

# Record harvest still expected as maize crop estimate rises

SA's 2017 commercial maize harvest is expected to be 2.16% higher than previously forecast in June - the largest maize crop to date in the country. In its sixth production estimate for the year, the crop estimates committee said on Wednesday the size of the maize crop had been set at 15.969-million tonnes in July.



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The three main maize-producing areas, namely the Free State, Mpumalanga and North West, are expected to produce 83% of the 2017 crop. Favourable weather conditions earlier this year had enabled farmers to increase the area planted for summer crops.

By the close of trade, the September 2017 white maize future contract was valued at R1,800 rand a ton, or 1.11% lower on the day. The yellow maize contract had shed 0.78%, to R1,917.

The production forecast for sunflower seed was unchanged at 821,970 tonnes. The forecast for soybeans was also unchanged at 1.34m tonnes.

The preliminary area estimate for wheat was 498,850 hectares, which is 1.87% or 9,515 hectares less than the 508,365 hectares planted for the previous season. This is the third smallest area planted for wheat since the 1930s, the committee said.

The preliminary area estimate for malting barley is 98,800 hectares, which is 11.39% more than last season. The area planted for canola is 87,000 hectares, up 27.80% from the previous comparative period.

*Source: BDpro*

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