

Preliminary area estimates for 2018 summer crops

The preliminary area estimates of today (30 January) are mainly based on the results of a non-probability survey conducted by the Directorate: Statistics and Economic Analysis of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. Less favourable rainfall and warm temperatures in the western producing areas over the past few weeks prevented producers from planting their intended area with summer crops, especially in the Free State and North West provinces.



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The revised area planted and production figures, which will be released by the Crop Estimates Committee on, DV, 27 February 2018, will mainly be based on information obtained from the Producer Independent Crop Estimation System (PICES) survey for the Northern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Gauteng and North West provinces.

Commercial maize: The preliminary area estimate for maize is 2,309 million ha, which is 12,15% or 319,400 ha less than the 2,629 million ha planted for the previous season, and also 6,53% or 161,200 ha less than the intended planting figure of 2,470 million ha released in October 2017.

The preliminary area estimate for white maize is 1,285 million ha, which represents a decrease of 21,81% or 358,400 ha compared to the 1,643 million ha planted last season. In the case of yellow maize, the area estimate is 1,024 million ha, which is 3,96% or 39,000 ha more than the 985,500 ha planted last season.

Other summer crops: Please note that only provisional national area planted figures of groundnuts, sorghum and dry beans for the current production season are being released today (30 January 2018).

Sunflower seed: The preliminary area estimate for sunflower seed is 560,100 ha, which is 11,90% or 75,650 ha less than the 635,750 ha planted the previous season. As some producers have not yet finished planting, mainly because of unfavourable weather conditions, rainfall during the next two weeks can still influence farmers' decisions to plant sunflower seed.

Soybeans: It is estimated that 701,000 ha have been planted to soybeans, which represents an increase of 22,14% or 127,050 ha compared to the 573,950 ha planted last season. For groundnuts, the area estimate is 53,000 ha, which is 5,36% or 3,000 ha less than the 56,000 ha planted for the previous season.

Sorghum: The area estimate for sorghum decreased by 40,97%, from 42,350 ha to 25,000 ha against the previous season.

Dry beans: the area estimate is 52,000 ha, which is 15,43% or 6,950 ha more than the 45,050 ha planted for the previous season.

Please note that the revised area estimates and first production forecast for summer field crops for 2018 will be released on 27 February 2018.

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