

Summer crop estimates lower than initial projections

The Crop Estimates Committee (CEC) released its second production forecast for summer grain crops for 2013 and all crops – except dry beans – have come in lower than initial projections.

The CEC said the decrease was mainly as a result of dry weather conditions in the Free State and North West.

“In the drought-affected provinces there are reports that certain areas look good while others look less promising

depending on when the crop was planted,” stated the report.

The maize crop is expected to be 11,752 million tons – 4,88% lower than the previous forecast. The area estimate for maize remained unchanged at 2,781 million hectares, while the expected yield is 4,23t/ha.

Andries Theron, vice-chairperson of Grain SA, said that the estimate figures were expected to decrease further as the real effect of the drought took hold.

“The western planting regions look disastrous, but the east looks good so the difference won’t be too dramatic.”

Although Theron did not expect the decrease to have an effect on the price of maize, he noted that the crop estimates recently done in the US were having a phenomenal effect.

“They are expecting a big harvest and prices here have already decreased in anticipation of the bumper crop (in the US).”

Sunflower seed production is expected

to be 554 500t, which is 11,17% less. The revised area estimate for sunflower seed is 504 700ha, while the expected yield is 1,10t/ha.

The production forecast for soya beans is 851 000t, which is 6,93% lower. It is estimated that 516 500ha have been planted to soya beans, which represents an increase of 0,29% compared to the previous area estimate, with an expected yield of 1,65t/ha.

Sorghum plantings are expected to yield

168 114t, which is 7,40% lower. The area estimate for sorghum is 62 620ha and the expected yield is 2,68t/ha.

In the case of dry beans the production forecast is 56 100t, which is 1,08% more than the previous forecast. The area estimate for dry beans is 43 550ha, and the expected yield is 1,29t/ha.

The third production forecast for summer field crops and the intentions to plant winter cereals for 2013 will be released on 25 April.

– *Lindi van Rooyen*