Sorghum Crop Quality 2023/24 – Summary of Results

The national Grading Regulations (Government Notice NO. R.15 of 08 January 2016, Regulation 4. Standards for classes) states that a consignment of sorghum shall be classified as Class GM Sorghum if it consists of malt sorghum that does not have a dark testa and complies with the standards for the grades. A consignment of sorghum shall be classified as Class GH Sorghum if it consists of malt sorghum that has a dark testa and complies with the standards for the grades.

Eighty percent (20) of the 25 samples analysed for the purpose of this survey was determined to be class GM. Of these, 13 samples (65%) were graded as Grade GM1. Four samples (20%) was graded GM2 and three samples (15%) were graded Class Other Sorghum (CO). Of the 5 samples determined to be class GH, 60% (3 samples) was graded GH1 and the remaining two samples were grade GH2.

No white sorghum samples were received this season for inclusion in the survey.

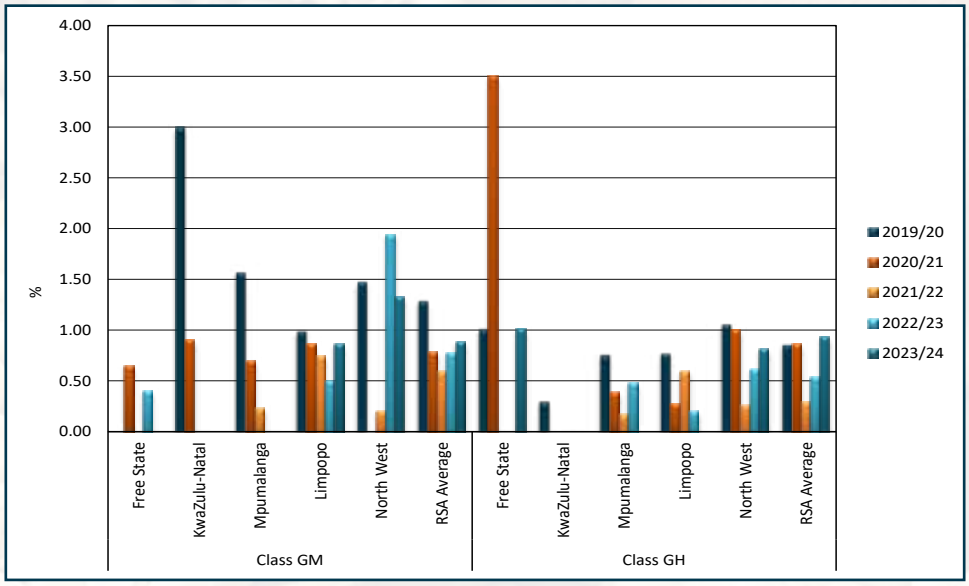
Certain varieties of sorghum contain tannins (specifically condensed tannins) in the seed coat layer beneath the pericarp (commonly referred to as the testa layer) of the grain. These varieties are variously referred to as: tannin, high-tannin, brown, bird-proof, bird-resistant, or bitter sorghums.

Varieties of sorghum not containing tannins are referred to as: non-tannin, low-tannin, condensed tannin-free, or sweet sorghums.

The detection of tannin in sorghum grain for grading purposes is done by SAGL by means of the bleach test. Please refer to the methodology followed under Methods on page 28.

See Graphs 16 to 18 for the weighted average percentages foreign matter, defective sorghum and small kernel sorghum per class per province over five seasons.

Graph 16: Average percentage foreign matter per class per province over five seasons



GM sorghum's foreign matter varied between 0.86% for Limpopo (19 samples) and 1.33% for North West (1 sample). GH sorghum's foreign matter varied between 0.81% for North West (2 samples) and 1.01% for the Free State (3 samples). The national weighted averages for GM and GH sorghum were 0.88% and 0.93% respectively.

The percentage defective GM sorghum averaged 2.18% for Limpopo and was 3.01% for North West. The weighted average defective GH sorghum varied between 2.07% (North West) and 2.51% (Free State). The national weighted averages were 2.22% for GM and 2.33% for GH sorghum.