



COMMUNICATION SERVICES

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Looming drought threatens SA food supply

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SOUTH Africa is set to be hit by a massive drought which could impact on food production, especially of maize.

The country could face a maize shortage and might have to import the grain if the present dry weather conditions persist.

Last week, the Department of Agriculture urged farmers to take precautionary measures during the dry weather conditions, with high temperatures reported since the beginning of the year in some parts of the country affecting crop production in parts of the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, North West and Mpumalanga.

Khosi Ramachela, the programme coordinator for faculty of agriculture, science and technology at the North West University, said South Africa and southern Africa as a whole experiences droughts on a 10-year cycle, which was related to the El Niño effect. "Recently, these droughts tend

to be prolonged, indicating that global warming is now with us. The current drought conditions have affected maize production, which is the staple food for the country.

"North West, home to the maize triangle, is severely hit. Most farmers there will have to write off their maize crop," he said.

Ramachela said the drought will not only affect production of maize meal, but will also affect the downstream industries that use maize for feed.

"Beef, poultry and pork producers as well as confectionery industries will be affected. To address the country's food deficit and mitigate against the drought the government will need to import maize and this of course will result in the prices of all maize dependent products to increase due to import costs," he said.

According to Deloitte, the country is likely to face food shortages in the next 10 years, given the



STAPLE: Maize may be imported unless production improves.

industry is struggling to attract new young farmers.

Omri van Zyl, head of Deloitte Africa's agricultural unit, said the average age of South African commercial farmers was 62 and that

the country is simply not attracting enough new farmers.

South Africa had 120 000 farmers in 1994 compared to 37 000 at present.

According to the latest sup-

ply and demand projections for grains published by the National Agricultural Marketing Council, the projected closing stock level at 30 April 2015 is estimated at 1284 074 tons. At an average processed quantity of 486 250 tons per month, this represents available stock of 2.6 months or 80 days.

In a forecast of summer crops 2015, Marda Scheepers, a senior statistician at Crop Estimates Committee (CEC), said the expected commercial maize crop is 9.665 million tons, which is 32.17% less than the 14.250 million tons of the previous season, with an expected yield of 3.63t/ha.

"The production forecast of white maize is 4.696 million tons, which is 39.09% less than the 7.710 million tons of last season.

"In the case of yellow maize the production forecast is 4.969 million, which is 24.02% less than the 6.540 million of last season," Scheepers said.

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SIBHOKILE ISOMISO E-KZN

PHILANI NGALANE

UKHALA ngokubhugwa yindlala umphakathi owakhele uMasipala waseMzinyathi njengoba kuhlasele isomiso.

Umphakathi kawusazi ukuthi kumele wenze njani njengoba imfuyo ibulawa yinkinga yokushoda kwamanzi, kanti nokudla kuphelile emasimini njengoba engokho amanzi okuchelela izitshalo.

Lesi simo yisona esisukumise uMasipala waseMzinyathi nama-bandla ehlukeni ukuyokhulekela imvula eNtabeni iSandlwana, eNquthu, enyakatho yeKwaZulu-Natal ngoLwesine. Kule nkondo bekukhona izinkumbi zabazalwane.

Inkinga abantu babuka mina emehlweni njengoba bebhujiswa yindlala.

UMfu James Mthethwa oyimeya yaseMzinyathi, uthi sebezame konke ukubhekana nesomiso kodwa kubukeka kunhlanga zimuka nomoya.

"Kunzima kakhulu ngoba umphakathi wethu uphila ngemfuyo nezolimo njengoba singenazo izimboni.

"Kubuhlungu ukubona abantu bengazi ukuthi bazolala bedleni.

Sesizame konke, kanti size sacela usizo

eMnyangweni wezoLimo esifundazweni naseMnyangweni WezaManzi kuzwelonke. Usizo lwabo selwenze umehluko omkhulu empilweni yabantu kodwa kakukheneli. Manje sesibone kungcono ukuthi sibize abamabandla bezosikhulekisa. Mina ke ngaphandle kokuba yimeya ngingumtwana kaNkulunkulu. Ngakho ngibone sisikhulu isidingo sokunxusa uMdali ukuba asizwele kulesi somiso. Inkinga abantu babuka mina emehlweni njengoba bebhujiswa yindlala," kusho uMfu Mthethwa.

Uthi basazoqhubeka nokwandisa amathangi amanzi namaloli awathuthayo yize kunzima ngoba babhekene nomthwalo wokuhlizeka amawadi angama-53.

MASINGABHUQABHUQWA YINDLALA

MHLELI, ngithi mangikhuthaze imiphakathi yasemakhaya ukuthi mayiwulime umhlabathi ukuze idle ukudla okunomsoco ingabulawa indlala.

Leli ivangeli elishunyayelwa nguhulumeni neSilo samaBandla.

Izindawo zasemakhaya ezibuswa ngamakhosi zivulekile kakhulu. Kusemandleni omuntu ukuthi ufuna ukulima amasimu angakanani. Inkinga enkulu nokho ukuthi iningi labantu liyaye lingabheki ukuthi hlobo luni lwezitshalo oluvumayo emhlabathini elinawo nanokuthi kwazona lezo zitshalo zitshalwa nini.

Akuzona zonke izindawo okungatshalwa amadumbe, ubhanana, izindlubu, ubhatata, ubhontshisi, amaklabishi namantongomane,

Kwezinye izindawo njengakwaMhlabuyalingana, amadumbe, ubhanana ubhatata nokunye kutshalwa emaxhaphozini ekubeni kwezinye izindawo lezi zitshalo zitshalwa ezigangeni.

Ngeshwa ukulima emaxhaphozini kubuye kushayisane nomthetho wezemvelo okwenza kucine abezemvelo nemiphakathi babhekane ngeziqu zamehlo.

Ivangeli lokulima umhlabathi

malishunyelwe yibo bonke abaholi okungaba amakhosi, ngabaholi bezolimo, abezempilo, abezemfundo nabezepolitiki.

Masikhumbule ukuthi ukudla okuphuma emhlabathini kunomsoco.

Ngokukhiqiza ukudla emhlabathini izinga lobuphofu lingehla kakhulu nemali yalaba abathola isibonelelo ingenza umehluko omkhulu ezimpilweni zabo.

Akungabi yikho konke okuthengwa ezitolo.

Sonto J Nsele
eMBAZWANA