Please refer to pages 115 - 119 for the methodologies followed.

The maize crop quality survey is performed annually by the Southern African Grain Laboratory NPC (SAGL). SAGL was established in 1997 on request of the Grain Industry. SAGL is an ISO 17025 accredited testing laboratory and participates in a number of proficiency testing schemes, both nationally and internationally, as part of our ongoing quality assurance procedures to demonstrate technical competency and international comparability.

The results of this, the 27th survey, as well as previous years' surveys are available on the SAGL website (www.sagl.co.za). The report, in an easy to page format, is also available on the website. Hard copy reports are distributed to industry stakeholders and interested parties.

In addition to the quality information, production figures (obtained from the Crop Estimates Committee (CEC)) relating to hectares planted, tons produced and yields obtained on a national as well as provincial basis, over an eleven season period, are provided in this report. SAGIS (South African Grain Information Service) supply and demand figures over several years are provided in table and graph format, also import and export data. Information on maize processed per province as well as the manufacture, import and export of maize products is also included in this report. The national grading regulations as published in Government Gazettes of 16 February 2024 as well as 1 March 2024, are provided on pages 124 to 134.

The long-term goal of this crop quality survey is the annual determination of the quality of the commercial maize crop on a national level. This valuable data set reveals general tendencies, highlights quality differences in the commercial maize produced in different local production regions for local market requirements and provides important information on the quality of commercial maize intended for export. During seasons when maize is imported for domestic use, the quality of the imported maize can be compared to that of locally produced maize.

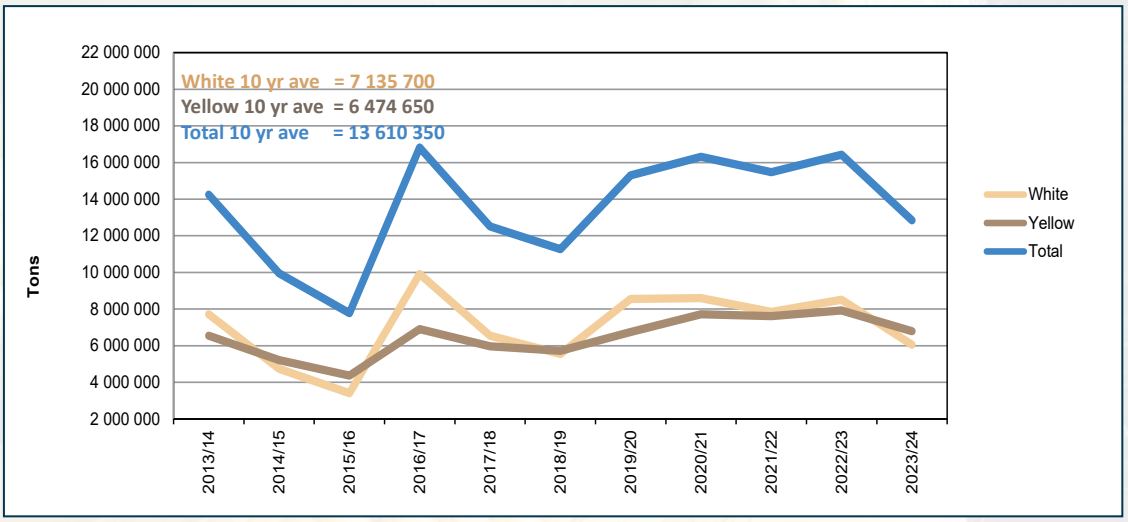
The quality data generated is also referred to by various role players in the maize industry, adds value to research projects and serves as the basis for discussions when maize grading regulations have to be revised.

With funding from the Maize Trust, a data mining project on thirteen season's crop quality data was conducted and the results transferred to a Geographic Information System (GIS) map system, reflecting all the maize producing areas of South Africa. These maps are updated annually.

## Production

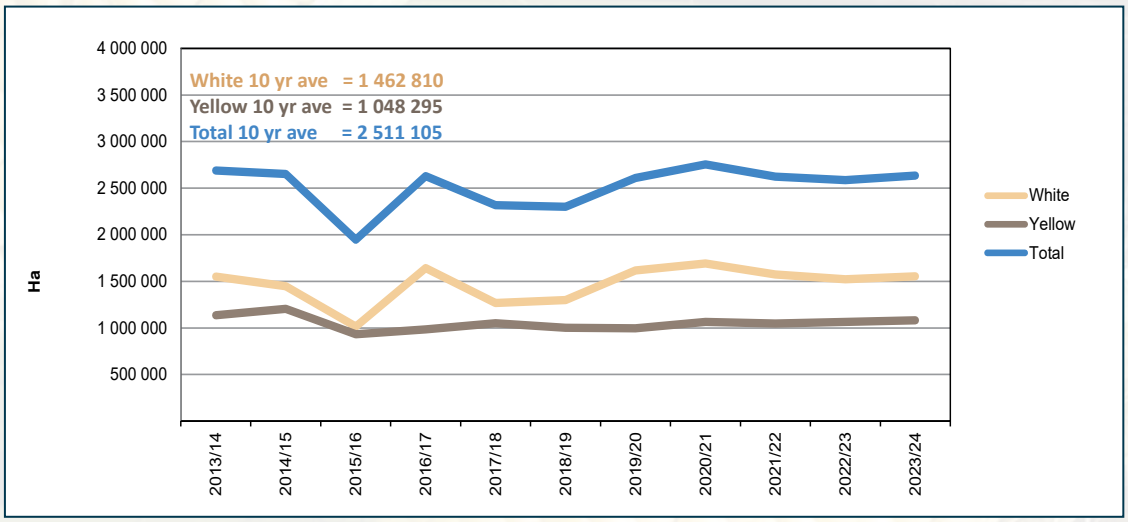
The final figure for the 2023/24 season's commercial maize crop as overseen by the National Crop Estimates Liaison Committee (CELC) and shown in Graph 2, is 12 850 000 tons. This figure represents a year-on-year decrease of almost 22% and is also almost 6% lower than the 10-year crop average (13 610 350 tons). White maize's contribution to the total production was 6 055 000 tons (47.1%) and that of yellow maize 6 795 000 tons (52.9%).

The national Crop Estimates Committee's (CEC) estimated total production figures were revised, using the South African Grain Information Services' (SAGIS) published figures of actual deliveries as basis for the calculations. Figures from the maize utilisation survey, conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALLRD) to determine on-farm usage and retentions as well as the telephonic survey conducted by the National Crop Statistics Consortium (NCSC), were added to the SAGIS delivery figures to calculate the final crop production figures.




Graph 2: Maize production in RSA from 2013/14 to 2023/24

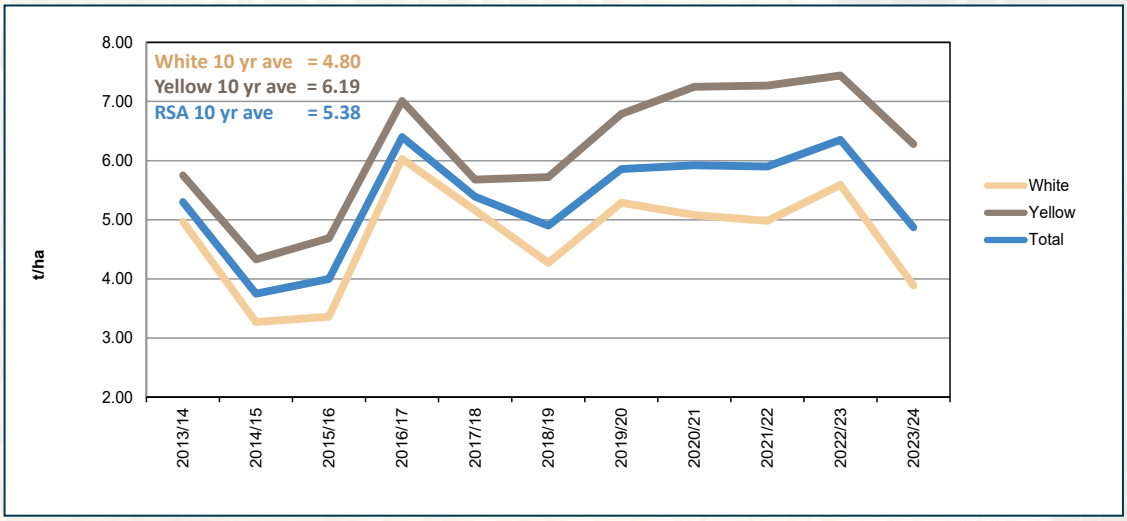
As shown in Graph 3, the total area utilised for maize production in the 2023/24 season was 2 636 250 hectares, representing increases of 1.9% compared to the previous season and 5% compared to the 10-year average. White maize was produced on 1 554 750 hectares and yellow maize on 1 081 500 hectares (1 521 300 and 1 064 800 hectares respectively in the 2022/23 season).




Graph 3: Total RSA area utilised for maize production from 2013/14 to 2023/24

Graph 4 depicts the maize yield of 4.87 tons per hectare (t/ha), which was 23% lower than the previous season (6.35 t/ha) and 9.5% lower than the 10-year average (5.38 t/ha). White maize yielded 3.89 t/ha and yellow maize 6.28 t/ha (5.59 t/ha and 7.44 t/ha respectively during the previous season).

According to the CEC, the maize area planted in the non-commercial agricultural sector is estimated at 347 000 ha, representing a 3.24% decrease compared to the 358 620 ha of the previous season. The expected maize crop for this sector is 575 000 tons, which is 13.41% less than the 664 040 tons of last season. Approximately 46% of non-commercial maize is produced in the Eastern Cape, followed by KwaZulu-Natal with 22%.




Graph 4: RSA Maize yield from 2013/14 to 2023/24

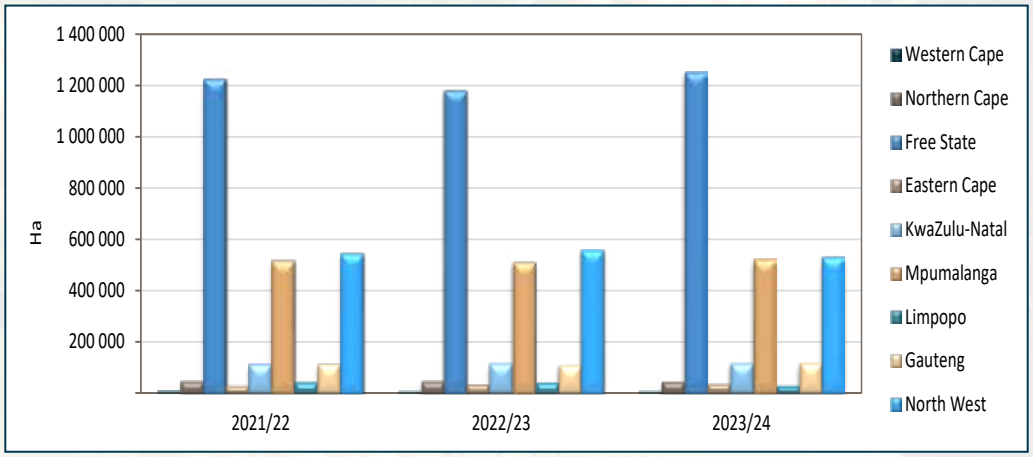
The major commercial maize-producing provinces are the Free State, Mpumalanga and North West, contributing 79% of the total maize production in the RSA (Table 1). The Free State produced 5 377 000 tons of maize on 1 250 000 hectares with a yield of 4.30 t/ha. Mpumalanga produced 3 474 000 tons of maize on 520 000 hectares with a yield of 6.68 t/ha and North West produced 1 298 500 tons of maize on 530 000 hectares yielding 2.45 t/ha. Yellow maize contributed 71.7% of the total maize production in Mpumalanga while the majority of maize produced in the Free State (63%) and North West (74.7%) was white.

**Table 1: Maize production overview - 2023/24 season**

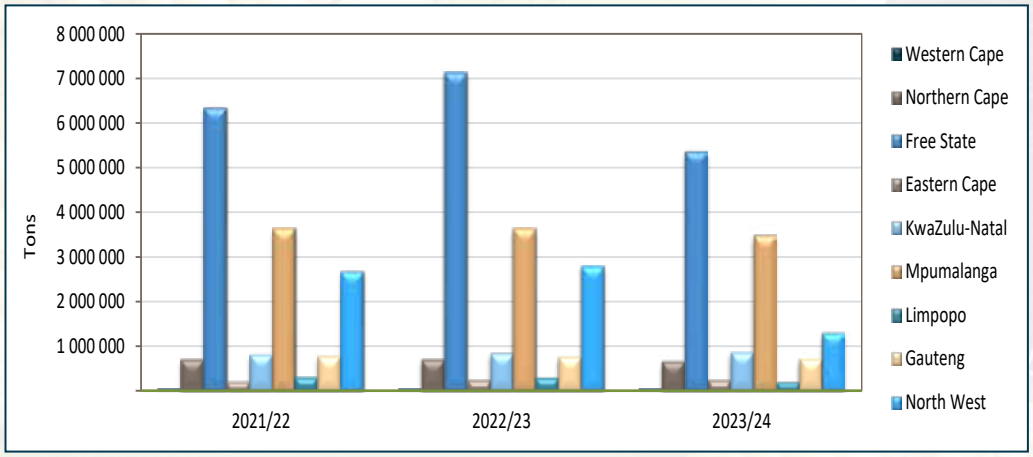
| Province | Type of production | White | | | Yellow | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Hectares planted, ha | Production, tons | Yield, t/ha | Hectares planted, ha | Production, tons | Yield, t/ha |
| Western Cape | Dryland | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| | Irrigation | 250 | 2 300 | 9.20 | 3 500 | 32 200 | 9.20 |
| | Total | 250 | 2 300 | 9.20 | 3 500 | 32 200 | 9.20 |
| Northern Cape | Dryland | 10 | 50 | 5.00 | 100 | 425 | 4.25 |
| | Irrigation | 1 490 | 18 850 | 12.65 | 41 900 | 648 475 | 15.48 |
| | Total | 1 500 | 18 900 | 12.60 | 42 000 | 648 900 | 15.45 |
| Free State | Dryland | 816 000 | 3 242 000 | 3.97 | 374 000 | 1 553 000 | 4.15 |
| | Irrigation | 19 000 | 143 000 | 7.53 | 41 000 | 439 000 | 10.71 |
| | Total | 835 000 | 3 385 000 | 4.05 | 415 000 | 1 992 000 | 4.80 |
| Eastern Cape | Dryland | 4 200 | 18 400 | 4.38 | 18 000 | 85 050 | 4.73 |
| | Irrigation | 1 800 | 22 400 | 12.44 | 9 000 | 106 650 | 11.85 |
| | Total | 6 000 | 40 800 | 6.80 | 27 000 | 191 700 | 7.10 |
| KwaZulu-Natal | Dryland | 39 500 | 216 000 | 5.47 | 475 000 | 352 000 | 7.41 |
| | Irrigation | 7 500 | 70 700 | 9.43 | 19 500 | 224 200 | 11.50 |
| | Total | 47 000 | 286 700 | 6.10 | 67 000 | 576 200 | 8.60 |
| Mpumalanga | Dryland | 151 700 | 903 000 | 5.95 | 337 000 | 2 258 000 | 6.70 |
| | Irrigation | 8 300 | 81 000 | 9.76 | 23 000 | 232 000 | 10.09 |
| | Total | 160 000 | 984 000 | 6.15 | 360 000 | 2 490 000 | 6.92 |
| Limpopo | Dryland | 4 900 | 20 800 | 4.24 | 4 000 | 12 000 | 3.00 |
| | Irrigation | 6 100 | 54 000 | 8.85 | 11 000 | 108 000 | 9.82 |
| | Total | 11 000 | 74 800 | 6.80 | 15 000 | 120 000 | 8.00 |
| Gauteng | Dryland | 50 400 | 257 000 | 5.10 | 53 400 | 372 350 | 6.13 |
| | Irrigation | 3 600 | 35 500 | 9.86 | 8 600 | 88 150 | 10.25 |
| | Total | 54 000 | 292 500 | 5.42 | 62 000 | 415 500 | 6.70 |
| North West | Dryland | 425 500 | 857 000 | 2.01 | 75 000 | 188 000 | 2.51 |
| | Irrigation | 14 500 | 113 000 | 7.79 | 15 000 | 140 500 | 9.37 |
| | Total | 440 000 | 970 000 | 2.20 | 90 000 | 328 500 | 3.65 |
| **RSA** | **Dryland** | **1 492 210** | **5 514 250** | **3.70** | **909 000** | **4 755 825** | **5.25** |
| | **Irrigation** | **62 540** | **540 750** | **8.65** | **172 500** | **2 019 175** | **11.71** |
| | **Total** | **1 554 750** | **6 055 000** | **3.89** | **1 081 500** | **6 795 000** | **6.28** |

*Figures provided by the CEC.*

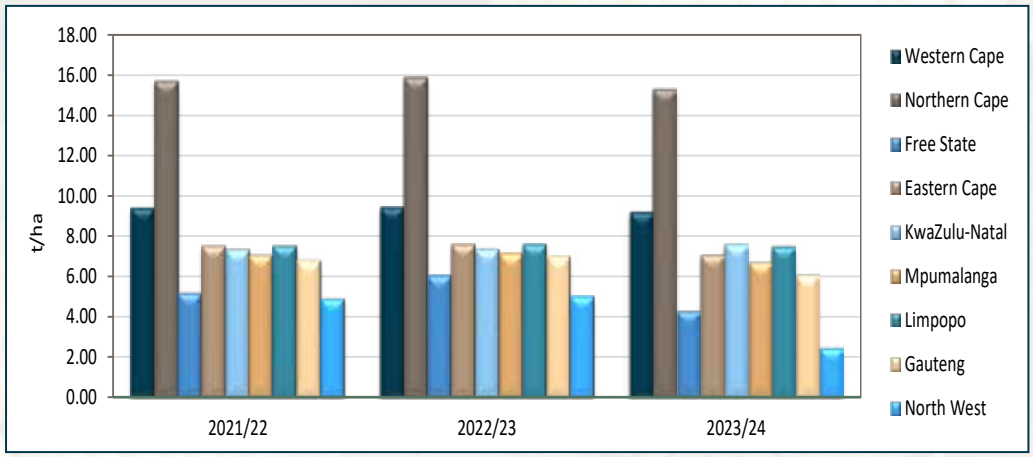
Please see graphs 5 to 7 for provincial figures of area planted, production and yield over the last three seasons.




Graph 5: Area utilised for maize production (dryland and/or irrigation) per province over three seasons



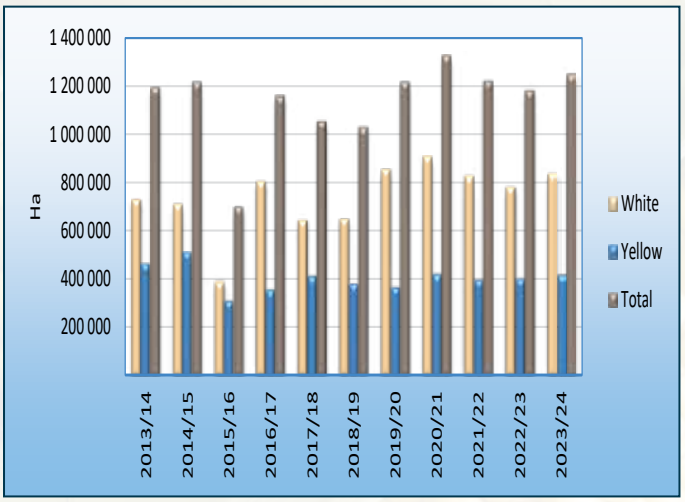

Graph 6: Maize production (dryland and/or irrigation) per province over three seasons



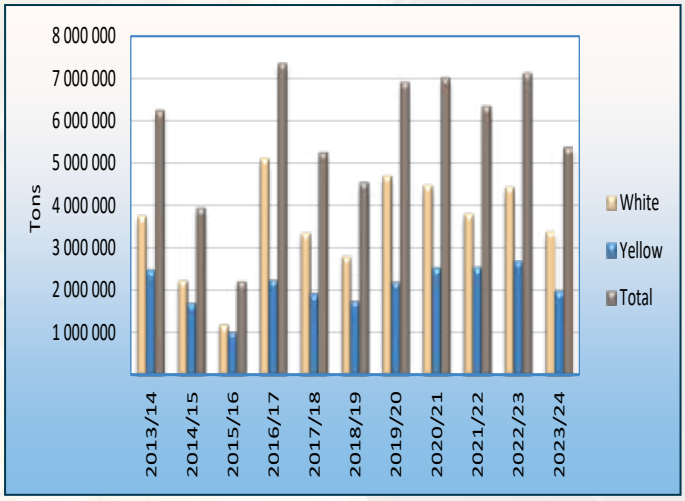

Graph 7: Maize yield (dryland and/or irrigation) per province over three seasons

*Figures provided by the CEC.*

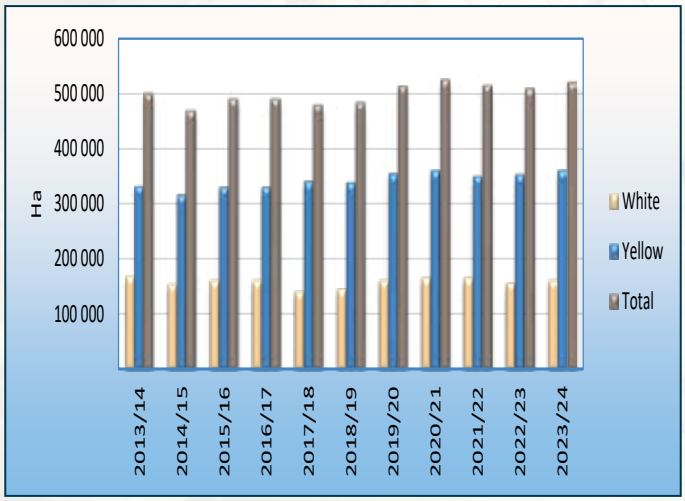
Graphs 8 to 13 provide an overview of the area planted and production figures for the Free State, Mpumalanga and North West from the 2013/14 to 2023/24 seasons.



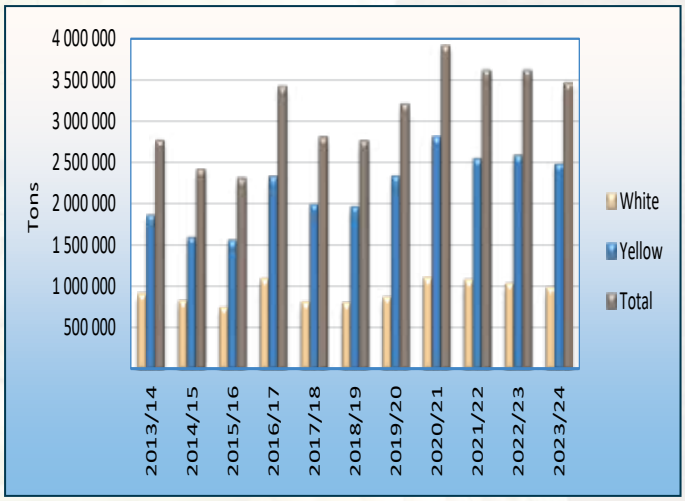

Graph 8: Area utilised for maize production in the Free State since 2013/14



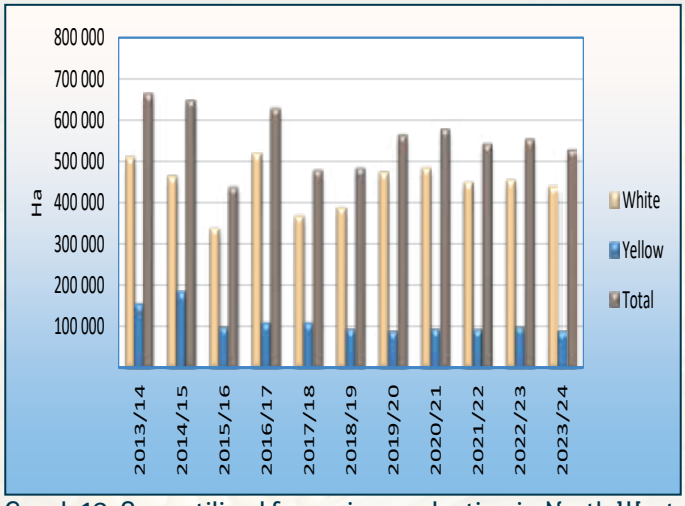

Graph 9: Maize production in the Free State since 2013/14



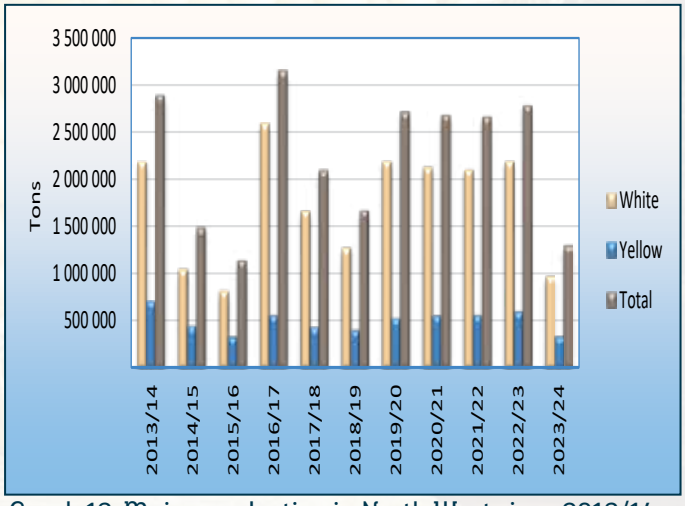

Graph 10: Area utilised for maize production in Mpumalanga since 2013/14




Graph 11: Maize production in Mpumalanga since 2013/14




Graph 12: Area utilised for maize production in North West since 2013/14




Graph 13: Maize production in North West since 2013/14

*Figures provided by the CEC.*