MINISTER
AGRICULTURE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X250, Pretoria, 0001; 20 Steve Biko Street, Pretoria, 0001
Tel.: 012 319 6000; Email: queries@nda.gov.za; Web: www.nda.gov.za

Media Statement **12 November 2025**

MINISTER STEENHUISEN: AGRICULTURE CHARGES AHEAD, PUTTING PEOPLE TO WORK

The Minister of Agriculture, John Steenhuisen, today affirmed that the agricultural sector is charging ahead with job creation, despite the challenges, as indicated by the latest Quarterly Labour Force Survey released by Statistics SA.

The latest figures show just how well the sector is doing.

Employment in agriculture is up by 2% (14 000 job increase) compared to the previous quarter, bringing the total to 920 000 jobs.

Quarterly job gains

The Labour Force Survey for the third quarter of 2025 is proof that this is no fluke.

The sector keeps growing, thanks to good harvests in field crops, horticulture, and forestry. This trajectory is pushing the employment figures well above the 799 000 long-term average figure for jobs.

"These figures are encouraging as we know the livestock industry is still dealing with Foot and mouth disease (FMD). As the Department of Agriculture, we will continue to source FMD vaccines and implement tighter biosecurity measures to ensure that our agricultural economy is protected," Minister Steenhuisen said.

Trade deals boost on-farm jobs

The minister also pointed out that the work the Department of Agriculture has been doing to secure trade deals is delivering results when it comes to on-farm job creation.

"We have had a record year for citrus exports, and we are also seeing good results from our efforts to gain new market access, such as China, for our avocado exports. And we are working hard to get more of our high-value products into markets like Japan, India, and the United Kingdom.

"This is all key to making sure that South Africa is a big player on the global stage, and to creating jobs here at home," said Minister Steenhuisen.

The minister continued by saying that trade deals like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) give the country a platform to increasingly grow exports. "By securing the demand for our products, we can keep on planting, harvesting and processing, which in turn keeps the number of jobs growing in supply chains across the provinces.

"And this kind of investment is exactly what we need to keep our employment levels increasing—especially in horticulture and field crops, which should be able to keep these numbers going well into 2026," stated the minister.

The ministry and department are committed to supporting farmers, no matter what challenge they are up against—and to making sure that South African agriculture remains a major engine of growth and employment for the country.

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For media enquiries, please contact:
Ms Joylene van Wyk
Director: Media Liaison Ministry
Cell: 083 292 7399
Email: Joylenev@nda.gov.za

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