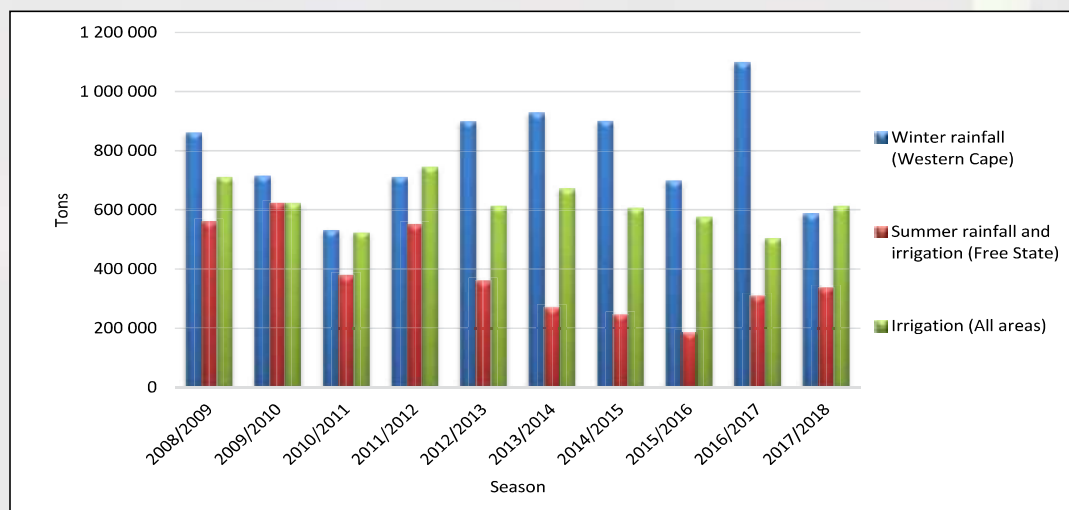


The final production figure of 1 535 000 tons is 16% lower than the ten-year production average of 1 826 800 tons (2007/2008 to 2016/2017 seasons). The severely drought stricken Western Cape produced 586 800 tons of wheat this season, contributing 38.2% of the total crop, compared to the 57.5% of the previous season. The Free State's wheat production (336 000 tons) was the highest of the last five seasons. This figure was also the second highest nationally. The irrigation areas of the Northern Cape, the third largest wheat producing area this season, produced 311 650 tons, 45 650 tons more than last season. The remainder of the wheat was produced mainly in Limpopo with 132 000 tons, representing an increase of 27% compared to the 2016/2017 season and North West, where production increased by 20% to 83 700 tons. Please see Graphs 1 and 2.

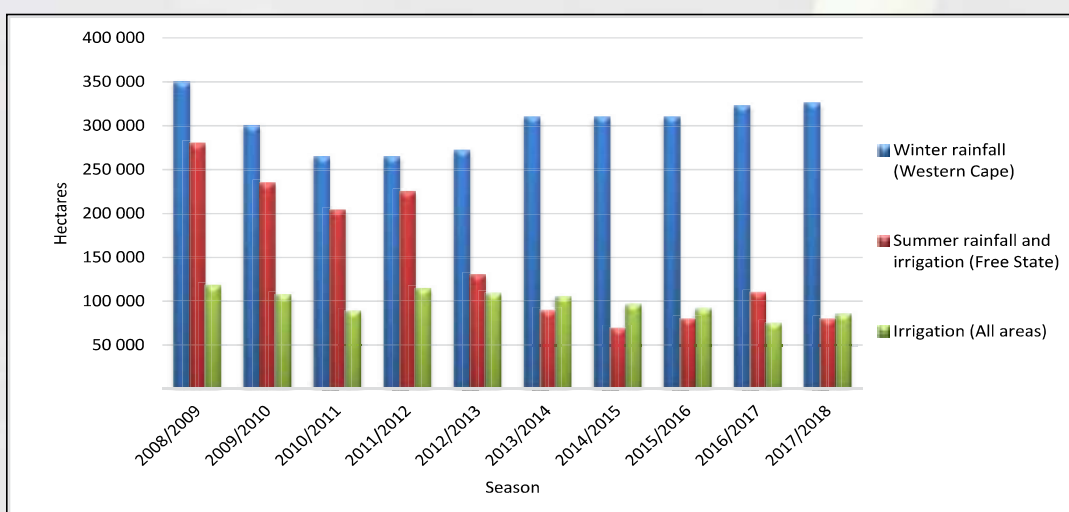
Graph 2: Wheat production figures per production area over seasons



Figures provided by the CEC.

The area utilized for wheat production decreased by 3.3% to 491 600 hectares from 508 365 hectares in the previous season. The almost 51% decline in dryland area planted in the Free State, were off set by a 56% increase in irrigation area planted and a 35% total yield increase. Nationally, dry land area decreased by 9.7% year on year and irrigation area increased by close to 22% year on year. Please see Graph 3.

Graph 3: Area planted per production area over seasons



Figures provided by the CEC.

The yield in the main production areas ranged from 1.80 tons per hectare (t/ha) in the winter rainfall area of the Western Cape to 4.20 t/ha in the Free State (summer rainfall and irrigation) to 8.20 t/ha for irrigation wheat produced in the Northern Cape. The national yield average decreased from 3.76 t/ha in the previous season to 3.12 t/ha. The drought in the Western Cape was the main contributor to this decrease in yield. Please refer to Graph 4.