

Outlook points to minimal rainfall for SA's wheat growing areas

South Africa has recorded a record harvest season with the total grain and oilseed crop of 18.91 million tonnes - up 101% year-on-year - and with the maize crop estimate, in particular, coming in at an all time high of 6.41 million tonnes - comprising of 59% yellow and 41% white maize.



Robin via [pixabay](#)

However, the winter rains have not retained momentum and the Western Cape is still struggling with persistent drought conditions.

“Weather is critical for price direction going forward, with the Western Cape still not out of the woods and the rainfall outlook still pointing to minimal rainfall for the wheat areas in South Africa. The crop has entered a critical stage of development and more moisture is needed for a good crop,” says Paul Makube, agricultural economist at FNB.

The short term rainfall outlook shows a limited chance of receiving rain in the grain areas in South Africa. The medium outlook shows an improvement in the rainfall expectations, particularly for Mpumalanga and KZN whose optimal planting dates for maize are fast approaching from 1 October to 15 and 30 November respectively.

Normal rainfall expected for the rest of the country

That said, all indications are that we are likely to have a largely normal rainfall season as the El Niño prospects that had been noted at the beginning of the year have diminished.

“Apart from the Western Cape water crisis, we still expect a normal rainfall pattern for the rest of the country and therefore there should not be major worries about the late onset of summer rains this year. The season is off to a slow start, but we should see a far more normal season this year,” concludes Makube.

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