

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 information is provided in table and graph format. Import and export figures over several seasons are also included.

Data on sorghum imported for domestic use during the period March 2018 to February 2019 is included in the report and compared to the quality of the local crop over the corresponding period.

The national sorghum grading regulations as published in the Government Gazette of 8 January 2016 are provided as the last section of the report.

Production

Sorghum is a tropical grass grown primarily in semi-arid regions of the world. Sorghum can grow in areas too dry for maize and is deemed to be the fifth most important grain crop grown in the world (after maize, wheat, rice and barley).

World sorghum production for the 2018/2019 season to date, stands at 58,4 million tons with the United States being the largest contributor (9,3 million tons). Please see Table 1a and 1b for the world sorghum trade (import and export) as well as production and consumption figures.

The local area utilized for sorghum production decreased by 32%, compared to the 42 350 hectares of the 2016/2017 season. The 28 800 hectares planted this season, is the lowest area seen in a steady decline in area over the last number of seasons.

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 Dec	2018/19 Feb
Exports (1 000 MT)						
Argentina	954	772	457	296	500	200
Australia	1,701	717	542	449	1,500	1,300
Ethiopia	75	75	75	75	75	75
India	122	74	24	140	50	50
Kenya	73	41	73	136	50	50
Nigeria	100	50	100	100	100	100
Ukraine	156	119	164	123	80	120
Others	138	115	229	212	102	102
Subtotal	3,319	1,963	1,664	1,531	2,457	1,997
United States	9,269	7,928	6,022	4,961	3,000	3,000
World Total	12,588	9,891	7,686	6,492	5,457	4,997
Imports (1 000 MT)						
Chile	98	134	54	49	100	100
China	10,162	8,284	5,209	4,436	2,000	1,700
European Union	131	119	194	486	800	800
Japan	903	649	561	594	600	600
Kenya	117	54	146	141	150	150
Korea, South	6	4	5	62	70	70
Mexico	29	661	548	98	500	500
Somalia	20	70	60	80	100	100
South Sudan	87	19	36	148	150	150
Sudan	120	200	120	150	200	200
Others	390	669	381	542	504	504
Subtotal	12,063	10,863	7,314	6,786	5,174	4,874
Unaccounted	498	-1,070	328	-345	283	123
United States	27	98	44	51	0	0
World Total	12,588	9,891	7,686	6,492	5,457	4,997

Table 1b: World Sorghum Production and Consumption
Local Marketing Years

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 Dec	2018/19 Feb
Production (1 000 MT)						
Argentina	3,500	3,375	3,400	3,000	3,150	2,800
Australia	2,209	1,791	994	1,439	2,200	2,000
Brazil	2,055	1,032	1,865	2,136	1,800	1,800
Burkina	1,708	1,436	1,663	1,366	1,800	1,800
Cameroon	1,150	1,217	1,339	1,400	1,400	1,400
Chad	922	835	991	946	950	950
China	2,885	2,750	2,985	3,200	3,450	3,450
Ethiopia	4,339	4,766	4,752	4,050	4,100	4,100
India	5,445	4,238	4,570	4,950	4,600	4,600
Mali	1,272	1,527	1,394	1,705	1,300	1,300
Mexico	6,270	5,587	4,638	4,545	4,600	4,600
Niger	1,426	1,918	1,808	1,944	1,700	1,700
Nigeria	6,883	7,005	6,939	6,300	6,800	6,800
Sudan	6,281	2,744	6,466	3,743	4,000	4,000
Tanzania	883	677	756	800	800	800
Other	7,948	7,309	6,614	7,005	7,026	7,032
Subtotal	55,176	48,207	51,174	48,529	49,676	49,132
United States	10,988	15,158	12,199	9,192	9,238	9,271
World Total	66,164	63,365	63,373	57,721	58,914	58,403
Total Consumption (1 000 MT)						
Argentina	2,800	2,900	2,900	3,200	2,700	2,700
Brazil	2,000	1,150	1,700	2,100	1,900	1,900
Burkina	1,700	1,465	1,640	1,400	1,700	1,700
Cameroon	1,175	1,232	1,369	1,415	1,425	1,425
Chad	930	850	950	1,000	980	980
China	12,900	11,000	8,300	7,800	5,500	5,300
Ethiopia	4,100	4,700	4,700	4,200	4,100	4,100
European Union	995	800	790	970	1,520	1,520
India	5,100	4,600	4,500	4,700	4,600	4,600
Mali	1,200	1,500	1,400	1,650	1,400	1,400
Mexico	6,600	6,300	5,300	4,700	5,000	5,000
Niger	1,450	2,000	2,000	1,850	1,800	1,800
Nigeria	6,833	6,905	6,850	6,250	6,700	6,700
South Sudan	1,050	830	760	800	850	850
Sudan	6,000	3,100	6,450	1,400	4,250	4,250
Other	8,800	8,689	7,588	8,541	8,411	8,401
Subtotal	63,453	57,691	57,507	54,409	52,559	52,189
United States	2,459	6,130	6,282	3,997	6,604	5,969
World Total	65,912	63,821	63,789	58,406	59,163	58,158

Notes:

Total consumption reflect total utilisation, including food, seed, industrial, feed and waste, as well as differences in local marketing year imports and exports.

Consumption statistics for individual countries reflect food, seed, industrial, feed and waste only.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service (USDA-FAS), Grain: World Markets and Trade report, February 2019.

According to *The Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP) Baseline, Agricultural Outlook 2018 – 2027*, one of the reasons for this decline is the fact that yield levels have failed to increase at the same rate as particularly yellow maize. Sorghum yields have remained fairly stagnant over the last ten years, while yellow maize yields have increased annually on average by more than 3%. This increase can be attributed to an increasing share of irrigated production, improved cropping practices and genetically modified (GM) technology traits.

Please see Table 2 for an overview of sorghum production under dry land conditions versus irrigation in the 2017/2018 season, compared to the 2016/2017 season. Graphs 2 to 4 provide national figures with regards to hectares planted, tons produced and yields obtained over the last 11 seasons. Graphs 5 to 10 on page 6 provide similar figures for the major sorghum producing provinces, namely Mpumalanga, North West and the Free State.

Province	Type of production	2017/2018			2016/2017		
		Hectares planted, ha	Production, tons	Yield, t/ha	Hectares planted, ha	Production, tons	Yield, t/ha
Western Cape	Dryland	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Cape	Dryland	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-
Free State	Dryland	6 000	23 600	3.93	7 400	23 000	3.11
	Irrigation	300	1 600	5.33	300	1 640	5.47
	Total	6 300	25 200	4.00	7 700	24 640	3.20
Eastern Cape	Dryland	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-
KwaZulu-Natal	Dryland	500	2 200	4.40	400	1 520	3.80
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	500	2 200	4.40	400	1 520	3.80
Mpumalanga	Dryland	7 500	40 500	5.40	12 000	62 400	5.20
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	7 500	40 500	5.40	12 000	62 400	5.20
Limpopo	Dryland	5 000	15 500	3.10	17 650	48 500	2.75
	Irrigation	-	-	-	350	1 900	5.43
	Total	5 000	15 500	3.10	18 000	50 400	2.80
Gauteng	Dryland	1 500	4 950	3.30	750	2 400	3.20
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	1 500	4 950	3.30	750	2 400	3.20
North West	Dryland	7 700	25 050	3.25	3 300	9 600	2.91
	Irrigation	300	1 600	5.33	200	1 040	5.20
	Total	8 000	26 650	3.33	3 500	10 640	3.04
RSA	Dryland	28 200	111 800	3.96	41 500	147 420	3.55
	Irrigation	600	3 200	5.33	850	4 580	5.39
	Total	28 800	115 000	3.99	42 350	152 000	3.59

Figures provided by the CEC.