Maize Imports and Exports during the 2018/2019 marketing season

A total of 171 578 tons of yellow maize was imported from Argentina and Brazil for local use during the period 28 April 2018 to 26 April 2019. No white maize was imported during this period. Fifteen samples, ten representing imported Argentinian maize and five representing imported Brazilian maize, were received at the SAGL for quality analyses purposes. One sample each from Argentina and Brazil was graded YM2, 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 (2017/2018). Please see the summary of results on pages 100 and 101. The average percentages total defective kernels on the imported maize were 1.0 – 1.3% higher than that of local maize. The 100 kernel mass and test weight of the imported maize was lower on average than local maize, while the percentage stress cracks were higher. The kernel sizes of the imported maize were smaller, values above the 10 mm sieve were on average 6.6 – 8.9% lower. The average protein content of the imported maize was lower than that of the RSA maize, while the average fat content was 0.2 – 0.4% higher. The starch content of the Argentinean maize compared well with local maize, the Brazilian starch content was on average 3.3% lower.

Multi-mycotoxin analyses were done on two Argentinean and one Brazilian composite sample per shipment. The mycotoxin results did not raise any concerns. The Fumonisin and DON residues observed, were well below the national maximum Fumonisin ($B_1 + B_2$) and DON levels for cereal grains and raw maize intended for further processing.

During the season under review, 539 588 tons of local white maize and 1 520 636 tons of local yellow maize were exported to countries in Africa and overseas. Botswana was the largest importer of South African white maize, while Vietnam was the largest importer of yellow maize. Please see tables and graphs on pages 97 and 98 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 55: Local maize production versus import figures over the last five seasons