

Maize Imports and Exports during the 2019/20 marketing season - summary of results

A total of 509 684 tons of yellow maize was imported from Argentina and Brazil for local use during the period 27 April 2019 to 24 April 2020. No white maize was imported during this period. Forty-two samples, 37 representing imported Argentinian maize and five representing imported Brazilian maize, were received at the SAGL for quality analyses purposes. Ten samples in total were graded YM2 and one Class Other Maize (COM), the rest were all graded YM1 according to South African grading regulations.

The results of the quality analyses performed on the imported maize are compared to those of the local maize crop of the corresponding grade and period (2018/19 production season). Please see the summary of results on pages 106 and 107.

The average percentages defective kernels above the 6.35 mm sieve for YM1 maize was higher on the imported samples, but lower than that of local maize for YM2 and COM. The average percentages defective kernels below the 6.35 mm sieve was higher than that of local maize. The 100 kernel mass of the imported maize was in contrast to previous seasons, higher than South African maize. Test weight values of the imported maize were lower on average than local maize as observed during the previous season. The difference in the percentage stress cracks between imported and local maize was smaller than in previous seasons, given the increase in stress cracks on local maize this season. The kernel sizes of the imported maize were smaller than South African maize as in previous seasons, values above the 10 mm sieve were on average 3 – 5% lower. The average protein content of the imported maize was approximately 1.0% lower than that of the RSA maize, while the average fat content was 0.3% higher. The starch content of the Argentinian maize compared well with local maize, the Brazilian starch content was on average 0.5% higher. Crude fibre values were almost identical.

Multi-mycotoxin analyses were done on nine Argentinian and one Brazilian composite sample per shipment. The mycotoxin results did not raise any major concerns. The fumonisin and DON residues on all but one sample from Argentina, were well below the national maximum Fumonisin (B₁ + B₂) level for cereal grains and raw maize intended for further processing.

During the season under review, 1 022 141 tons of local white maize and 402 373 tons of local yellow maize were exported to countries in Africa and overseas. Zimbabwe was the largest importer of South African white maize, while Eswatini (Swaziland) was the largest importer of yellow maize. Please see tables and graphs on pages 103 and 104 for the major destinations for exports of RSA maize as well as origins of import for local use.

All figures were obtained from SAGIS.

Graph 56: Local maize production versus import figures over the last five seasons

