

The area utilised for sunflower production increased by 40% to 670 700 ha, compared to the 477 800 ha of the previous season. The national yield average decreased by 11% from 1.42 t/ha in the previous season to 1.26 t/ha this season.

According to *The Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP) Baseline, Agricultural Outlook 2022 – 2031*, the area under sunflower should stabilise at around 500 000 hectares in the medium term. The rising prevalence of *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* is expected to remain a challenge, adding costs for producers and resulting in some area shifting to soybeans in affected regions. Despite the normalisation in area, production growth is supported by a projected 23% gain in yields over the coming decade, reflecting technological gains and continuous improvement in production practices. This is sufficient to meet the growth in domestic demand.

The latest seed technology is providing promising results in high-oil content cultivars without compromising significantly on yields per hectare. High oil content cultivars will support the relative competitiveness of local sunflower crushing plants.

Please see Table 2 for an overview of sunflower production under dry land conditions versus irrigation in the 2021/22 season, compared to the 2020/21 season. Graphs 2 to 4 provide national figures with regards to hectares planted, tons produced and yields obtained over the last 11 seasons and Graphs 5 to 10 similar figures for the major sunflower producing provinces, namely the Free State and North West as well as Limpopo.

Table 2: Sunflower production overview over two seasons							
Province	Type of production	2021/22			2020/21		
		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	2 500	6 250	2.50	1 100	1 320	1.20
	Total	2 500	6 250	2.50	1 100	1 320	1.20
Free State	Dryland	350 000	483 000	1.38	229 200	338 000	1.47
	Irrigation	7 000	16 800	2.40	5 800	14 500	2.50
	Total	357 000	499 800	1.40	235 000	352 500	1.50
Eastern Cape	Dryland	30	48	1.60	120	120	1.00
	Irrigation	270	702	2.60	180	330	1.83
	Total	300	750	2.50	300	450	1.50
KwaZulu-Natal	Dryland	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mpumalanga	Dryland	3 500	5 250	1.50	3 500	5 250	1.50
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	3 500	5 250	1.50	3 500	5 250	1.50
Limpopo	Dryland	107 000	72 200	0.67	73 500	70 800	0.96
	Irrigation	3 000	4 800	1.60	3 000	5 700	1.90
	Total	110 000	77 000	0.70	76 500	76 500	1.00
Gauteng	Dryland	2 400	3 000	1.25	4 400	5 720	1.30
	Irrigation	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	2 400	3 000	1.25	4 400	5 720	1.30
North West	Dryland	193 200	250 500	1.30	155 500	233 100	1.50
	Irrigation	1 800	3 000	1.67	1 500	3 160	2.11
	Total	195 000	253 500	1.30	157 000	236 260	1.50
RSA	Dryland	656 130	813 998	1.24	466 220	652 990	1.40
	Irrigation	14 570	31 552	2.17	11 580	25 010	2.16
	Total	670 700	845 550	1.26	477 800	678 000	1.42

Figures provided by the CEC.