CoCA 2017 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Why do we need to conduct CoCA:
   Answer: CoCA collects data on the size, nature and structure of commercial agriculture. It answer questions such as:
   - how big is commercial agriculture in terms of income and employment,
   - which sectors of commercial agriculture creates more jobs and contributes the most to income,
   - what are the major field crops (in terms of land use or production),
   - what are most dominant livestock,
   - where (part of the country or in which municipality) is commercial agriculture taking place?

2. How is a farm defined in CoCA?
   Answer: A farm or farming unit consists of one or more farms, holdings or pieces of land, whether adjacent or not, operated as a single unit and situated within the same local municipality.

3. If one owned a farm but rented it out, how was I included in the statistics?
   Answer: CoCA is a survey of commercial agriculture activity in the country, not of land ownership. Since they rented out the farm to someone, they were involved in **'real estate'**, not in agriculture. Thus, they were not covered by the survey.

4. What is the reference period for the survey?
   Answer: The reference period for most of the question was the financial year that ended on any date between 1 March 2017 and 28 February 2018, according to the usual reporting schedule of the farm.

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The South Africa I know, the home I understand

However, there were exceptions with regards to number of livestock on farm (30 September 2018) and employment (30 June 2018). This was mainly to make it easier for the farms to **recall** since collection only started in October 2018. If collection started in January 2018 (as usual), the year will have been 2017.

5. What is the number of farms in South Africa?
   Answer: There were 40 122 commercial farms in 2017. At least 62% (around 24 942) of the farms are 'micro', with income less than R2,3 million. 15 000 (38%) large, medium and small farms contributed 95% of total income and 90% of employment.

6. How was a farm defined in 2017?
   Answer: According to FAO, a farm/ farming unit consists of one or more farms, holdings or pieces of land, whether adjacent or not, operated as a single unit and situated within the same local municipality. If a farm operated in more than one municipality, they had to complete a questionnaire for each municipality.

7. What is the difference between income of field crops, horticulture and animals and animal products?
   Answer: Of the total income of R332,8 billion in the commercial agriculture industry in 2017, R294,8 billion was derived directly from agricultural activities, and is referred as gross farming income. Animals and animals products contributed 52,2% to gross farming income, followed by horticulture (23,9%) and field crops (23,4%).

8. Which provinces are critical for food security in the country?
   Answer: It is difficult to say. However it is important to note that Free State is dominant in field crops contributing 43,6%, 40,6% and 57,8% to the production of maize, soya beans and sunflower seed, respectively. The other major producers of maize are Mpumalanga and North West.

9. Contribution of largest enterprises - refer to large, medium and micro.
   Answer: There were about 15 000 (38% of the total) large, medium and small farms in 2017, which contributed 95% of income, and 90% of employment.

10. Number of black farmers and average age of farmers.
Answer: CoCA didn't collect information on farm owners. However, it did collect demographic details of the farm manager/ operator, which are as follows:

- 90% male and 9% female.
- 86%, 9%, 3% and 1% of the farm operators are White, Black African, Coloured and Indian/ Asian, respectively.
- 40% of the farm operators are 55 years and above of age.

11. What is the average farm income?
Answer: There were 40 122 farms with gross farming income of R294,8 billion. Thus, the average income per farm is R7,3 million.

12. What are major field crops?
Answer: The major field crops (in terms of area planted) were maize, soya beans, sunflower seeds, wheat and sugarcane.

13. What are the major vegetables?
Answer: The major vegetables were potatoes, onions, tomatoes and cabbages.

14. What is the average size of a farm in commercial agriculture?
Answer: Historically, CoCA doesn't collect information on farm size as it is not possible to verify the figure. The focus is more on land used on a certain date since this ascertained by looking at international standards or previous results on yield (crop production per hectare) and number of livestock per hectare.

On 30 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).

15. Main fruit exports in the commercial agriculture industry.
Answer: In 2017, the main fruit exported as measured in metric tons was oranges (967 thousand), followed by apples (403 thousand), grapefruit (357 thousand), lemons (301 thousand) and table grapes (229 thousand).

When fruits exports were measured as a percentage of production, lemons was the most exported (77,7%). We also exported 74,0% of our grapefruit production, followed by oranges (70,4%) and table grapes (69,8%).

16. When are we going to conduct Coca again?
Answer: The first Census of Commercial Agriculture (CoCA) after 27 April 1994 (Freedom Day) was conducted in 2002. This was followed by another CoCA in 2007. Unfortunately, CoCA 2012 was not conducted since no funding was provided. It is important that the next CoCA in 2022 takes place to restore the time series and ensure that plans and policies are informed by facts. Also, failure to conduct a series regularly have an effect on the quality of statistics.