

Summer crop estimate revised higher

The revised area and sixth production forecast and summer crop estimate was recently released by the Crop Estimates Committee (CEC).



Image via [AgriOrbit](#)

Commercial maize

The size of the expected commercial maize crop has been set at 10,979 million tonnes, which is 0,42% or 46,200 tonnes more than the previous forecast of 10,933 million tonnes. The area estimate for maize is 2,301 million hectare, while the expected yield is 4,77 ton per hectare.

The estimated maize crop is 12% smaller than the 2018 crop. The three main maize producing areas, namely the Free State, Mpumalanga and North West provinces are expected to produce 80% of the 2019 crop.

The area estimate for white maize is 1,298 million hectares and for yellow maize the area estimate is 1,002 million hectare

The production forecast of white maize is 5,572 million tonnes, which is 1,53% or 84 200 tonnes more than the 5,488 million tonnes of the previous forecast. The yield for white maize is 4,29 tonne per hectare. In the case of yellow maize the production forecast is 5,407 million tonnes, which is 0,70% or 38,000 tonnes less than the 5,445 million tonnes of the previous forecast. The yield for yellow maize is 5,40 tonne per hectare.

Sunflower seed

The production forecast for sunflower seed increased by 7,28% or 44 500 tonnes to 655 640 tonnes. The area estimate for sunflower seed is 515,350 hectare, while the expected yield is 1,27 tonne per hectare.

Other crops

The production forecast for soybeans is 1,170 million tonnes, which is 3,79% or 46 050 tonnes less than the previous forecast of 1,216 million tonnes. The estimated area planted to soybeans is 730,500 hectare and the expected yield is 1,6 tonne per hectare.

The expected groundnut crop decreased by 8,26% or 1,700 tonnes to 18,880 tonnes, with an expected yield of 0,94 tonne per hectare. The area estimate for groundnuts is 20 050 hectare.

The production forecast for sorghum also decreased by 4,65% or 7,500 tonnes, from 161 450 tonnes to 153 950 tonnes. The area estimate for sorghum is 50 500 hectare and the expected yield is 3,05 ton per hectare.

In the case of dry beans, the production forecast has been adjusted slightly downwards by 0,26% or 175 tonnes – from 66,530 tonnes to 66 355 tonnes. The area estimate of dry beans is 59,300 hectare, with an expected yield of 1,12 tonne per hectare.

White maize production shows increase

According to Wandile Sihlobo, agricultural economist and head of agribusiness research at Agbiz, South Africa's maize production estimates were lifted by 0,42% from last month to 10,8 million tonnes. This, however, was boosted by an uptick only on white maize production estimates, which is now estimated at 5,57 million tonnes. Meanwhile, yellow maize production estimates declined marginally from last month to 5,41 million tonnes.

AgBiz feared that the white maize production estimate would be revised down somewhat due to reports of poor yields in parts of the North West, a province that produces 23% of South Africa's white maize. But Gauteng saved the day, as it saw its white maize production estimate lifted from last month, while that of North West remained unchanged.

Sunflower seed production estimate improves

The sunflower seed production estimate improved with 7% from last month to 655,640 tonnes. This was underpinned by improved yield prospects in the Free State and North West. While this is an encouraging development, it is still 24% lower than the previous season and implies that South Africa will be a net importer in the 2019/20 marketing year.

[Click here](#) to read the previous summer field crop report.

The seventh production forecast for summer field crops for 2019 will be released on 27 August 2019.

CEC report & Agbiz comments

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