



**stats sa**

Department:  
Statistics South Africa  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X44, Pretoria, 0001, South Africa, ISibalo House, Koch Street, Salvokop, Pretoria, 0002  
www.statssa.gov.za, info@statssa.gov.za, Tel +27 12 310 8911

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**24 March 2020**

### **Stats SA releases Census of Commercial Agriculture 2017 Report**

#### **Number of farms**

Statistics South Africa today released findings from the Census of Commercial Agriculture report, the report shows that a total number of farms/ farming units involved in the commercial agriculture industry in 2017 was 40 122. The largest proportion of farms was in livestock farming (13 639 or 33,9% of the total), followed by mixed farming (12 458 or 31,1%) and field crops (8 559 or 21,3%).

The province with the highest number of farms in 2017 was Free State (7 951 farms or 19,8% of the national total), followed by Western Cape (6 937 or 17,3%), North West (4 920 or 12,3%) and Northern Cape (4 829 or 12,0%). The provinces with the lowest number of farms in 2017 were Gauteng (2 291 or 5,7%), Mpumalanga (2 823 or 7,0%) and Limpopo (3 054 or 7,6%).

#### **Land use**

On land use (as opposed to farm size), the survey show that In September 2018, the total land used for commercial agriculture was 46,4 million hectares, which represents 37,9% of the total land area of South Africa (122,5 million hectares). Commercial agricultural land comprised mainly grazing land (36,5 million hectares) and arable land (7,6 million hectares). Grazing land is used for livestock and game farming, and arable land is used for crop production.

The Northern Cape province accounted for the largest share of the country's commercial agricultural land (37,1%), followed by Free State (16,4%), Eastern Cape (12,3%) and North West (11,5%). Gauteng (0,8%) and Limpopo (3,7%) recorded the smallest shares.



Dipalopalo tsa Aforikaborwa • Dipalopalo tsa Afrika Borwa • Ezezibalo zaseNingizimu Afrika • Tshitatistika Afrika Tshipembe • Tinhlayohlayo Afrika-Dzonga  
Statistieke Suid-Afrika • Dipalopalo tša Afrika Borwa • Telubalo taseNingizimu Afrika • EzeeNkcukacha maNani zoMzantsi Afrika • Iimbalobalo zeSewula Afrika

**The South Africa I know, the home I understand**



## **Income**

According to the Census of Commercial Agriculture 2017 report, released by Statistics South Africa, the total income for the commercial agriculture industry in 2017 was R332,8 billion, which was higher than the R85,9 billion recorded for 2007. In 2017, the major contributor to total income was livestock farming (R120,8 billion or 36,2%), followed by mixed farming (R95,0 billion or 28,6%) and horticulture (R65,7 billion or 19,8%).

The province contributing the most to total income in 2017 was Western Cape (R64,3 billion or 19,3%), followed by Free State (R46,9 billion or 14,1%), North West (R39,7 billion or 11,9%), Mpumalanga (R38,4 billion or 11,6%) and KwaZulu-Natal (R34,0 billion or 10,2%).

## **Employment**

Findings from the report shows that a total number of persons employed in commercial agriculture as on 30 June 2018 was 757 628, down from 769 594 in 28 February 2007 (-1,6%). In terms of employment, the major commercial agriculture activity in 2017 was horticulture (268 740 employees or 35,5% of the total), followed by mixed farming (185 863 or 24,5%) and farming of animals (162 116 or 21,4%).

Western Cape was by far the largest provincial employer in 2018 (186 997 employees or 24,7% of the national total), followed by Limpopo (97 478 or 12,9%) and KwaZulu-Natal (96 206 or 12,7%). The provinces with the lowest number of commercial agriculture employees were Gauteng (36 517 or 4,8%) and North West (57 758 or 7,6%).

In terms of area planted, the major field crops in both 2007 and 2017 were maize, soya beans, sunflower seeds, wheat and sugarcane. Between 2007 and 2017 the area planted increased in three cases, namely maize, soya beans and sunflower seeds. All major field crops were mostly planted under dry land, i.e. their main source of water was rain. In 2017 sunflower seeds had the highest proportion (99,2% of sunflower seeds) planted under dry land, followed by soya beans (93,7%), maize (89,4%), sugarcane (80,2%) and wheat (73,0%).

***Issued by Statistics South Africa***

**For technical enquiries contact:**

Mr Joe de Beer  
Deputy Director-General: Economic Statistics  
Tel: 012 310 8024  
Cell: 082 888 2600  
Email: [JoeDB@statssa.gov.za](mailto:JoeDB@statssa.gov.za)

Mr Itani Magwaba  
Chief Director: Structural Industry Statistics  
Tel: 012 337 6254/6471  
Email: [ItaniM@statssa.gov.za](mailto:ItaniM@statssa.gov.za)

Mr Tshepo Pekane  
Director: Data Analysis and Outputs  
Tel: 012 310 8191  
Email: [TshepoP@statssa.gov.za](mailto:TshepoP@statssa.gov.za)

**For media enquires contact:**

Ms. Felicia Sithole  
Tel: 012 339 2401  
Cell: 0764300693  
Email: [felicias@statssa.gov.za](mailto:felicias@statssa.gov.za)