

MONTHLY FOOD SECURITY BULLETIN OF SOUTH AFRICA MAY 2026

Issued: 5 June 2026

Directorate: Statistics and Economic Analysis

- During May 2026, significant rainfall events were limited to the southern coastal areas as well as the extreme northern parts of KwaZulu-Natal.
- The projected closing stocks of wheat for the 2025/26 marketing year are 547 494 tons, which includes imports of 1,860 million tons. It is also 15,9% less than the previous years' ending stocks.
- The expected commercial maize crop for 2026 is 17,064 million tons, which is 2,0% more than the 16,725 million tons of the previous season (2025).
- Projected closing stocks of maize for the current 2026/27 marketing year are 4,096 million tons, which is 39,8% more than the previous years' ending stocks
- The projected closing stocks of sorghum for the current 2026/27 marketing year are 86 199 tons, which is 4,4% less than the previous year's ending stocks.
- The projected closing stocks of sunflower seed for the current 2026/27 marketing year are 119 446 tons, which is 142,4% more than the previous year's ending stocks.
- The projected closing stocks of soybeans for the current 2026/27 marketing year are 468 510 tons, which is 63,5% more than the previous year's ending stocks.
- The annual percentage change in the CPI was higher at 4,0% in April 2026.
- The annual percentage change in the PPI for final manufactured goods was higher at 4,8% in April 2026.
- April 2026 tractor sales of 548 units were 4% more than the 527 units sold in April 2025.



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1. Weather conditions

1.1 Rainfall for May 2026

During May 2026, significant rainfall events were limited to the southern coastal areas as well as the extreme northern parts of KwaZulu-Natal (**Figure 1**). Comparing rainfall totals to the long-term average for May 2026, above-normal rainfall was received mainly over most of the Western Cape, parts of the Eastern Cape, southern areas of the Northern Cape, Mpumalanga and northern KwaZulu-Natal provinces (**Figure 2**). The remainder of the country received a mixture of normal to below-normal rainfall. (Source: Directorate: Climate Change and Disaster Management of Department: Agriculture)

Figure 1: Rainfall (mm) for May 2026

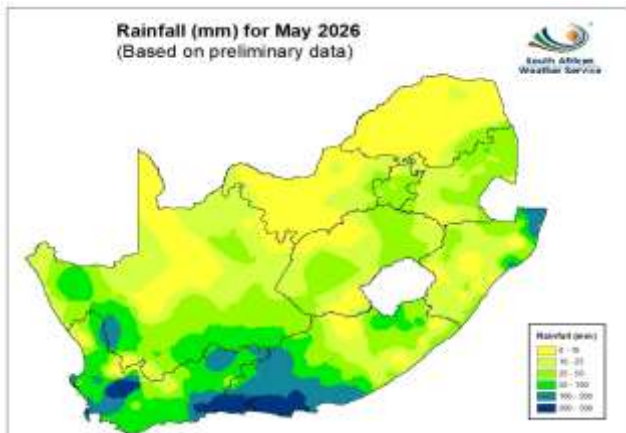
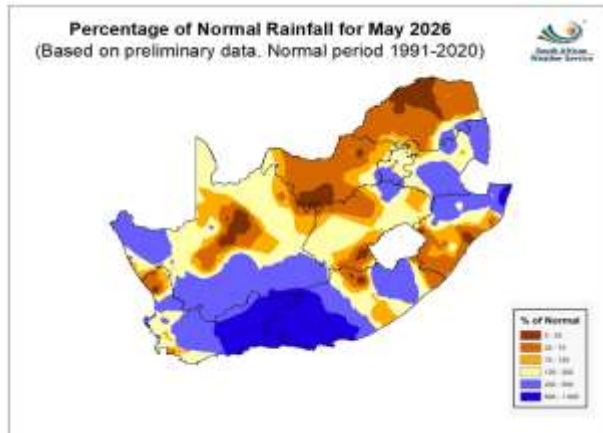


Figure 2: Percentage rainfall for May 2026



1.2 Level of dams

Available information on the level of South Africa's dams on 1 June 2026 indicates that the country has approximately 97% of its full supply capacity (FSC) available, which is 1,0% less as compared to the corresponding period in 2025. The Western Cape (16%), Northern Cape (15%), Limpopo (13%), Eastern Cape (7%), Free State (1%), and North West (1%) provinces, all show increases in the full supply capacity as compared to 2025. However, the KwaZulu-Natal (-7%) and Gauteng (-1) provinces, show decreases in the full supply capacity as compared to 2025. The Mpumalanga province shows no change in the full supply capacity for the same period.

The provincial distribution of South Africa's water supply including Lesotho and Eswatini is contained in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Level of dams, 1 June 2026

Province	Net FSC million cubic meters	1/06/2026 (%)	Last Year (2025) (%)	% Increase/Decrease 2026 vs. 2025
Eastern Cape	1 726	89	82	7,0
Free State	15 665	102	101	1,0
Gauteng	128	101	102	-1,0
Kingdom of Lesotho	2 363	97	100	-3,0
Kingdom of Eswatini	334	100	100	-
Kwazulu-Natal	4 910	91	98	-7,0
Limpopo	1 485	101	88	13,0
Mpumalanga	2 538	100	100	-
North West	866	103	102	1,0
Northern Cape	149	105	90	15,0
Western Cape	1 866	72	56	16,0
Total	32 030	97	96	-1,0

2. Grain production

2.1 Summer grain crops - 2026

The revised area planted and fourth production forecast for summer grains for the 2026 season was released by the Crop Estimates Committee (CEC) on 26 May 2026, and is as follows:

Table 2: Commercial summer grains: Revised area planted and fourth production forecast - 2026 season

CROP	Area planted	4 th forecast	Area planted	Final estimate	Change
	2026 Ha (A)	2026 Tons (B)	2025 Ha (C)	2025 Tons (D)	2026 vs 2025 % (B) ÷ (d)
Commercial:					
White maize	1 664 700	9 178 690	1 635 000	8 500 000	7,51%
Yellow maize	1 051 500	7 885 350	1 030 000	8 225 000	-5,48%
Total Maize	2 716 200	17 064 040	2 665 000	16 725 000	1,11%
Sunflower seed	570 100	877 680	555 700	708 635	17,38%
Soybeans	1 212 700	2 911 200	1 154 000	2 800 000	0,32%
Groundnuts	44 650	57 798	48 750	63 350	9,49%
Sorghum	45 000	149 053	41 350	154 000	-6,23%
Dry beans	38 920	79 450	45 620	90 556	-12,26%
TOTAL	4 627 570	21 139 220	4 510 420	20 541 541	1,47%

Note: Estimate is for calendar year, e.g. production season 2025/26 = 2026

- The area estimate for **maize** is 2 716 200 ha, which is 1,92% or 51 200 ha more than the 2 665 000 ha planted for the previous season. The production forecast of maize is 17 064 040 tons, which is 2,03% or 339 040 tons more than the 16 725 000 tons of last season. The yield for maize is 6,28 t/ha.
- The area estimate for **white maize** is 1 664 700 ha, which represents an increase of 1,82% or 29 700 ha compared to the 1 635 000 ha planted last season. The production forecast of white maize is 9 178 690 tons, which is 7,98% or 678 690 tons more than the 8 500 000 tons of last season. The yield for white maize is 5,51 t/ha.
- In the case of **yellow maize**, the area estimate is 1 051 500 ha, which is 2,09% or 21 500 ha more than the 1 030 000 ha planted last season. The yellow maize production forecast is 7 885 350 tons, which is 4,13% or 339 650 tons less than the 8 225 000 tons of last season. The yield for yellow maize is 7,50 t/ha.
- The area estimate for **sunflower seed** is 570 100 ha, which is 2,59% or 14 400 ha more than the 555 700 ha planted the previous season. The production forecast for sunflower seed is 877 680 tons, which is 23,86% or 169 045 tons more than the 708 635 tons of the previous season. The expected yield is 1,54 t/ha.
- It is estimated that 1 212 700 ha have been planted to **soybeans**, which represents an increase of 5,09% or 58 700 ha compared to the 1 154 000 ha planted last season. The production forecast is 2 911 200 tons, which is 3,97% or 111 200 tons more than the 2 800 000 tons of the previous season. The expected yield is 2,40 t/ha.
- For **groundnuts**, the area estimate is 44 650 ha, which is 8,41% or 4 100 ha less than the 48 750 ha planted for the previous season. The expected crop is 57 798 tons – which is 8,76% or 5 553 tons less than the 63 350 tons of last season. The expected yield is 1,29 t/ha.
- The area estimate for **sorghum** is 45 000 ha, an increase of 8,83% or 3 650 ha against the 41 350ha of the previous season. The production forecast for sorghum is 149 053 tons, which is 3,21% or 4 9488 tons less than the 154 000 tons of the previous season. The expected yield is 3,31 t/ha.



- For **dry beans**, the area estimate is 38 920 ha, which is 14,69% or 6 700 ha less than the 45 620 ha planted for the previous season. The production forecast is 79 450 tons, which is 12,26% or 11 106 tons less than the 90 556 tons of the previous season. The expected yield is 2,04 t/ha.

The area planted and fifth production forecast will be released by the Crop Estimates Committee on 25 June 2026.

2.2 Winter cereal crops – 2025

Please note that the preliminary area estimate of winter crops for 2026 will be released on 28 July 2026.

2.3 Non-commercial maize - 2026

The CEC also released the preliminary area planted and production estimate of the non-commercial maize sector for the 2026 season on 26 May 2026, and is as follows:

Table 3: Non-commercial maize: Preliminary area planted and production estimate - 2026 season

CROP	Area planted 2026 Ha (A)	Production 2026 Tons (B)	Area planted 2025 Ha (C)	Final crop 2025 Tons (D)	Change % (B) ÷ (D)
Non-commercial agriculture:					
White maize	261 305	390 720	252 030	389 410	0,34
Yellow maize	135 865	304 305	105 970	232 090	31,12
Maize	397 170	695 025	358 000	621 500	11,83

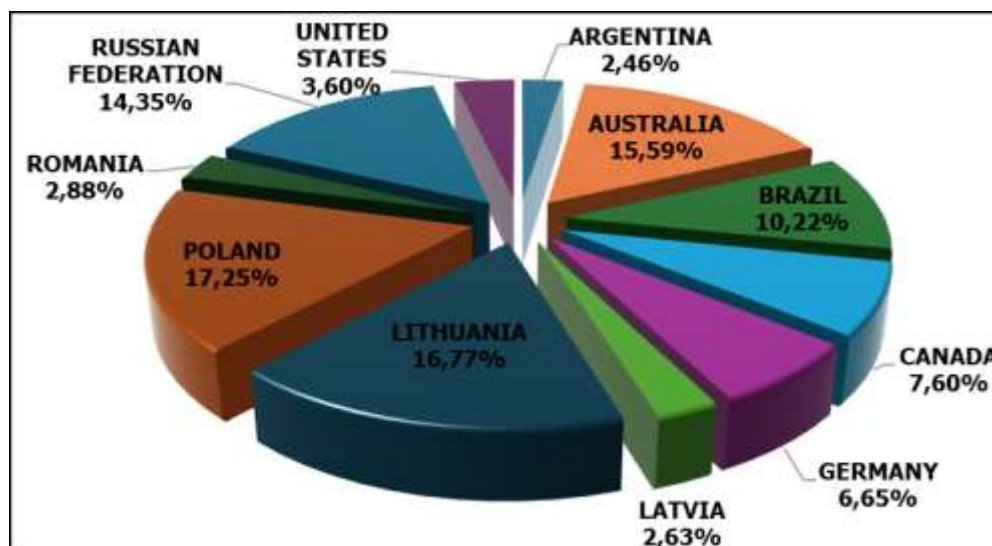
- The area planted to maize in the non-commercial agricultural sector is estimated at 397 170 ha, which represents an increase of 10,94%, compared to the 358 000 ha of the previous season. The expected maize crop for this sector is 695 025 tons, which is 11,83% more than the 621 500 tons of last season. It is important to note that about 36,96% of the maize produced in the non-commercial sector, is planted in the Eastern Cape, followed by Limpopo with 31,00% and then KwaZulu-Natal with 21,90%.

3. Cereal balance sheets

For the latest Cereal Balance Sheets (supply and demand tables) on maize, wheat, sorghum, sunflower seed and soybeans please refer to the attachment called FSB MAY26 Annexure A.

3.1 Imports and exports of wheat for the 2025/26 marketing year

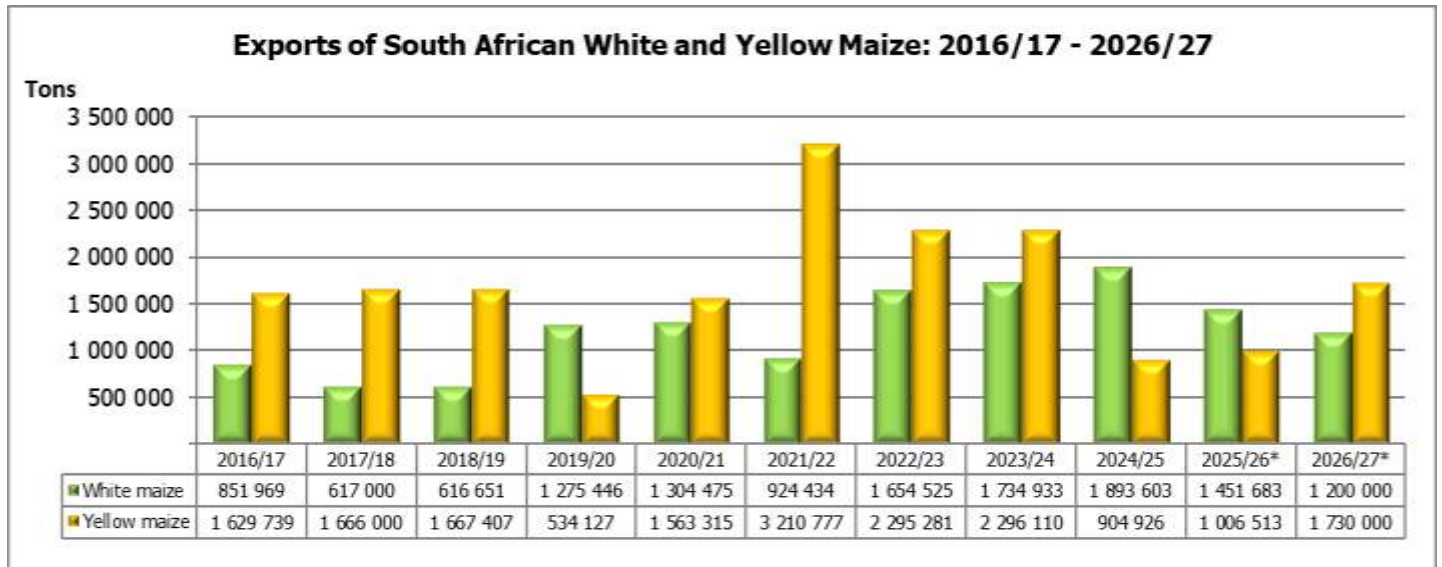
Graph 1: Major countries of wheat imports to South Africa: 2025/26 marketing year



- The progressive wheat imports (human consumption) for the 2025/26 marketing year (27 September 2025 to 29 May 2026) amount to 1 229 679 tons, with 17,25% or 212 121 tons from Poland, followed by 16,77% or 206 210 tons from Lithuania, 15,59% or 191 709 tons from Australia, 14,35% or 176 418 tons from Russian Federation, 10,22% or 125 713 tons from Brazil, 7,60% or 93 489 tons from Canada, 6,65% or 81 734 tons from Germany, 3,60% or 44 250 tons from the United States, 2,88% or 35 432 tons from Romania, 2,63% or 32 398 tons from Latvia and only 2,46% or 30 205 tons from Argentina. The exports of wheat (human consumption) for the above-mentioned period amount to 53 669 tons, of which 42,03% or 22 558 tons went to Zambia, 20,75% or 11 139 tons went to Botswana, 18,85% or 10 114 tons went to Lesotho, 16,39% or 8 799 tons went to Zimbabwe and only 1,97% or 1 059 tons went to Namibia.

3.2 Exports of South African white and yellow maize

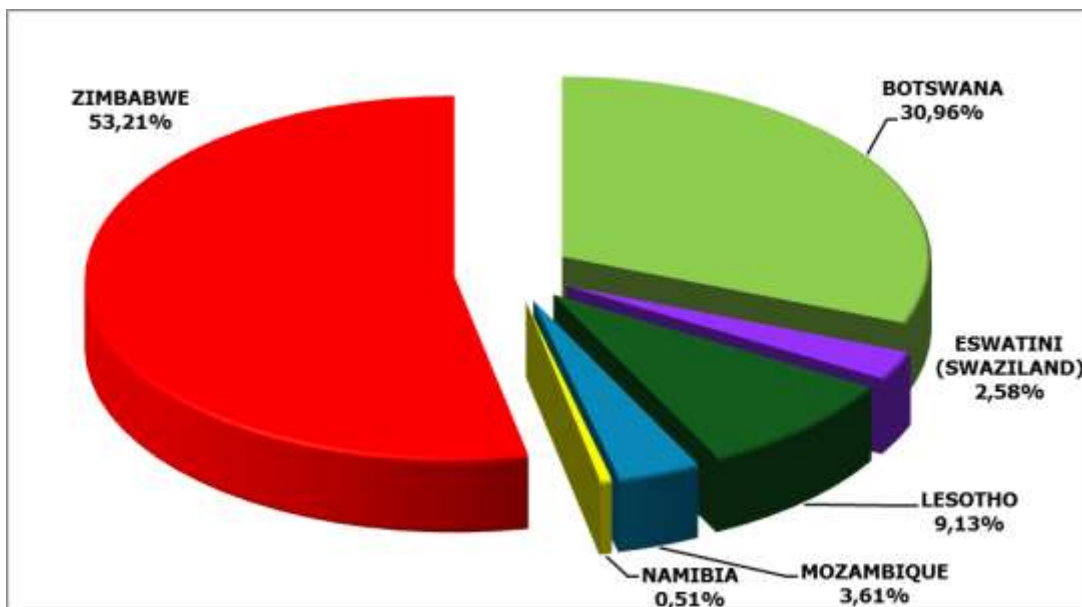
Graph 2: Exports of South African white and yellow maize: 2016/17 - 2026/27 marketing year



*Projection

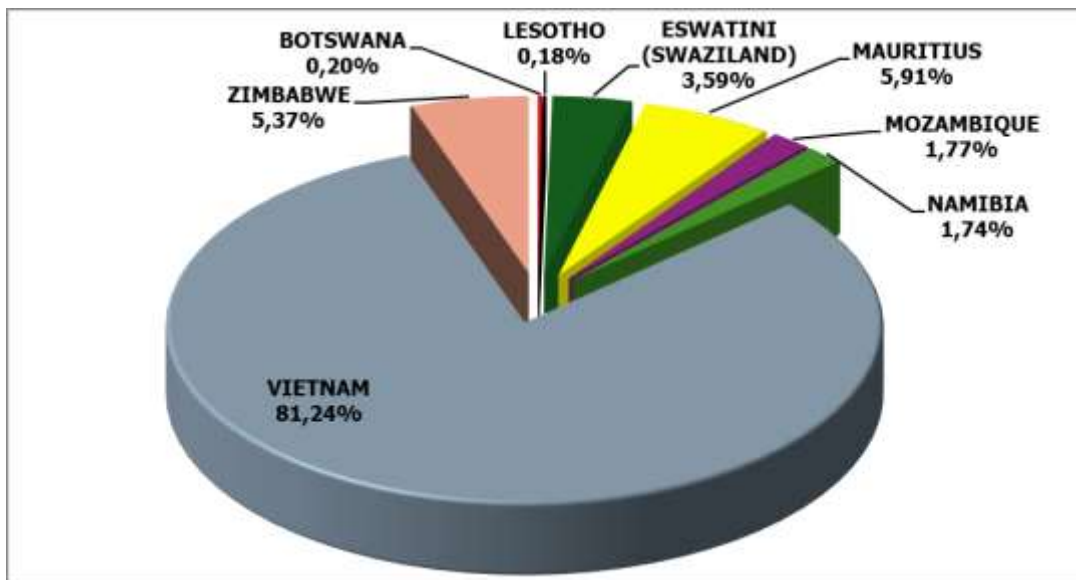
- The exports of white maize for the 2026/27 marketing year are projected at 1,200 million tons, which represents a decrease of 17,34% or 251 683 tons compared to the 1,452 million tons of the previous marketing year. Yellow maize exports for the mentioned period are projected at 1,730 million tons, which represents an increase of 71,88% or 723 487 tons compared to the 1,006 million tons of the previous marketing year.

Graph 3: Major countries of white maize exports from South Africa: 2026/27 marketing year



- From 25 April to 29 May 2026, progressive white maize exports for the 2026/27 marketing year amount to 64 377 tons, with the main destinations being Zimbabwe (53,21% or 34 255 tons), followed by Botswana (30,96% or 19 930 tons), Lesotho (9,13% or 5 875 tons), Mozambique (3,61% or 2 325 tons), Eswathini (Swaziland) (2,58% or 1 661 tons) and Namibia (0,51% or 331 tons). The imports of white maize for the mentioned period amount to zero.

Graph 4: Major countries of yellow maize exports from South Africa: 2026/27 marketing year



- From 25 April to 29 May 2026, progressive yellow maize exports for the 2026/27 marketing year amount to 279 153 tons, with the main destinations being, Vietnam (81,24% or 226 782 tons), followed by Mauritius (5,91% or 16 500 tons), Eswatini (Swaziland) (3,59% or 10 021 tons), Mozambique (1,77% or 4 954 tons), Namibia (1,74% or 4 865 tons), Botswana (0,20% or 554 tons) and Lesotho (0,18% or 489 tons). The imports of yellow maize for the mentioned period are zero.

4. Market information

4.1 Consumer Price Index (CPI)

- Annual consumer price inflation was 4,0% in April 2026, up from 3,1% in March 2026. The CPI increased by 1,1% month-on-month in April 2026.
- The main contributors to the 4,0% annual inflation rate were:
 - Housing and utilities (5,2% and contributing 1,2%);
 - Transport (4,9% and contributing 0,7%); and
 - Insurance and financial services (5,7% and contributing 0,6%).
- In April 2026, the annual inflation rate for:
 - Goods was 3,4%, up from 1,8% in March 2026; and
 - Services was 4,6%, up from 4,2% in March 2026.

4.2 Producer Price Index (PPI)

- Annual producer price inflation (final manufacturing) was 4,8% in April 2026, compared with 2,3% in March 2026. The producer price index (PPI) increased by 3,0% month-on-month in April 2026.
- The main positive contributors to the headline PPI annual inflation rate were coke, petroleum, chemical, rubber and plastic products (11,8% and contributing 2,5%); food products, beverages and tobacco products (1,9% and contributing 0,6%); and paper and printed products (6,4% and contributing 0,5%). The main positive contributor to the headline PPI monthly inflation rate was coke, petroleum, chemical, rubber and plastic products (12,8% and contributing 2,7%).

- The annual percentage change in the PPI for intermediate manufactured goods was 10,0% in April 2026, compared with 9,1% in March 2026. The index increased by 3,2% month-on-month. The main positive contributors to the annual rate were basic and fabricated metals (14,7% and contributing 7,1%); chemicals, rubber and plastic products (5,3% and contributing 1,6%); and sawmilling and wood (7,6% and contributing 0,7%). The main positive contributor to the monthly rate was chemicals, rubber and plastic products (15,7% and contributing 4,0%).
- The annual percentage change in the PPI for electricity and water was 12,5% in April 2026, compared with 17,9% in March 2026. The index increased by 1,5% month-on-month. The contributors to the annual rate were electricity (12,7% and contributing 10,6%) and water (11,0% and contributing 1,8%). The contributors to the monthly rate were electricity (1,7% and contributing 1,4%) and water (0,5% and contributing 0,1%).
- The annual percentage change in the PPI for mining was 24,9% in April 2026, compared with 33,0% in March 2026. The index decreased by 3,1% month-on-month. The main positive contributors to the annual rate were non-ferrous metal ores (47,4% and contributing 21,0%) and gold and other metal ores (11,3% and contributing 3,3%). The main negative contributors to the monthly rate were non-ferrous metal ores (-3,1% and contributing -1,6%) and coal and gas (-9,0% and contributing -1,6%).
- The annual percentage change in the PPI for agriculture, forestry and fishing was -6,5% in April 2026, compared with -2,9% in March 2026. The index increased by 0,6% month-on-month. The negative contributor to the annual rate was agriculture (-8,8% and contributing -7,5%). The main contributor to the monthly rate was agriculture (0,5% and contributing 0,5%).

4.3 Future contract prices

Table 4: Closing prices on Thursday, 4 June 2026

	4 June 2026	4 May 2026	% Change
RSA White Maize per ton (June 2026 contract)	R3 110,00	R3 338,00	-6,83
RSA Yellow Maize per ton (June 2026 contract)	R3 136,00	R3 456,00	-9,26
RSA Wheat per ton (June 2026 contract)	R5 696,00	R5 896,00	-3,39
RSA Sunflower seed per ton (June 2026 contract)	R8 500,00	R8 964,00	-5,18
RSA Soya-beans per ton (June 2026 contract)	R6 660,00	R6 974,00	-4,50
Exchange rate R/\$	R16,25	R16,73	-2,87

Source: JSE/SAFEX

4.4 Agricultural machinery sales

- April 2026 tractor sales of 548 units were 4% more than the 527 units sold in April 2025. On a year-to-date basis tractor sales are now almost 3% up on last year. Fifty-two combine harvesters were sold in April 2026, six more than the 46 units sold in April 2025. On a year-to-date basis, combine harvester sales are now approximately 9% up on last year.
- Market sentiment has recently changed to one of uncertainty and caution. Diesel and fertilizer prices, amongst others, have escalated sharply. Summer crop prospects still look promising, although some harvesting is being hampered by the late rains. Commodity prices are well down on last year. As harvesting progresses, farmers will get a better estimate of their production. However, there is no doubt that they will be looking closely at input costs for the forthcoming summer crop season and may hold back on investing in capital equipment. Industry predictions of tractor sales for the 2026 calendar year are that these will be similar, or marginally lower, than those in 2025.

Table 5: Agricultural machinery sales

Equipment class	Year-on-year		Percentage Change %	Year-to-date		Percentage Change %
	April			April		
	2026	2025		2026	2025	
Tractors	548	527	3,98%	2 352	2 291	2,66%
Combine harvesters	52	46	13,04%	117	107	9,35%

Source: SAAMA press release, May 2026

PLEASE NOTE: The Food Security Bulletin for June 2026 will be released on **6 July 2026**.



5. Acknowledgements

The Directorate: Statistics and Economic Analysis make use of information sourced from various institutions and organisations within South Africa to compile the monthly report on South Africa's Food Security Situation. This report has been compiled with the aid of information and reports sourced from the following institutions and organisations:

- Agbiz
- Agfacts
- BVG Commodities (Pty) Limited
- Department of Water and Sanitation
- Directorate: Climate Change and Disaster Management at DAFF
- Grain South Africa (Grain SA)
- IGC Grain Market Report
- National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC)
- South African Agricultural Machinery Association (SAAMA)
- South African Futures Exchange (SAFEX)
- Statistics South Africa (Stats SA)
- The South African Supply and Demand Estimates Report (SASDE)
- The South African Grain Information Service (SAGIS)
- The South African Weather Service (WeatherSA)
- USDA Foreign Service