

SOYA BEANS

Soya bean yield down 28% due to drought

The devastating drought in the central and western parts of South Africa, which had a severe impact on the maize harvest this year, with an expected 30% decline in production, was also causing serious damage to the soya bean crop.

Roughly 40% of SA's soya beans are grown in the western Free State and North West, areas hardest hit by the drought, according to Wessel Lemmer, an economist at Grain SA.

While the total impact of the drought on the soya bean crop had not yet been established, it was already clear that the yield for the season would be

much lower than originally expected, he said.

According to the Crop Estimates Committee's first production forecast of summer crops for 2015, the total harvest was expected to be only about 1% lower than the 2014 crop,

However, this figure did not reflect the decline in yield per hectare as a result of the drought.

Soya bean plantings increased by about 37%, from 502 900ha planted in 2014 to 687 300ha in 2015. Despite this significant increase in area planted, the total soya bean crop was expected to decline by almost 10 000t to 938 350t according to the committee.

This meant that the soya bean yield per hectare



ABOVE:

This season's soya bean crop is expected to be significantly lower than anticipated.

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had declined by 28% or 0,54t/ha from 1,9t/ha in 2014 to 1,36t/ha in 2014.

In the world market, the prices for soya beans were likely to remain under pressure due to good stock levels, according to a Grain SA market report.

At the beginning of this month the futures contract prices for soya beans

delivered in Randfontein were between R5 000/t and R5 100/t. Prices were down by roughly R400/t to R600/t from June 2014.

The price for the crop for delivery in May had dropped from R5 900/t in mid-December last year to around R5 000/t at the beginning of this month.

– Denene Erasmus