



Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

The key priorities of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) are to alleviate poverty, create employment and improve food security. Added to this, the department focuses on the conservation and sustainable use of the country's natural resources in the agricultural, forestry and fisheries sectors. The department's overall responsibilities include production and resource management, agricultural support services, trade and economic development, food safety and biosecurity, forestry and marine aquaculture.

Economic contribution

The gross value of agricultural production for 2013 was R171 258 million. The gross income of producers (the value of sales and production for other uses, and the value of changes in inventories) for the year amounted to R167 394 million. The increase can be ascribed mainly to farmers receiving better prices for products in general, but in particular prices of field crops, which improved by 23%; and those of animal products, which were 8,7% higher.

Field crops and horticulture

Gross income from field crops increased by 24,4%, to R44 804 million.

- South Africa is the main maize producer in the Southern African Development Community region. Maize is produced mainly in North West, the Free State and Mpumalanga. Some 11,5 Mt of maize were commercially produced on 2,8 million ha of land. Income from maize at R23 813 million was R7 143 million or 42,9% more than in the previous 12 months.
- Wheat is produced mainly in the winter rainfall areas of the Western Cape and the eastern parts of the Free State. Some 1,9 Mt were produced on 511 200 ha of land.
- Malting barley is produced mainly on the southern coastal plains of the Western Cape on 84 940 ha and production totalled 298 000 t.
- Sorghum is cultivated mostly in the drier parts of the summer rainfall areas such as Mpumalanga, the Free State, Limpopo and North West. An estimated 62 620 ha were planted, with production totalling 154 494 t.
- About 430 000 ha are under sugar cane production with 68% grown within 30 km of the coast and 16% in the high rainfall areas of KwaZulu-Natal. The remainder is grown in the northern irrigated areas that comprise Pongola and the Mpumalanga lowveld. The industry produces an estimated average of 19,9 Mt of sugarcane (2,2 Mt of sugar) per season. About 60% of this sugar is marketed in the Southern African Customs Union.
- Honeybush production is unique to South Africa. It is part of the fynbos that grows wild in the Cederberg area of the

Western Cape and is not produced anywhere else in the world. Some 230 ha of honeybush tea are under cultivation.

Other crops

Other crops grown in South Africa include:

- Deciduous fruit: grown mainly in the Western Cape and in the Langkloof Valley of the Eastern Cape. Smaller production areas are found along the Orange River and in the Free State, Mpumalanga and Gauteng. South Africa produced 1 694 452 t of deciduous fruit.
- Citrus production is largely limited to irrigation areas and occurs in Limpopo (23 753 ha), Eastern Cape (13 951 ha), Western Cape (8 970 ha), Mpumalanga (9 111 ha), KwaZulu-Natal (3 284 ha) and Northern Cape (1 418 ha).
- Pineapples are grown mainly in the Eastern Cape and northern KwaZulu-Natal. Other 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 the subtropical coastal areas of KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape.
- South Africa's wine industry saw the biggest grape crop ever produced after a bumper 2013 harvest season. High-quality wines were anticipated for the 2013 vintage. According to the South African Wine Industry Information and Systems, the 2013 wine grape crop reached about 1,5 million tons – 5,6% higher than the 2012 crop. The 2013 wine harvest – including juice and concentrate for non-alcoholic purposes, wine for brandy and distilling wine – amounted to 1 152 Mz, calculated at an average recovery of 773 litres per ton of grapes.

Game ranching

South Africa's unique wildlife ranching sector is widely recognised as one of the world leaders in the use of wildlife for farming/ranching purposes.

The sector has shown extraordinary growth over the years, with the number of game farms operating in the country

At the World Economic Forum meeting held in September 2013 in Cape Town, African Heads of State and Government agreed that agricultural investment would uplift smallholder farmers out of poverty, empower women and transform Africa. Several African countries have called on the continent's private sector to aid in enhancing Africa's agricultural development programme.

The Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme, an African Union and New Partnership for Africa's Development initiative, aims to drive agricultural development in Africa. The programme aims to increase public financing in agriculture by 10% and raise agricultural productivity by 6%. The Grow Africa partnership countries have made agricultural transformation a priority.

increasing from 3 500 in 1992 to approximately 10 000. Most game farms are in Limpopo, followed by the Northern and Eastern Cape, respectively. In 2013, the DAFF finalised a game farming policy.

Livestock

Agriculture forms a critical part of South Africa's socio-economic and socio-political stability. Animal production contributes approximately 48% to the country's agricultural output in terms of value. The industry employs about 500 000 people.

South Africa has approximately 8 000 commercial sheep farms and about 5 800 communal farmers. Most of the estimated 24,4 million sheep in South Africa are in the Eastern Cape, followed by the Northern Cape, Free State, Western Cape and Mpumalanga.

The South African dairy industry is important to the job market, with approximately 2 700 milk producers employing 60 000 farm workers and providing 40 000 people with indirect jobs within the value chain such as milk processing.

Commercial farmers own 59% of the 14 million cattle available in South Africa. There are 27 popular breeds in South Africa including the Brahman, indigenous Afrikaner and Nguni, Tuli, Boron, Bonsmara, Drakensberger, Simbra, Beefmaster, Angus and Braford.

Support to smallholder farmers

Support to smallholder producers is being synchronised through the department's coordinated Programme Management Unit, which comprises all DAFF technical support units.

The Jobs Fund received R9 billion over a three-year period. The fund is targeted at established companies with a good track record, which plan to expand existing programmes or pilot innovative approaches to employment creation, with a special focus on opportunities for young people.

Akwandze Agricultural Finance Ltd, through funding provided by the Jobs Fund, is addressing this need by ensuring these farmers get adequate, cost-effective and appropriate financing with favourable terms. Akwandze is also providing a package of associated farmer support initiatives such as on-site service back-up, training and capacity building.

Climate change response

The agriculture 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 mainly through the Department of Environmental Affairs, but the DAFF, as well as other departments such as

those of mineral resources, energy, science and technology, and water affairs are also involved.

The increasing risk of disaster is reduced by strengthening early warning systems and disseminating early warnings, as well as raising awareness through campaigns.

The DAFF has therefore developed and implemented an Early Warning System that disseminates extreme weather warnings to farming communities.

Climate variability has induced drought interspersed with flooding, resulting in lower-than-average agricultural production yields.

The DAFF has completed two policy documents: the Agricultural Disaster Risk-Management Plan and the Agricultural Drought-Management Plan. An amount of more than R990 million has been made available through the Medium Term Expenditure Framework period until 2014/15 as part of the flood-assistance scheme.

Forestry

The DAFF is the custodian of South Africa's forest resources, which cover over 40 million ha of the country's land surface area. An amount of R1,2 billion from the department's budget has been allocated to forestry and natural resources management.

The forestry sector employs around 165 900 workers and provides about 62 700 direct jobs and 30 000 indirect jobs. Forestry provides livelihood support to 652 000 people of the country's rural population.

The pulp and paper industry provides approximately 13 200 direct and 11 000 indirect employment opportunities. Some 20 000 workers are employed in sawmilling, 6 000 in the timber board and 2 200 in the mining timber industries, while a further 11 000 workers are employed in miscellaneous jobs in forestry.

In terms of land use, the afforested area is about 1,27 million ha – about 1% of the total South African land area of 122,3 million ha. The forest sector (forestry and forest products) contributes about 1% to the gross domestic product.

The department develops human resources through forestry-sector skills development initiatives and promotes employment through commercial forestry activities such as forestation and downstream activities. The integration of forestry programmes into provincial and municipal development plans will assist the "Plant a Million Trees" campaign.

The department is pursuing a target of 10 000 ha of nett new afforestation a year.

The focus will remain on encouraging cooperatives, simplifying and streamlining the regulatory environment, training and extension, supporting the implementation of rural credit and offering incentives for new entrants.

Afforestation is taking place in rural areas where there are few other viable opportunities for job creation and economic activity. The development of these additional raw material resources will attract greater processing capacity in the form of sawmills, board mills, chipping plants and treatment plants, which will lead to broad economic growth. An additional R500 million a year could be generated from such plantations.

The forestry programme also includes greening and tree-planting projects. The programme prioritises work on fire-fighting programmes such as the Working on Fire Programme and encourages the establishment of fire-protection associations.

Woodlands

The woodlands, also known as savannas, constitute a forest resource of major importance in South Africa. It is the most accessible forest resource for poor communities and contributes in the region of R2 000 to R5 000 to poor households annually. While natural forests cover less than one million ha of land in total, and plantation forestry covers less than 1,3 million ha and the woodlands collectively cover about 29 million ha to 46 million ha.

The cover includes extensive areas in the low-lying, drier areas of Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga. Rich biodiversity is found in savanna woodland comprising 5 900 plants, 540 bird species and 175 mammals. These include iconic species such as the Big Five group of mammals that are important to the tourism industry.

Several protected tree species of the savanna, such as camel thorn and leadwood, contribute substantially to the lucrative braai wood market, and guidelines have been set for licensing processes to assist with the control of their use.

Kathu Forest in the Northern Cape is the first woodland area to be declared protected woodland under the National Forests Act of 1998.

The woodlands are a valuable source of fuel, building material, craft timber and a variety of non-timber products. These include fruit, fodder, medicinal compounds, honey, meat and mushrooms. They form the backbone of the livelihoods of millions of people. The annual marula-fruit (*Sclerocarya birrea*) harvest, for example, is worth some R1,1 billion a year to rural communities.

Fisheries

South Africa is among the global fishing nations who have identified the challenges within their fishing industries. With 22 commercial fisheries sectors and new fisheries being explored and experimented with, South Africa has two fishery sector components.

Wild capture fisheries include three distinct components (commercial, recreational and subsistence fisheries), each of

which requires specific research and management interventions. The aquaculture (fish farming) sector is considered underdeveloped and as a result has been prioritised due to declining wild stocks.

The main challenge in fisheries is to create a balance between maximising the social and economic potential of the fisheries industry while protecting the integrity and quality of the country's marine and coastal ecosystems and addressing transformation in the sector.

In line with international trends, the department recognises fisheries as an economic activity rather than a purely environmental or biodiversity matter. Government has expanded the mandate for fisheries management through the inclusion of fresh water and inland fisheries, as well as aquaculture, to the department's existing responsibilities.

Aquaculture

Aquaculture incorporates the breeding, trading or rearing of aquatic organisms in a controlled or selected aquatic environment for recreational, commercial or subsistence purposes.

In March 2013, government launched the R800-million Agriculture Development Enhancement Programme, which offers cost-sharing grants of R40 million per company. The aim is to create more jobs in the sector. The grants are available for machinery, equipment, infrastructure, commercial vehicles and work boats in pursuit of boosting competition in the industry.

Abalone fishing is severely restricted in South African waters, but poaching is rife as it is a lucrative trade. A big cause for the decline in abalone numbers is rampant poaching over the years. The species is highly coveted and fetches high prices, especially in the Far East.

In May 2013, Cabinet approved the National Aquaculture Policy Framework. The policy provides a unified framework for the establishment and development of an industry that contributes towards sustainable job creation and increased investment.

Marine and freshwater aquaculture presents a good opportunity to diversify fish production to satisfy local demand, contribute to food security, job creation, economic development and rural development, and export opportunities.

In December 2013, South Africa hosted the Third Global Conference on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change.

