry is therefore represented by organisations from the mutton and the wool industry.

The sheep breed with the highest wool production per head is the South African Merino, followed by other dual-purpose Merino breeds, such as the Dohne Merino, South African Mutton Merino, Afrino and Letelle breeds. Dual-purpose breeds are bred with the specific aim of maximising wool and mutton produce. Limited numbers of indigenous fat-tailed and Karakul sheep are still found in the more arid areas.

Goats
Goats are found mainly in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and North West. The indigenous meat-producing Boer goat accounts for about 40% of all goats in South Africa. Herds of goats intended for meat production are usually smaller than sheep flocks, averaging approximately 300 goats per farm.

Angora goats are kept primarily for mohair production, while Boer goats are mainly for meat production. According to the SA Milch Goat Breeders' Society, there are also farmers who have adopted a market differentiating strategy by producing goat milk and these are increasing in numbers.

Through selective breeding and farming techniques, the Angora goat farmer plays a crucial role in promoting the constant availability of quality natural fibres. Most of the world mohair production is imported to South Africa for further processing, after which it is exported together with locally (including Lesotho) produced mohair. China remains the leader in mohair imports from South Africa, followed by Italy and Taiwan.

Pigs
The South African pork industry is small in terms of the overall South African agricultural sector. It contributes 2.2% to the primary agricultural sector. Pigs are found predominantly in Limpopo, North West, Gauteng and the Western Cape. There are approximately 400 commercial pork producers and 19 stud breeders in South Africa.

The gross value of pork production is dependent on the quantity produced and the price farmers receive. The trend in gross value follows a pattern of prices, because the industry is characterised by volatile prices. Pork is produced throughout South Africa, with Gauteng and Western Cape being the largest producers, contributing to 40% and 21%, respectively, to total production.

There are about 132 commercial, four stud and about 400 smallholder pig farmers. They own about 120 000 sows (100 000 commercial and 10 000 smallholder sows) and employ about 3 005 workers, comprising about 2 200 farm workers and 805 workers in the abattoir sectors.

The 145 registered pig abattoirs use modern technology to ensure a streamlined slaughtering process. The total number of employees in the formal pork production industry in South Africa is estimated to be approximately 10 000, comprising about 4 000 farm workers and 6 000 workers in the processing and abattoir sectors.

Poultry farming
The poultry industry consists of the day-old chick, broiler and egg supply. The broiler industry continues to dominate the agricultural sector in South Africa as the main supplier of animal protein.

Poultry Master Plan
To address threats to the local production of poultry, government, together with a number of stakeholders in the industry, including poultry producers, farmers, processors, exporters, importers and organised labour, developed the Poultry Master Plan.

The plan provides a framework for a determined effort to grow jobs in the industry through a number of measures that will be implemented over a number of years. Signed during the second South African Investment Conference in November 2019, the plan is also expected to ensure that locally produced products make up an increasingly larger proportion of consumption over time.

Information for international travellers
Pests and invasive species are not only introduced through formal trade, but are also brought into South Africa by tourists. Once a pest has entered South Africa, climate change may influence its establishment and spread, as well as the damage it causes. When travelling to South Africa, tourists should make sure that they do not bring in prohibited agricultural products.

These products may harbour pests that occur in other countries and their introduction may endanger South Africa's competitiveness in trade and agricultural productivity. Animals and animal products such as meat and dairy products, plants and plant products, honey and honey products as well as other regulated goods, are all potentially high-risk materials.

These materials may only be imported into South Africa by means of an import permit, unless exempted, and must be declared with the DALRRD inspectors for inspection at ports of entry before entering South Africa. Inspectors from the department conduct luggage and consignment inspections at the ports of entry, with the help of sniffer dogs to ensure compliance with the import permit requirements.

Prohibited products will either be confiscated, destroyed or returned to the country of export and those found carrying them may face a fine of up to R20 000 or imprisonment.

Food import and export standards
Internationally, standards for food imports and exports are harmonized through various international standard-setting bodies subscribed to under the World Trade Organisation, to which South Africa is a signatory. This includes the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measurements Agreement, the World Organisation for Animal Health, Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. These requirements aim to protect consumer rights, the environment, animal life and public health.

The DALRRD collates information regarding the standards for sanitary and phytosanitary measures applicable to trade in animal and plant products. The department also coordinates promotion and awareness programmes addressing crosscutting standards and legislative requirements for food safety, quality, and plant and animal health. The DALRRD and the Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) work closely to assist South Africans to export their products successfully in a highly competitive global arena.

National Analytical Services (NAS)
There are two in-house laboratories within NAS – one situated in Stellenbosch and the other in Pretoria. The laboratories provide and coordinate the analysis of certain agricultural products (fresh fruit and vegetables, grains, wines and spirits, dairy products and processed food) in support of the enforcement of the food safety and quality standards and requirements as laid down in the Agricultural Product Standards Act of 1990 and the Liquor Products Act, 1989 (Act 60 of 1989).

Disaster and risk management
The National Agricultural Disaster Risk Management Committee provides strategic guidance on policy and advises government on issues relating to agricultural disaster risk management. The committee comprises members from provincial departments of agriculture, organised agriculture, such as the National African Farmers' Union of South Africa (NAFU SA), Agri SA, Transvaal Agricultural Union of South Africa (TAU SA) and the ARC and relevant directorates within the DALRRD.

The National Drought Task Team, chaired by the DALRRD, advises the National Disaster Management Advisory Forum on drought management. The task team comprises provincial disaster management centres, organised agriculture and relevant directorates within the department. The DALRRD frequently responds to hazards such as droughts, veld fires, floods and outbreaks of pests and disease, which includes the control of migratory pests such as locusts and quelea. It is also responsible for the control of blackfly.

Weather and climate
Climate change
The agricultural sector in South Africa faces considerable impact from climate change, which affects the livelihoods of most people, especially those who are vulnerable to food insecurity. South Africa responds to international obligations regarding climate through

various government departments. The Climate Change Programme implemented by the DALRRD includes programmes on raising awareness, policy development, the development of sector mitigation and adaptation plans, conducting vulnerability assessments countrywide, and identifying and coordinating climate-related research projects. The Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan outlines useful mitigation and adaptation options promoting soil, water and nutrient conservation for agricultural production.

The DALRRD's Crop Suitability programme is aimed at promoting best adaptation management practices and enhancing adaptive capacity and resilience of the agricultural systems to minimise the risk of the negative impacts of climate change as drastic increases in temperature have a negative impact on crop growth and crop yields.

South Africa is a full member of the Global Research Alliance which, among other objectives, aims to enhance collaborative research into reducing agricultural emissions and increasing support and resourcing for agricultural emissions research. South Africa has already been involved in stock takes and regional workshops run by the Livestock Research Group.

Early warning unit

The increasing risk of disaster is reduced by strengthening early warning systems and disseminating early warnings, as well as raising awareness through campaigns. This helps to build resilient farming communities. The DALRRD has, therefore, developed and implemented an Early Warning System (EWS) that disseminates extreme weather warnings to farming communities.

The EWS communicates monthly advisories and daily extreme weather warnings, in support of reducing disaster risk. The implementation of the EWS is continuously monitored and evaluated to identify and address gaps in the system. National Agro- Meteorological Committee meetings are held quarterly.

Other risk reduction activities include continuous research to identify areas and measures in addressing and improving disaster risk management, including awareness campaigns and education and training so as to strengthen disaster risk management.

In addition, the DALRRD continues to encourage integration of disaster risk management into all departmental programmes and projects. The DALRRD also encourages the strengthening of EWS by all relevant role players to be prioritised, including the creation of disaster units in provinces.

Sustainable resource management and use

The DALRRD and the ARC's Institute for Soil, Climate and Water have developed an inventory of soils, terrain forms and climate (land types). The National Land Type Survey, available for use at a 1:250 000 scale, aims to assist and guide land-use planning and decision making at national level.

All available natural resource spatial information and other required data sets, including the latest Spot-5 satellite imagery and agricultural information, are found on the internet-based Agricultural Geo-Referenced Information System (Agis). Using interactive web-based applications, Agis provides access to spatial information, industry-specific information and decision-support tools.

The Advanced Fire Information System tracks all fire outbreaks in the SADC region through the use of Moderate- Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer satellite imagery. The information may be viewed at afis.meraka.org.za.

Soil degradation

Soil degradation is largely related to the decline in organic soil matter. Monoculture cereal production, intensive tillage, short-term fallow periods and limited crop rotation have contributed to this in the commercial sector. Excessive fuel-wood collection, inappropriate land use, population density and overgrazing are the main causes of soil degradation in communal areas.

South African soils are extremely prone to serious soil compaction, particularly under intensive mechanised cultivated agriculture, in both dryland and irrigated land. It is a problem throughout the country and much more widespread and serious than the global norm. Human-induced soil acidification is a major problem.

Its effect is severe since it impacts on the country's scarce, arable land, especially the limited high-potential agricultural land. In commercial agriculture, there has been capital-building of some nutrients, especially phosphorus and zinc. In some cases, phosphorus has built up to excessive levels, where it starts to reduce crop yields.

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)

GMOs provide a way to meet the growing demand for food without placing greater pressure on scarce resources. South Africa has commercialised three different genetically modified crops, namely maize, cotton and soya beans.

The country is also the ninth-largest producer of genetically modified crops in the world and remains the pioneer for the adoption of genetically modified crops. This is aligned to Section 24 of the Constitution, which advocates for sustainable use of biodiversity.

National LandCare Programme

This is a government-supported community-based initiative, which is active throughout the country. Driven by both the public and private sectors through partnerships and cooperation, it seeks to:

- conserve natural resources;
- use them in a sustainable way;
- create a conservation ethic through education and awareness; and
- create jobs and address poverty by launching various natural resource rehabilitation, improvement and conservation projects.

Serious concerns about land and water degradation are identified in each province and specific projects address these issues. Projects have been implemented in all nine provinces through the LandCare Conditional Grant, whereby ring-fenced funding is transferred to provinces.

The National LandCare Programme is aligned with government's broader objective of job creation. The temporary jobs created under the programme are funded through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). The programme adheres to the target of 55% women, 40% youth and 2% people with disabilities as specified by the EPWP.

Funding for these projects is transferred quarterly to the respective provincial departments as implementing agents, as conditional grants under the Division of Revenue Act, 2013 (Act 2 of 2013). Assessment and reporting requirements are specified in the Act, as well as by the EPWP.

The provincial departments use the reporting tools provided by the EPWP to report on the number of jobs created. Provincial departments forward additional quarterly and annual reports to the DALRRD to monitor performance and the impact of the programme on the state of the natural agricultural resources.

Extension and advisory services

The National Policy on Extension and Advisory Services for the agricultural sector recognises and calls for the involvement of a wide array of stakeholders involved in the delivery of extension and advisory services through a pluralistic and integrated approach.

The implementation process of the National Policy on Extension and Advisory Services commenced with the establishment of the Provincial Extension Coordinating Forum (PECF). The PECF is operational in all provinces and meetings are held on a quarterly basis. The DALRRD provides support to the PECF to ensure provincial integrated service-delivery.

Training

The agricultural sector boasts state-of-the-art training and research facilities. South Africa has a number of regular schools offering a range of agricultural subjects as well as specialised agricultural high schools. Prospective farmers and technicians are trained at the country's colleges of agriculture, such as Grootfontein Agricultural Development Institute in the Eastern Cape, Cedara College of Agriculture in KwaZulu-Natal and Madzivhandila College of Agriculture in Limpopo. In September 2020, Cabinet approved the establishment of agricultural colleges as the competency of higher education colleges in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act 101 of 1997), as amended.

The relocation of these colleges to the Department of Higher Education and Training will align them to the prescribed Higher Education Act of 1997 and improve their governance and management.

Universities, some with designated faculties of agriculture, offer degree courses. Veterinary surgeons are trained at the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Veterinary Sciences at Onderstepoort.

Animal identification

Any owner of cattle, sheep, goats or pigs is compelled by law to mark their livestock. The registered mark is put on the National Register of Animal Identification System. This register is available to the South African Police Service (SAPS) to help it trace individual animals in cases of stock theft. However, this can only be implemented successfully if all cattle, goats, pigs and sheep are marked in accordance with the Animal Identification Act, 2002 (Act 6 of 2002).

Pest control

The South African Pest Control Association (SAPCA) is the official representative of the pest, termite and woodborer-control industries. All SAPCA-qualified inspectors have to register with the DALRRD. South Africa regularly liaises with other countries and international organisations to ensure the transfer of pest-control technology.

To respond comprehensively to the management of regulated plant pests and diseases, the DALRRD, in close collaboration with the South African fruit industries, has developed an early warning surveillance programme for the quarantine of fruit flies. The technical forum continues to identify, prioritise and manage quarantine pest risks, such as the African invader fruit fly.

Rural Development

Rural development creates and maintains an equitable and sustainable land dispensation, and acts as a catalyst in the development of rural areas, to ensure sustainable rural livelihoods, decent work and continued social and economic advancement for all South Africans. Approximately 33.7% of the South African population lives in rural areas. This figure is below the global average of 44.7%, and has been declining gradually over the past 10 years, owing to rapid urbanisation.

While rural areas were a key development priority in the early 2000s, an increasing global focus on cities through the development of the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 11 focusing on sustainable cities, has meant that rural areas have been deprioritised to a certain extent. This has been a contributing factor to the state of rural poverty and underdevelopment. In South Africa, rural areas have the highest poverty concentration.

It is estimated that 59.7% of the population living below the poverty line is found in rural areas. This is illuminated when the provincial distribution of poverty is analysed. There is a correlation between low poverty levels and highly urbanised provinces, such as Gauteng and the Western Cape – and conversely, between high poverty levels in provinces where the majority live in rural areas, such as the Eastern Cape and Limpopo.

This illustrates that there are spatial patterns of economic development in South Africa, which result in acute poverty in rural areas. While the disconnected nature of rural areas may be an explanatory factor of this phenomenon, the spatial configuration of national value chains and broader economic climate are also key factors.

The characteristically poverty-stricken nature of rural South Africa is both a cause and effect of poor performing socio-economic indicators, including education, healthcare and employment. The majority of rural South Africa fell under the homelands system during colonialism and apartheid, emphasising their historic exclusion from service delivery.

Limited access to quality education and healthcare is an acute challenge in rural areas because of undeveloped infrastructure and limited economic activity. There are 11 252 schools in rural areas across South Africa, many of which face infrastructural challenges, teacher shortages and other critical challenges.

While there are a number of factors affecting this disparity, the rural-urban divide is chief among them. A contributing factor to rural poverty and underdevelopment is the rapid rate of rural-urban migration that is taking place in South Africa. The rate of rural-urban migration has almost doubled over the past two decades, increasing from 15 people per 1 000 to 28 people per 1 000.23.

Both economic and non-economic reasons cause citizens to move from rural areas to urban areas, including hopes of employment and higher wages, better access to social services, such as healthcare and education, and to reunite with family living in cities. While the promise of the city may seem appealing to rural residents, prosperity in urban areas is not necessarily guaranteed, as the rapid influx of people into the cities has put pressure on social services and housing requirements.

In rural areas, the outflow of citizens who constitute the majority of the economically active population exacerbates underdevelopment. This results in decreased economic activity and investment in rural areas. It is within this context that the DALRRD is mandated to serve residents in rural areas by providing economic stimulation in a three-pronged manner by stimulating the agricultural sector, coordinating rural development and promoting access to and productivity of land.

In the face of rapid rural-urban migration, the DALRRD plans to focus specifically on stimulating economic activity and uplifting social conditions in rural areas through its mechanisms of agricultural support, land administration and tenure, and rural development coordination.

Economic structure of rural South Africa

Agriculture and mining are traditionally thought to be the foundations of rural economies, as these sectors tend to be the key drivers of external investment into rural areas. While this chiefly refers to commercial agriculture, it is worth noting that subsistence agriculture plays an important role in meeting the needs of residents in rural areas.

Beyond agriculture and mining, there are also a number of other ts of the rural economy, which can be leveraged for rural development. While secondary sector activities such as manufacturing, processing and construction are most often developed in urban or peri-urban settings, they also form an important economic driver in rural and semi- rural areas. In terms of the tertiary sector, there are critical activities that support rural communities, in the form of both local business and chain stores.

Overall, all of these components of the rural economy are interconnected and connected to industrial activity and the urban economy. There are two key inflows of support for social infrastructure aside from external investment – international or local aid and government programmes.

In terms of aid, there are a myriad of multilateral, bilateral and local non-governmental organisations, such as the United Nations Development Programme, the Belgian Development Agency and the Rural Development Support Programme, which have programmes in areas that contribute to rural development. Government has various schemes and programmes that support the rural economy.

One of government's largest contributors to the social infrastructure of rural areas is the Social Grant Scheme, which includes financial stipends for old-age pensions, child support, care dependency, war veterans, foster child support and disabilities. A total of 44.3% of households in South Africa are receiving at least one grant, the majority of which reside in rural areas.

Provinces with a higher rural population such as the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and Limpopo have a higher proportion of households receiving social grants. This illustrates that social grants play an important role in supporting the social infrastructure of rural economies. Rural development remains a strategic and important element of national economic development. As outlined in the NDP, the country is working towards achieving an inclusive and integrated rural economy.

The DALRRD plays a fundamental role in coordinating national efforts in order to reduce rural poverty and create gainful socio-economic development in rural South Africa. However, as the face of rural South Africa is rapidly changing, there are certain considerations that need to be taken into account, specific to challenges and trends emerging in the sector.

Key considerations for the DALRRD are: The decreased profitability of the mining sector may result in less investment in rural communities and potential job losses. Agricultural productivity challenges threaten existing and new farmers, resulting from climate change, increased water scarcity and a lack of training available for new farmers. A decreased economically active population in rural areas further limits economic activity.

Decreased funding and social programmes for South Africa and rural areas – while South Africa experienced a boom in foreign aid post-1994, this has declined as there is currently increasing competition for aid globally. This coupled with decreasing contributions from donors and implementing regulations that are more rigorous will have adverse effects on funding for rural areas in South Africa.

The commercialisation of the retail sector in rural areas has increased competition for previously owner-run businesses. The department is uniquely positioned to tackle these challenges strategically through the coordination of rural development efforts in the private and public sectors.

The land reform landscape

One of the most critical areas of redress in South Africa is the issue of land. Throughout South Africa's history, dispossession of land has been systemic, embodied in policies such as the Native Land Act, 1913 (Act 27 of 1913), and the Group Areas Act, 1950 (Act 41 of 1950), during the apartheid era.

In 1994, it was estimated that 83% of agricultural land was owned by white capital. Therefore, from the onset of democracy, land reform as a mechanism for redress has been a focus of the South African Government, historically carried out by what is currently the DALRRD.

Over the past 30 years, there have been a number of policies and legislation put in place to implement land reform in South Africa. Predominantly, the national position on land reform has been a willing buyer-willing seller model mediated by government, coupled with a legal restitution process.

The Expropriation Act, 2024 (Act 13 of 2024) allows government to take ownership of private property for a public purpose or in the public interest, with owners receiving just and equitable compensation. This Act also allows for expropriation without compensation in specific, limited circumstances. The Act, which repeals the 1975 Expropriation Act, aims to provide a framework for land expropriation in line with constitutional principles. The Act forms part of a broader land reform effort in South Africa, aimed at addressing historical inequalities in land ownership.

Programmes and projects

Agricultural Production, Biosecurity and Natural Resources Management

The programme oversees livestock production, game farming, animal and plant health, natural resources and disaster management. Its objectives include managing biosecurity and related sector risks. Over the medium term, this will be achieved by conducting nine countrywide surveys of plant pests and diseases, in particular the exotic fruit fly, citrus greening disease and banana bunchy top virus, to manage their spread and incursion, and eradicating them, as well as conducting nine planned animal risk surveillance exercises on foot-and-mouth disease, ovine rinderpest and Newcastle disease.

In addition, the programme plans to ensure access to primary animal healthcare services through the implementation of compulsory community services by deploying 100% of veterinary graduates to rural areas by 2023/24. It will enforce an animal disease regulatory framework to reduce the level of disease outbreaks and reduce interception at export channels in production areas to a minimum level by conducting three planned animal risk surveillance exercises on foot-and-mouth disease and goat plague in each year over the medium term.

Furthermore, the DALRRD will implement regulatory compliance and monitoring interventions to prevent plant and animal pest and disease outbreaks through quarantine inspections, surveillance, and testing and registration of products used in agriculture by 2023/24.

Food Security, Land Reform and Restitution

Under the programme, the DALRRD aims to acquire and redistribute land, and promote food security and agrarian reform. The programme's objectives include:

- redressing equitable access to land by conducting research and finalising land claims;
- coordinating the implementation of the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security by providing production inputs such as seeds and fertilisers, and cultivating underused land in communal areas over the medium term.
- improving delivery capacity in support of sustainable growth in the sector by implementing policies to develop capacity in agricultural sectors, such as the National Policy On Extension and Advisory Services, facilitating collaborations with commodity organisations to build the capacity of extension officers by the end of 2023/24 and providing strategic leadership and support, such as research, training and extension services, to targeted subsistence and smallholder producers by transforming all agricultural colleges into agricultural training institutions by the end of 2023/24.
- coordinating comprehensive support systems and programmes provided to producers by supporting subsistence and smallholder producers, supporting the commercialisation of smallholder producers through the blended finance model, placing unemployed agricultural graduates in farms and further supporting access to resources for agribusiness development.

Rural Development

The purpose of the programme is to facilitate rural development strategies for socio-economic growth. Its objectives include promoting an integrated and inclusive rural economy through the coordination and implementation of rural development strategies over the medium term.

Economic Development, Trade and Marketing

The purpose of the programme is to promote economic development, trade and market access for agriculture products; and foster international relations for the sector. The programme's objectives, over the medium term, include:

- upskilling 600 agro-processing entrepreneurs by training them on food manufacturing norms and standards;
- increasing market access and maintaining existing markets by certifying and accrediting producers of fresh produce for exports through good agricultural practice certification and an accreditation programme;
- building national skills capabilities in international market research by providing for the transfer of marketing skills to small and medium agro-processing entrepreneurs;
- providing technical sector leadership in trade negotiations and implementing trade agreements to improve market access by linking producers to high-value markets; and
- ensuring shared growth by developing the agricultural value chain and improving market access.

Land Administration

The purpose of the programme is to provide and maintain an inclusive, effective and comprehensive system of planning, geospatial information and cadastral surveys; legally secure land tenure; and conduct land administration that promotes social, economic and environmental sustainability.

Over the medium term, the programme aims to ensure spatial transformation and efficient land administration by rolling out and implementing the electronic deeds registration system and reducing the number of days taken to process general plans, sectional plans and diagrams to 14 working days.

Deeds registration

The core responsibility of South Africa's deeds registries is to:

- register real rights in land;
- maintain a public land register;
- provide registration information; and
- maintain an archive of registration records.

There are deeds registries in Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Kimberley, King William's Town, Mthatha, Nelspruit, Pietermaritzburg, Pretoria and Vryburg. These offices register deeds and documents relating to real rights in more than eight million registered land parcels consisting of township erven, farms, agricultural holdings, sectional title units and sectional title exclusive-use areas in terms of the Deeds Registries Act, 1937 (Act 47 of 1937), and the Sectional Titles Act, 1986 (Act 95 of 1986).

The Deeds Registry is open to any member of the public to access information regarding:

- the registered owner of a property;
- the conditions affecting such property;
- interdicts and contracts in respect of the property;

- the purchase price of the property;
- rules of a sectional title scheme;
- a copy of an antenuptial contract, deeds of servitude and mortgage bonds;
- a copy of a sectional title plan;
- township-establishment conditions; and
- information relating to a property or deed.

Entities

Agricultural Land Holding Account

The agricultural land holding account was established in 2009 in terms of the Provision of Land and Assistance Act of 1993. The act authorises the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development to purchase land to enable the department to accelerate land redistribution, acquire land in nodal areas and other areas of high agricultural potential, improve the identification and selection of beneficiaries, improve the planning of land on which people could be settled, and ensure the most productive use of acquired land.

Over the medium term, the entity will focus on promoting equitable land redistribution and agricultural development by acquiring a targeted 102 025 hectares for redistribution, of which 50 per cent is set to be allocated to women, 40 per cent to youth and 10 per cent to people with disabilities. The entity will also prioritise the land development support programme, which focuses on redistributed farms that have received limited or no agriculture support but have growth potential. The programme plans to support 108 farms with equipment through an allocation of R846.2 million over the MTEF period.

Expenditure is set to increase at an average annual rate of 1.4 per cent, from R942.4 million in 2023/24 to R983.5 million in 2026/27. Total expenditure over the MTEF period is set to amount to R3.1 billion. The entity expects to derive 77.9 per cent (R2.8 billion) of its revenue over the period ahead through transfers from the department, 11.4 per cent (R404 million) through lease revenue and 10.7 per cent (R353 million) through other sources.

Agricultural Research Council (ARC)

The ARC was established by the Agricultural Research Act of 1990 and is the main agricultural research institution in South Africa. The entity's primary mandate in terms of the act is to conduct research and development and effect the transfer of technology to promote agriculture and industry, contribute to a better quality of life, and facilitate and ensure the conservation of natural resources.

Over the medium term, the council will focus on: generating knowledge and technologies that enhance efficiencies of crop production, animal production and health, the management of natural resources, and research and development; developing a foot-and-mouth disease facility at Onderstepoort to reduce reliance on imports; maintaining national assets such as irrigation and mechanisation laboratories; and providing diagnostic and analytical services on behalf of the department and industry stakeholders.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average of annual rate of 3.8 per cent, from R1.6 billion in 2023/24 to R1.7 billion in 2026/27. Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 50.6 per cent (R2.5 billion) of total spending, and goods and services accounts for 44.9 per cent. Transfers from the department constitute an estimated 66.7 per cent (R3.4 billion) of the council's total revenue over the medium term. The remainder is set to be generated through providing analytical and research services, selling farm products and rental income.

KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Board

The KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Act of 1994 makes provision for 2.8 million hectares of land across KwaZulu-Natal to be held in trust and managed on behalf of communities. The trust is administered for the benefit, material welfare and social wellbeing of the members of the tribe, communities and residents. The affairs of the trust are administered by the KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Board, which was established in terms of the Act.

Over the medium term, the board will focus on systematically aligning its organisational processes with the resources it has available. This initiative is pivotal for the new board, as it underpins its ongoing commitment to enhancing the administration of its land and fostering integrated socioeconomic development.

Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5.6 per cent, from R23.1 million in 2023/24 to R27.2 million in 2026/27. Transfers from the department amount to R77.8 million over the MTEF period, comprising 99.7 per cent of total revenue, mainly to fund salaries and operational expenses. The remaining revenue is expected to be sourced from the KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust from the sale of goods and other capital assets.

Office of the Valuer-General

As a new schedule 3A public entity established in terms of the Property Valuation Act of 2014, the Office of the Valuer-General continually aims to be a leader in the property valuations sector and be recognised as a centre of excellence and innovation for property valuations, with a primary focus on land reform. To do this, the office seeks to build a strong corporate identity to increase visibility and improve stakeholder engagement.

Over the medium term, the office plans to help speed up land reform by providing independent and credible property valuation services to ensure that land claim values are settled with greater efficiency and decisiveness.

Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 43.8% (R196.4 million) of total expenditure over the MTEF period, increasing at an average annual rate of 3%, from R60.9 million in 2023/24 to R66.5 million in 2026/27. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 3.6%, from R140.3 million in 2023/24 to R156 million in 2026/27. The entity is set to derive all of its revenue, amounting to a projected R448 million over the medium term, through transfers from the department.

Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP)

OBP was established as a public entity in terms of the Onderstepoort Biological Products Incorporation Act of 1999, with the government as its sole shareholder. Its mandate is to prevent and control animal diseases that affect food security, human health and livelihoods by developing, manufacturing and commercialising animal vaccines and ensuring food security through the promotion of animal health. These activities will comprise the entity's primary focus over the period ahead. It will also maintain a reserve stock of vaccines to be used in the event of an outbreak of animal diseases.

Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 40.4% (R349.8 million) of total spending, increasing at an average annual rate of 4.3 per cent, from R106.4 million in 2023/24 to R120.8 million in 2026/27. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 5.4%, from R260.5 million in 2023/24 to R305 million in 2026/27. The organisation generates revenue mainly through the sale and supply of livestock vaccines and uses it to fund the operations of its business.

Revenue is projected to increase at an average annual rate of 5.7%, from R270.4 million in 2023/24 to R319.6 million in 2026/27, as the entity anticipates an increase in the sale of vaccines in the export market due to improved production and marketing, and greater access to vaccines by smallholder farmers.

National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC)

The NAMC derives its mandate from the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act of 1996, which provides for the authorisation, establishment and enforcement of regulatory measures to intervene in the marketing of agricultural products, including the introduction of statutory measures on agricultural products.

Over the period ahead, the council will continue to play an active role in coordinating the work of industry trusts, conducting research aimed at advising the minister and directly affected groups on marketing matters and working directly with farmers to address their marketing needs.

As the council primarily conducts research and development, it relies on highly skilled personnel such as agricultural economists, scientists and researchers to fulfil its mandate. Accordingly, compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 70.1 per cent (R111.2 million) of total spending over the medium term. Expenditure is expected to increase at average annual rate of 0.9 per cent, from R53 million in 2023/24 to R54.4 million in 2026/27. The council derives most its revenue from the department, estimated at R143.6 million over the medium term and increasing at an average rate of 0.2 per cent, from R49.8 million in 2023/24 to R50 million in 2026/27.

Perishable Products Export Control Board

The Perishable Products Export Control Board is an independent service provider of quality assurance, food safety and cold chain management services for producers and exporters of perishable food products, as mandated by the Perishable Products Export Control Act of 1983. The board also derives its mandate from the Agricultural Products Standards Act of 1990, which broadly requires it to monitor the minimum quality standards of perishable exports as required by government and bilateral agreements with importing countries.

The board aims to improve client experience over the medium term through the seamless integration of its systems with those of its clients. This is expected to ensure the provision of relevant and timeous export and shipping information and market trends to enhance the competitiveness of the industry.

Spending on compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 65.9% (R1.5 billion) of total expenditure over the MTEF period, increasing at an average annual rate of 6.2%, from R454.9 million in 2023/24 to R544.4 million in 2026/27. Expenditure is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 6%, from R689.9 million in 2023/24 to R822.8 million in 2026/27.

The board generates revenue by charging levies and tariffs on the export of perishable products, and fees for inspection, laboratory and export certification services. Revenue is projected to amount to R2.3 billion over the MTEF period.

Registration of Deeds Trading Entity

The Deeds Registries Act (1937) makes provision for the administration of the land registration system and the registration of rights in land. It requires that deeds and documents are prepared and lodged in the deeds registry by a conveyancer or public notary, and scrutinised for accuracy and compliance with common law, case law and statutory law. The main goal of the trading account is to contribute to effective land planning, administration and property registration.

The entity plans to develop and implement an electronic deeds registration system over the MTEF period, driven by the Electronic Deeds Registration Systems Act of 2019. This is expected to result in a more secure, accessible, integrated, innovative, scalable, cost-effective and self-sustainable deeds registration system that enables and provides accurate and reliable land administration and information.

The system is also expected to have the capacity to register and record insecure land tenure rights. Its development and implementation is expected to lead to enhanced confidence in the country's land registration process. Expenditure and revenue are expected to increase at an average annual rate of 4.4%, from R1 billion in 2023/24 to R1.2 billion in 2026/27. Compensation of employees accounts for an estimated 69% (R2.3 billion) of spending over this period, driven by the filling of 86 critical vacant posts. The entity generates revenue by selling deeds information and registering properties..

Role players

Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights

The Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994 created the Commission on the Restitution of Land Rights under a chief land claims commissioner and seven regional commissioners. In addition, the Act established the Land Claims Court to address land claims and other land-related issues though later amendments enabled an administrative process of settling claims with court referrals only in cases of dispute.

The DALRRD is authorised to administer the Act, including by negotiating on behalf of the State, acting as a respondent before the court, and managing the implementation and finances of the restitution process. Legally, all land claims are against the State and not against past or current landowners. Consultants are extensively used as part of the pre-settlement of claims, and are a major cost driver in the restitution programme.

Agri-parks

The agri-parks initiative supports rural enterprises, develops rural industries and facilitates the efficient movement of rural produce to markets. The initiative develops networked systems of agro-production, processing, logistics, marketing, training and extension services in district municipalities and developments on underused land.

Each agri-park supports smallholder farmers by providing capacity-building, mentorship, farm infrastructure, extension services, and production and mechanisation inputs. Smallholder farmers own 70% of an agri-park, while the remainder is owned by government and commercial farmers. Agri-parks are expected to contribute to government's targets of creating one million new jobs in rural economies by 2030.

Communal Property Associations (CPAs)

The CPAs Act, 1996 (Act 28 of 1996) is aimed at enabling communities to form juristic persons, to be known as CPAs – to acquire, hold and manage property on a basis agreed upon by members of a community in terms of a written constitution and to provide for matters connected therewith. The DALRRD has facilitated the establishment of CPA district forums to assist in the provision of support to the associations and serve as a platform for them to share experiences, approaches and lessons on how to handle matters.

Credit and assistance

Land and Agricultural Development Bank of South Africa (Land Bank) Established in 1912, the Land Bank is a government-owned development finance institution with the mandate of financing agricultural development to achieve food security, and to drive economic growth and development in South African agricultural sector.

The bank is a specialist agricultural bank guided by a government mandate to provide financial services, including crop insurance, to established commercial farmers, developing farmers and agri-enterprises. The bank provided support to farmers impacted by the drought, disbursing more than R240 million in loans under its drought relief programme, administered in conjunction with the Industrial Development Corporation. As part of its transformation objective, the

Land Bank Insurance

Company subsidiary launched and implemented the Agricultural Insurance Assessors Development Programme to train agricultural economist graduates (or equivalent) in crop insurance assessment protocols to service the agricultural sector. It is charged with promoting agricultural and rural development, as well as providing a range of financial products and services, including crop insurance to farmers and agribusinesses.

Micro Agricultural Financial Institutions of South Africa (MAFISA)

The MAFISA provides production loans to smallholder operators within the agriculture sector. The scheme's operations are guided by the MAFISA Credit Policy. Loans are provided at a low interest rate and accessed through a network of institutions accredited by the DALRRD as retail intermediaries. Intermediaries submit monthly and quarterly reports to the DALRRD as part of its monitoring process.

Regular workshops and inspection visits to intermediaries are also conducted as part of monitoring. The scheme offers production loans of up to R500 000 per person, with the repayment terms structured according to the income cycle of the enterprise. The loans are limited to South African citizens who meet the eligibility criteria set in the MAFISA Credit Policy.

The MAFISA loans are available for the entire value chain of agriculture though most of the loans are still in respect of primary production and largely in agriculture. To date, most of the loans are in respect of livestock, sugar cane, vegetables and grain crops. Currently, the MAFISA is accessed through the following intermediaries:

- National Emergent Red Meat Producer Organisation – livestock in all provinces.
- South African Sugar Association – sugar cane in KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga.
- Peulwana Agricultural Financial Services – grains, vegetables, sugar cane and fruits in KwaZulu-Natal.
- Mpumalanga Economic Growth Agency – various agricultural commodities in Mpumalanga.

- Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency – various agricultural commodities in the Eastern Cape.

Farmers' organisations

Agri SA

Agri SA was established in 1904 as the South African Agricultural Union. Its mission is to promote 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. Agri SA, through its affiliated membership, represents a diverse group of individual farmers.

Agri SA's policy advocacy includes work on trade negotiations, industrial policy, taxation, financing, land reform, labour laws, training, farmer development, environmental affairs, water rights and water pricing, other input-related issues, farm safety, law and order, infrastructure, technology development and transfer, statistical information and local government.

Furthermore, the organisation maintains an extensive communication network with its members and other affected communities, organisations and individuals. Agri SA is a member of high-level business, trade and agricultural entities that includes Business Unity South Africa, the International Chamber of Commerce, the World Farmers' Organisation, the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions and the Cairns Group Farm Leaders.

Agri SA is committed to ensuring a safe environment for all people involved in the agricultural sector. A sound working relationship has been established with the SAPS at both policy and operational level, with a view of addressing the relevant rural safety problems.

Agricultural Business Chamber (Agbiz)

The Agbiz is a voluntary, dynamic and influential association of agribusinesses operating in South Africa and southern Africa. The function of Agbiz is to ensure that agribusiness plays a constructive role in the country's economic growth, development and transformation, and to create an environment in which agribusinesses of all sizes and in all sectors can thrive, expand and be competitive.

The Agbiz is the only organisation that serves the broader and common overarching business interests of agribusinesses in South Africa. It addresses the legislative and policy environment on the many fronts that it impacts on the agribusiness environment.

The Agbiz facilitates considerable networking opportunities so that South African agribusinesses can play an active and creative role within the local and international organised business environment. The strategic intent of the Agbiz is to advocate for and facilitate a favourable agribusiness environment in order for its members to perform competitively and sustainably.

Transvaal Agricultural Union of South Africa

The TAU SA was established in 1897 as the Transvaal Agricultural Union. In 2002, the union reorganised to become a national agricultural union serving commercial farmers. It also renders services to its members in terms of property rights, economic issues, and safety and security. The TAU SA conducts various projects to enhance the concept of successful agriculture.

National African Farmers' Union of South Africa

The NAFU SA is an independent, autonomous farmers organisation governed by and representing farmers in South Africa, united for the purpose of analysing their problems and formulating action to achieve economic emancipation and development through production efficiencies, access to market opportunities and education.

It was formed in 1991 as part of the broader process of economic liberation and empowerment of, mainly, black farmers who were excluded from mainstream economic landscape of South Africa. Its predecessor, the National African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, for many years had fought against economic oppression and marginalisation of African people in this country.

Over many years, the union has acted as an advocacy and pressure group calling for policy reforms and the support and development of farmers. Through its interventions and contribution to policy formulation, the NAFU SA has contributed to the following:

- access to productive land being made available to farmers;
- access to finance and other support for farmers;
- access to markets and information for farmers; and
- skills development and technical support.

The NAFU SA pursues these items by implementing the following broad programmes:

- dvocacy, lobbying and policy research,
- cooperatives and commodity group development, and
- farm enterprise development.

African Farmers' Association of South Africa (AFASA)

The objectives of AFASA are to create a sustainable united body of African farmers with capacity to influence policies through lobbying and advocacy, to facilitate development of competencies of African farmers in order for them to participate meaningfully in formal and informal markets, and to mobilise resources for the benefit of African farmers.

Grain SA

Grain SA was established in June 1999. Its mission is to provide commodity strategic support and services to South African grain producers, as well as to support sustainability. Grain SA is a voluntary association of grain farmers established to represent the interests of its members. It aims to be recognised as an autonomous and independent grain producers' organisation. The organisation also aims to be involved in all matters bearing on the well-being of the industry and to be consulted about policy issues relating to the industry. The association is controlled by farmers and structured to ensure members' democratic control over their elected office bearers.

Female Entrepreneur Awards

The Female Entrepreneur Awards are a joint venture between the provincial departments of agriculture and key partners in the sector. They honour female farmers and recognise their role in the sector and their entrepreneurial skills in mainstream agriculture, forestry and fisheries. The major thrust of the awards is to underline the fact that women play a significant role in food security, job creation, economic growth and poverty alleviation.

World Food Day

World Food Day provides an occasion to highlight the plight of undernourished people in the world. Most of them live in rural areas where their main source of income is agriculture. Global warming and the biofuel boom are now threatening to push the number of hungry even higher.

South Africa joins the world in marking World Food Day on 16 October every year, to highlight the plight of millions of undernourished people in the world. World Food Day is commemorated annually around the world in remembrance of the founding of the Food and Agriculture Organisation in 1945. In South Africa, October has been declared Food Security Month.

The objective of Food Security Month is to create a platform for heightening public awareness on issues pertaining to food security in the country. World Food Day 2023 was celebrated under the theme; "Water is life, water is food. Leave no one behind".

Regional cooperation

South Africa has strong and mutually dependent economic links with countries in southern Africa through the SADC and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) regions. As a contribution to the African regional development, the DALRRD continues to implement South Africa's foreign policy objectives, through the facilitation of the SADC and African Union engagements and implementation of the South-South Cooperation.

The International Relations Strategy is an instrument put into place to interact with various sector stakeholders at regional and international level in support of producers to access international markets.

Regional trade

South Africa, as a member of the SACU and a signatory of the SADC Treaty, is committed to sharing its objectives with other nations in the region. The SACU opened its markets to the countries of the SADC region by implementing its tariff reduction commitments under the SADC Trade Protocol.

The signatories to the SADC Trade Protocol are Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles, Eswatini, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo are still in the process of acceding to the protocol.

The first objective of the trade protocol is to remove both tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade between SADC countries The SADC has set up an electronic reporting system for non-tariff barriers, in which the DALRRD is involved as a contact point to receive traders' complaints.

South African agriculture products continue to benefit from the Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement of the SADC, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the East African Community.