MONTHLY FOOD SECURITY BULLETIN OF SOUTH AFRICA MARCH 2024

Issued: 9 April 2024

Directorate: Statistics and Economic Analysis

- **During March 2024, significant rainfall events were confined to the eastern parts of the country.**
- **The final production estimate of wheat is 2,078 million tons, which is 1,5% less than the previous seasons' crop of 2,110 million tons.**
- **The projected closing stocks of wheat for the current 2023/24 marketing year are 488 984 tons, which includes imports of 1,650 million tons. It is also 13,2% less than the previous years' ending stocks.**
- **The expected commercial maize crop is 13,256 million tons, which is 19,3% less than the 16 430 000 tons of the previous season (2023).**
- **Projected closing stocks of maize for the current 2023/24 marketing year are 2,316 million tons, which is 18,6% more than the previous years' ending stocks.**
- **Projected closing stocks of maize for the coming 2024/25 marketing year are 1,326 million tons, which is 42,8% less than the previous years' ending stocks.**
- **The projected closing stocks of sorghum for the current 2024/25 marketing year are 23 090 tons, which is 57,2% less than the previous years' ending stocks.**
- **The projected closing stocks of sunflower seed for the current 2024/25 marketing year are 73 114 tons, which is 42,3% less than the previous years' ending stocks.**
- **The projected closing stocks of soybeans for the current 2024/25 marketing year are 224 437 tons, which is 29,8% less than the previous years' ending stocks.**
- **The annual percentage change in the CPI was higher at 5,6% in February 2024.**
- **The annual percentage change in the PPI for final manufactured goods was lower at 4,5% in February 2024.**
- **March 2024 tractor sales of 498 units were significantly less (26%) than the 676 units sold in March 2023.**

agriculture, land reform & rural development

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1. Weather conditions

1.1 Rainfall for March 2024

During March 2024, significant rainfall events were confined to the eastern parts of the country (**Figure 1**). Comparing rainfall totals to the long-term average for March, below-normal rainfall was received over most of the country with isolated areas of above-normal rainfall evident in the Western Cape, southern parts of the Northern Cape, south-eastern Limpopo, and the northern parts of KwaZulu-Natal (**Figure 2**). (Source: Directorate: Climate Change and Disaster Management of Department: Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development).

Figure 1: Rainfall (mm) for March 2024

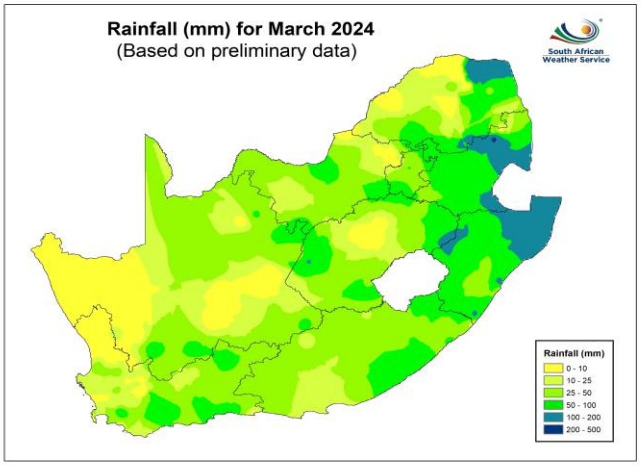
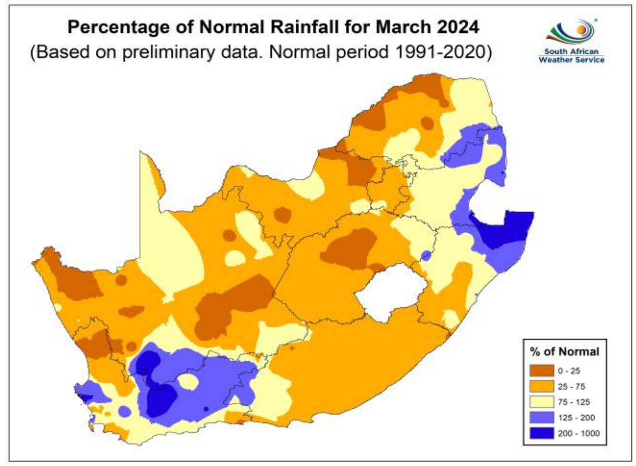


Figure 2: Percentage rainfall for March 2024



1.2 Level of dams

Available information on the level of South Africa's dams on 8 April 2024 indicates that the country has approximately 85% of its full supply capacity (FSC) available, which is 9,0% less as compared to the corresponding period in 2023. The dam levels in the Western Cape (7%) and Eastern Cape (4%) provinces, all show improvements in the full supply capacity as compared to 2023. However, the Northern Cape (-16%), Free State (-16%), North West (-13%), Gauteng (-9%) Limpopo (-6%) and Mpumalanga (-2%) provinces, all show decreases in full supply capacity as compared to 2023. With reference to KwaZulu-Natal, the full supply capacity remained unchanged as compared to 2023. The provincial distribution of South Africa's water supply including Lesotho and Swaziland is contained in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Level of dams, 8 April 2024

Province	Net FSC million cubic meters	**08/04/2024 (%)**	Last Year (2023) (%)	% Increase/Decrease 2024 vs. 2023
Eastern Cape	1 729	82	78	4,0
Free State	15 657	85	101	-16,0
Gauteng	128	91	100	-9,0
Kingdom of Lesotho*	2 363	94	100	-6,0
Kingdom of Eswatini*	334	100	100	-
KwaZulu-Natal	4 910	91	91	-
Limpopo	1 480	84	90	-6,0
Mpumalanga	2 539	97	99	-2,0
North West	867	74	87	-13,0
Northern Cape	146	79	95	-16,0
Western Cape	1 868	58	51	7,0
Total	**32 021**	**85**	**94**	**-9,0**

Source: Department of Water and Sanitation

2. Grain production

2.1 Summer grain crops - 2023

The revised area planted and second production forecast for summer grains for the 2024 season was released by the Crop Estimates Committee (CEC) on 26 March 2024, and is as follows:

Table 2: Commercial summer grains: Revised area planted and second production forecast - 2024 season

CROP	**Area planted 2024 Ha (A)**	**2nd forecast 2024 Tons (B)**	Area planted 2023 Ha (C)	Final estimate 2023 Tons (D)	Change 2024 vs 2023 % (B) ÷ (D)
Commercial:					
White maize	**1 554 750**	**6 277 000**	1 521 300	8 505 000	-26,20
Yellow maize	**1 081 500**	**6 978 750**	1 064 800	7 925 000	-11,94
Total Maize	**2 636 250**	**13 255 750**	2 586 100	16 430 000	-19,32
Sunflower seed	**529 000**	**589 000**	555 700	720 000	-18,19
Soybeans	**1 150 500**	**1 813 790**	1 148 300	2 770 000	-34,52
Groundnuts	**41 200**	**57 610**	31 300	53 000	8,70
Sorghum	**42 100**	**89 630**	34 000	94 360	-5,01
Dry beans	**39 550**	**54 120**	36 650	50 260	7,68
TOTAL	**4 438 600**	**15 859 900**	4 392 050	20 117 620	-21,16

Note: Estimate is for calendar year, e.g. production season 2023/24 = 2024

- The revised area estimate for maize is 2 636 250 ha, which is 1,94% or 50 150 ha more than the 2 586 100 ha planted for the previous season, and 0,11% or 3 000 ha less than the area estimate of 2 639 250 ha released in February 2024.
- The expected **commercial maize crop** is 13 255 750 tons, which is 19,32% or 3,174 million tons less than the 16 430 000 tons of the previous season (2023). The yield for maize is 5,03 t/ha.
- The area estimate for **white maize** is 1 554 750 ha, which represents an increase of 2,20% or 33 450 ha compared to the 1 521 300 ha planted last season. The production forecast of white maize is 6 277 000 tons, which is 26,20% or 2,228 million tons less than the 8 505 000 tons of last season. The yield for white maize is 4,04 t/ha.
- In the case of **yellow maize,** the area estimate is 1 081 500 ha, which is 1,57% or 16 700 ha more than the 1 064 800 ha planted last season. The yellow maize production forecast is 6 978 750 tons, which is 11,94% or 946 250 tons less than the 7 925 000 tons of last season. The yield for yellow maize is 6,45 t/ha.
- The revised area estimate for sunflower seed is 529 000 ha, which is 4,80% or 26 700 ha less than the 555 700 ha planted the previous season. The production forecast for **sunflower seed** is 589 000 tons, which is 18,19% or 131 000 tons less than the 720 000 tons of the previous season. The expected yield is 1,11 t/ha.
- It is estimated that 1 150 500 ha have been planted to **soybeans**, which represents a decrease of 0,19% or 2 200 ha compared to the 1 148 300 ha planted last season. The production forecast is 1 813 790 tons, which is 34,52% or 956 210 tons less than the 2 770 000 tons of the previous season. The expected yield is 1,58 t/ha.
- For **groundnuts**, the area estimate is 41 200 ha, which is 31,63% or 9 900 ha more than the 31 300 ha planted for the previous season. The expected crop is 57 610 tons – which is 8,70% or 4 610 tons more than the 53 000 tons of last season. The expected yield is 1,40 t/ha.
- The area estimate for **sorghum** increased by 23,82% or 8 100 ha, from 34 000 ha to 42 100 ha against the previous season. The production forecast for sorghum is 89 630 tons, which is 5,01% or 4 730 tons less than the 94 360 tons of the previous season. The expected yield is 2,13 t/ha.

- For **dry beans**, the area estimate is 39 550 ha, which is 7,91% or 2 900 ha more the 36 650 ha planted for the previous season. The production forecast is 54 120 tons, which is 7,68% or 3 860 tons more than the 50 260 tons of the previous season. The expected yield is 1,37 t/ha.

Please note that the fourth production forecast for summer field crops for 2024 will be released on 25 April 2024.

2.2 Winter cereal crops – 2022

Please note that the intentions to plant winter cereals for 2024 will be released on 25 April 2024.

2.3 Non-commercial maize - 2023

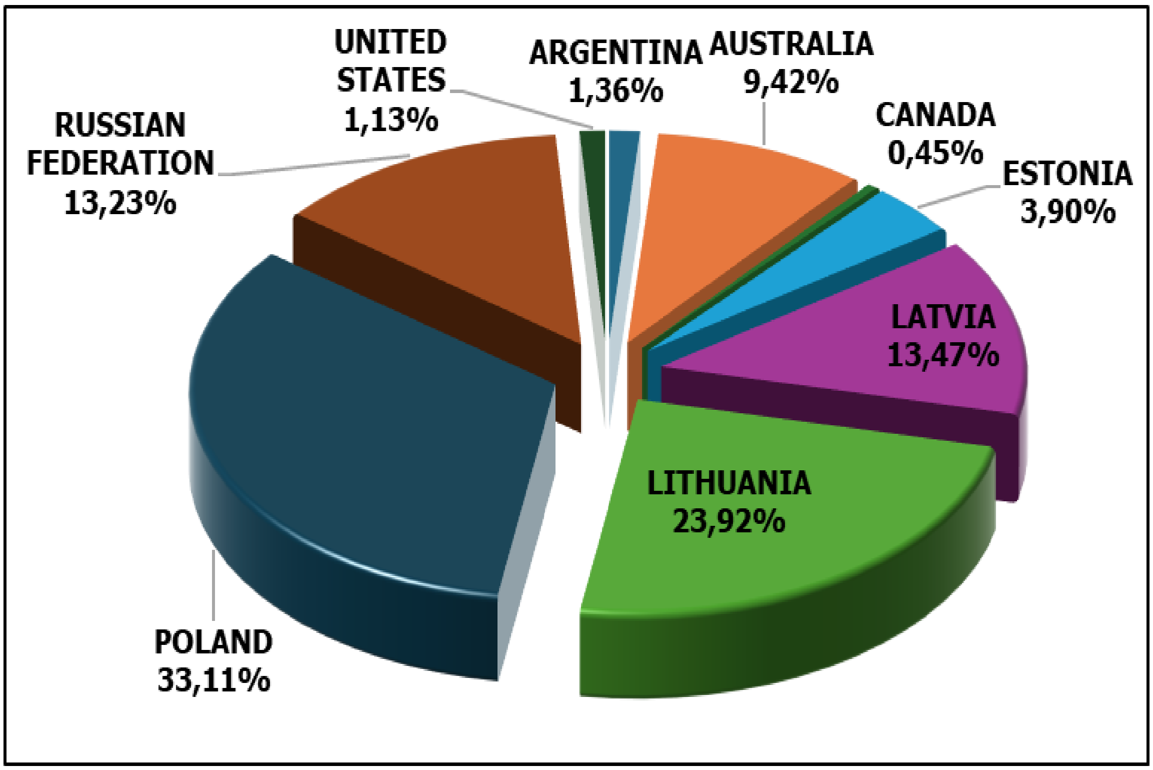
Please note that the preliminary area planted and production estimate of the non-commercial maize sector for the 2024 season will be released on 25 April 2024.

3. Cereal balance sheets

For the latest Cereal Balance Sheets (supply and demand tables) on maize, wheat, sorghum, sunflower seed and soybeans please refer to the attachment called FSB MAR24 Annexure A.

3.1 Imports and exports of wheat for the 2023/24 marketing year

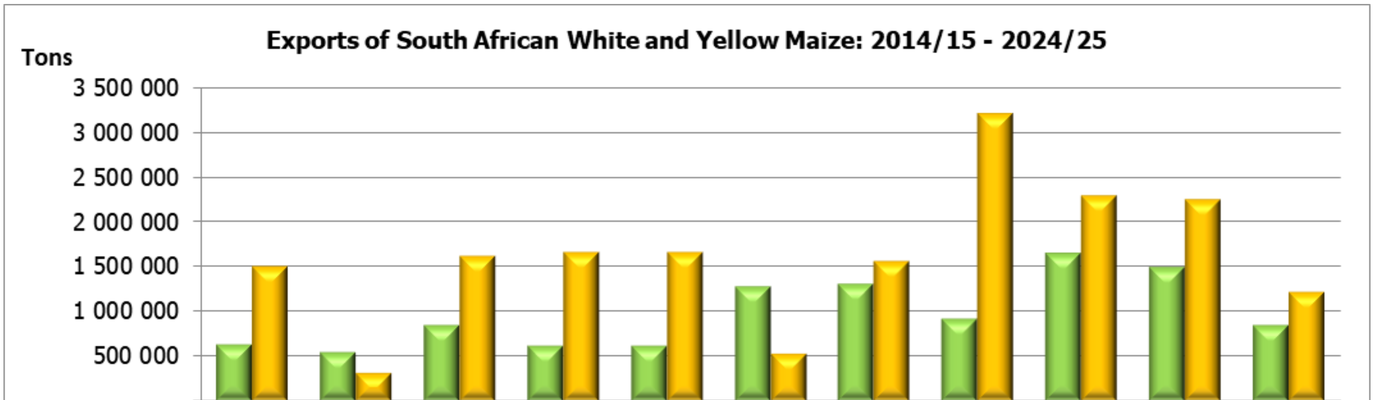
Graph 1: Major countries of wheat imports to South Africa: 2023/24 marketing year



- The progressive wheat imports (human consumption) for the 2023/24 marketing year (30 September 2023 to 29 March 2024) amount to 958 098 tons, with 33,11% or 317 271 tons from Poland, followed by 23,92% or 229 140 tons from Lithuania, 13,47% or 129 053 tons from Latvia, 13,23% or 126 762 tons from the Russian Federation, 9,42% or 90 296 tons from Australia, 3,90% or 37 410 tons from Estonia, 1,36% or 13 001 tons from Argentina, 1,13% or 10 865 tons from the United States and 0,45% or 4 300 tons from Canada. The exports of wheat (human consumption) for the above-mentioned period amount to 89 942 tons, of which 32,45% or 29 190 tons went to Zimbabwe, 32,01% or 28 791 tons went to Lesotho, 27,39% or 24 632 tons went to Botswana, 5,45% or 4 901 tons went to Namibia and only 2,70% or 2 428 tons went to Zambia.

3.2 Exports of South African white and yellow maize

Graph 2: Exports of South African white and yellow maize: 2014/15 - 2024/25 marketing year

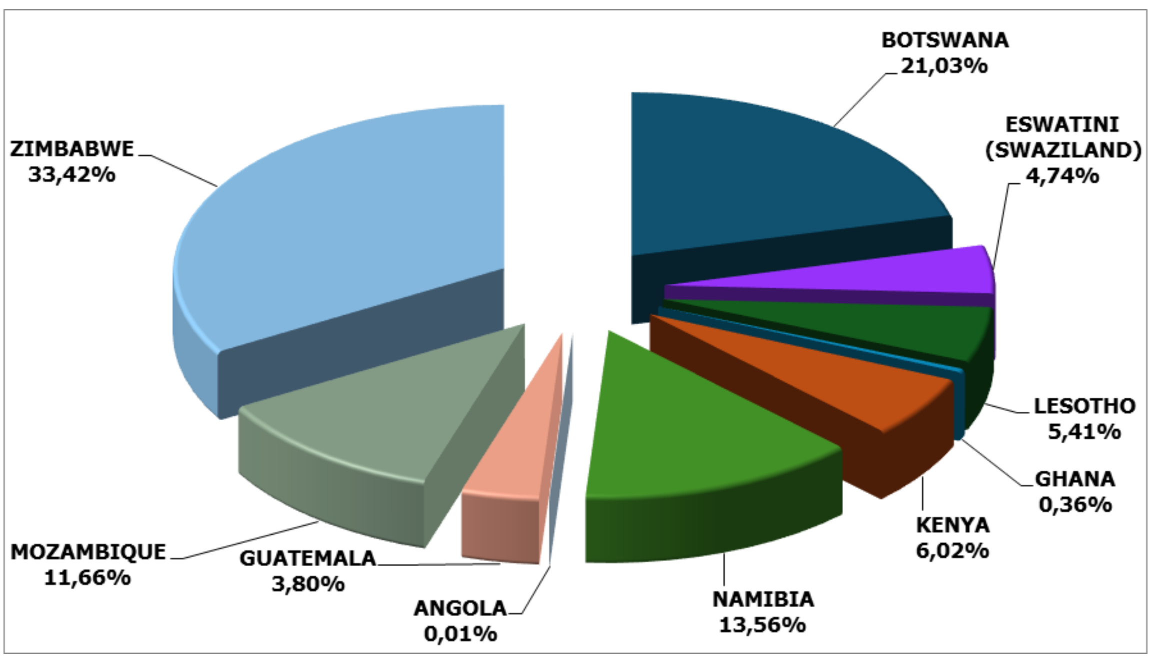


	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24*	2024/25*
White maize	640 807	557 063	851 969	617 000	616 651	1 275 446	1 304 475	924 434	1 654 525	1 500 000	850 000
Yellow maize	1 514 917	322 748	1 629 739	1 666 000	1 667 407	534 127	1 563 315	3 210 777	2 295 281	2 258 000	1 220 000

*Projection

- The exports of white maize for the 2023/24 marketing year are projected at 1,500 million tons, which represents a decrease of 9,34% or 154 525 tons compared to the 1,654 million tons of the previous marketing year. Yellow maize exports for the mentioned period are projected at 2,258 million tons, which represents a decrease of 1,62% or 37 281 tons compared to the 2,295 million tons of the previous marketing year.
- The exports of white maize for the 2024/25 marketing year are projected at 850 000 tons, which represents a decrease of 43,33% or 650 000 tons compared to the 1,500 million tons of the previous marketing year. Yellow maize exports for the mentioned period are projected at 1,220 million tons, which represents a decrease of 45,97% or 1,038 million tons compared to the 2,258 million tons of the previous marketing year.

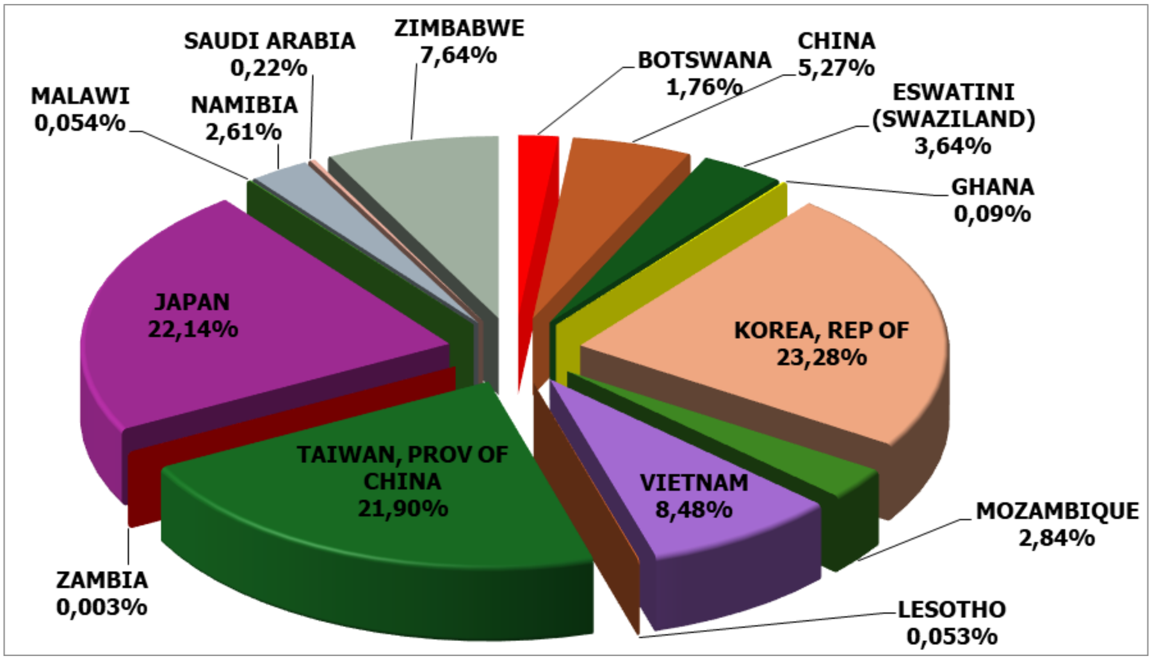
Graph 3: Major countries of white maize exports from South Africa: 2023/24 marketing year



- From 29 April 2023 to 29 March 2024, progressive white maize exports for the 2023/24 marketing year amount to 1,127 million tons, with the main destinations being Zimbabwe (33,42% or 376 640 tons), followed by Botswana (21,03% or 237 034 tons), Namibia (13,56% or 152 818 tons), Mozambique (11,66% or 131 395 tons), Kenya (6,02% or 67 792 tons), Lesotho (5,41% or 60 996 tons), Eswathini (Swaziland) (4,74% or

53 362 tons), Guatemala (3,80% or 42 770 tons), Ghana (0,36% or 4 018 tons) and Angola (0,01% or 105 tons). The imports of white maize for the mentioned period amount to zero.

Graph 4: Major countries of yellow maize exports from South Africa: 2023/24 marketing year



- From 29 April 2023 to 29 March 2024, progressive yellow maize exports for the 2023/24 marketing year amount to 2,115 million tons, with the main destinations being Republic of Korea (23,28% or 492 252 tons), followed by Japan (22,14% or 468 303 tons), Taiwan (21,90% or 463 086 tons), Vietnam (8,48% or 179 330 tons), Zimbabwe (7,64% or 161 677 tons), China (5,27% or 111 513 tons), Eswathini (Swaziland) (3,64% or 77 046 tons), Mozambique (2,84% or 60 062 tons), Namibia (2,61% or 55 263 tons), Botswana (1,76% or 37 259 tons), Saudi Arabia (0,22% or 4 720 tons), Ghana (0,09% or 1 969 tons), Malawi (0,054% or 1 145 tons), Lesotho (0,053% or 1 123 tons) and Zambia (0,003% or 72 tons). The imports of yellow maize for the mentioned period amount to zero.

4. Market information

4.1 Consumer Price Index (CPI)

- Annual consumer price inflation was 5,6% in February 2024, up from 5,3% in January 2024. The CPI increased by 1,0% month-on-month in February 2024.
- The main contributors to the 5,6% annual inflation rate were:
    - Housing and utilities (increased by 5,8% year-on-year and contributed 1,4%);
    - Miscellaneous goods and services (increased by 8,4% year-on-year and contributed 1,2%);
    - Food and non-alcoholic beverages (increased by 6,1% year-on-year and contributed 1,1%); and
    - Transport (increased by 5,4% year-on-year and contributed 0,8%).
- In February 2024, the annual inflation rate for goods was 6,2%, down from 6,6% in January 2024; and for services it was 4,9%, up from 4,0% in January 2024.

4.2 Producer Price Index (PPI)

- Annual producer price inflation (final manufacturing) was 4,5% in February 2024, down from 4,7% in January 2024. The producer price index (PPI) increased by 0,5% month-on-month in February 2024.
- The main contributors to the headline PPI annual inflation rate were:

    - Food products, beverages and tobacco products (increased by 4,3% year-on-year and contributed 1,2%);
    - Coke, petroleum, chemical, rubber and plastic products (increased by 4,0% year-on-year and contributed 1,0%); and
    - Metals, machinery, equipment and computing equipment (increased by 5,2% year-on-year and contributed 0,7%).
- The contributors to the headline PPI monthly increase were coke, petroleum, chemical, rubber and plastic products (increased by 1,5% month-on-month and contributed 0,4% and food products, beverages and tobacco products (increased by 0,5% month-on-month and contributed 0,1%).
- The annual percentage change in the PPI for intermediate manufactured goods was 1,0% in February 2024 (compared with 0,2% in January 2024). The index increased by 0,8% month-on-month. The main contributor to the annual rate was basic and fabricated metals (1,0%). The main contributor to the monthly rate was chemicals, rubber and plastic products (0,5%).
- The annual percentage change in the PPI for electricity and water was 16,0% in February 2024 (compared with 16,8% in January 2024). The index increased by 0,7% month-on-month. Electricity contributed 14,4% and water contributed 1,4% to the annual rate. Electricity contributed 0,7% to the monthly rate.
- The annual percentage change in the PPI for mining was -9,0% in February 2024 (compared with -5,9% in January 2024). The index increased by 0,2% month-on-month. The main negative contributor to the annual rate was non-ferrous metal ores (-15,7%). The main positive contributors to the monthly rate were stone quarrying, clay and diamonds (0,4%) and non-ferrous metal ores (0,3%).
- The annual percentage change in the PPI for agriculture, forestry and fishing was 2,8% in February 2024 (compared with 6,6% in January 2024). The index decreased by 2,4% month-on-month. The main contributors to the annual rate were agriculture (2,0%) and fishing (0,7%). The contributor to the monthly rate was agriculture (-2,4%).

4.3 Future contract prices

Table 3: Closing prices on Monday, 8 April 2024

	8 April 2024	8 March 2024	% Change
RSA White Maize per ton (Apr. 2024 contract)	R5 264,00	R5 072,00	3,78
RSA Yellow Maize per ton (Apr. 2024 contract)	R4 240,00	R4 164,00	1,82
RSA Wheat per ton (Apr. 2024 contract)	R6 051,00	R5 920,00	2,21
RSA Sunflower seed per ton (Apr. 2024 contract)	R9 448,00	R8 872,00	6,49
RSA Soya-beans per ton (Apr. 2024 contract)	R8 752,00	R8 308,00	5,34
Exchange rate R/$	R18,56	R18,64	-0,43

Source: JSE/SAFEX

4.4 Agricultural machinery sales

- March 2024 tractor sales of 498 units were significantly less (26%) than the 676 units sold in March 2023. Year-to-date tractor sales are now 28% down on last year. Twenty-six combine harvesters were sold in March 2024, 13 less than the 39 units sold in March 2023. On a year-to-date basis, combine harvester sales are now almost 45% down on last year.
- With the El Niño phenomenon now expressing itself, some uncertainty has been created amongst farmers. Although summer crops in the east should provide good yields, late planted crops, particularly in the west, will not realise the yields hoped for. The Crop Estimates Committee (CEC) predictions show that there will be significant reductions in most summer crops, particularly in the Free State and North West provinces, compared to last year. The rain over the past week or so will be too late to save these late-planted crops. The CEC is

predicting a maize crop for the forthcoming season almost 19% down on last year and soybeans almost 34% down.

- Expectations are that, despite the market being very competitive, 2024 calendar year tractor sales will be between 15 and 20% % down on last year.

Table 4: Agricultural machinery sales

Equipment class	Year-on-year March		Percentage Change %	Year-to-date March		Percentage Change %
	2024	2023		2024	2023	
Tractors	498	676	-26,33	1 383	1 927	--28,23
Combine harvesters	26	39	-33,33	52	49	-44,68

Source: SAAMA press release, April 2024

PLEASE NOTE: The Food Security Bulletin for April 2024 will be released on **7 May 2024**.

5. Acknowledgements

The Directorate: Statistics and Economic Analysis makes use of information sourced from various institutions and organisations within South Africa to compile the monthly report on South Africa's Food Security Situation. This report has been compiled with the aid of information and reports sourced from the following institutions and organisations:

- Agbiz
- Agfacts
- BVG Commodities (Pty) Limited
- Department of Water and Sanitation
- Directorate: Climate Change and Disaster Management at DAFF
- Grain South Africa (Grain SA)
- IGC Grain Market Report
- National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC)
- South African Agricultural Machinery Association (SAAMA)
- South African Futures Exchange (SAFEX)
- Statistics South Africa (Stats SA)
- The South African Supply and Demand Estimates Report (SASDE)
- The South African Grain Information Service (SAGIS)
- The South African Weather Service (WeatherSA)
- USDA Foreign Service