

Food & Water Security in South Africa WEEKLY MONITOR

16 September – 22 September 2017

Prepared by Augustus Consulting

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1.0 Key Weekly Trends, Themes and Issues

- **Western Cape farmers expect further decrease in production as the drought crisis deepens amid growing concerns that this will lead to fruit and other agricultural produce shortages and a sharp increase in prices**
- **Agricultural Business Chamber (Agbiz) says fuel prices are expected to reach their highest in three years next month, hitting farmers hard**
- **Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) confirms the presence of foot-and-mouth disease detected in Limpopo amid a deepening bird flu crisis in South Africa**
- **World Bank slashes South Africa's economic growth outlook for this year to 0.6%, from 1.1% amid reports that South Africa's second quarter growth of 2.5 percent would be insufficient to restore positive per capita gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the year**
- **Poultry prices surge as flu spreads to more chicken farms in South Africa**
- **Drought pushes farmers to suicide in South Africa**
- **South Africa's Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, Bheki Cele, says that there are corrupt official in his department and has called for an anti-corruption unit to be established to investigate corruption in the agricultural industry**
- **Limpopo villages hit by poor water supply as South Africa's ailing water infrastructure takes its toll**
- **City of Cape Town says that residents are ignoring the Level 5 water restrictions and are undeterred by the increased water tariffs as the drought crisis deepens**
- **South Africa's President Jacob Zuma says climate change is a global challenge**
- **North West residents' taps run dry as scandals continue to plague South Africa's water sector**

- **ANC accuses Western Cape Premier Helen Zille for not setting an example for saving water in the drought-wracked province amid reports that a R92000 stream water purification system has been installed at her official residence**
- **Department of Water and Sanitation urges Gauteng residents to use water sparingly amid reports that the South African Weather Service's forecast shows that there will be no heavy rains in Gauteng until next year**
- **Nedbank's head of infrastructure, energy and telecommunications, Mike Peo, says the impact of the drought in South Africa is being worsened by massive water losses due to inadequate maintenance of ageing infrastructure and poor management of water distribution networks**

1.1 Food Security

1.1.1 Western Cape farmers expect further decrease in production as the drought crisis deepens amid growing concerns that this will lead to fruit and other agricultural produce shortages and a sharp increase in prices

On 18 September, *Business Day* reported that drought-hit deciduous fruit farmers in the Western Cape, which produces more than 50% of SA's agricultural exports, are expecting a further decrease in production, exports and foreign earnings and job opportunities.¹

1.1.2 Agricultural Business Chamber (Agbiz) says fuel prices are expected to reach their highest in three years next month, hitting farmers hard

On 18 September, *IOL Business* reported that farmers could be hit where it hurts the most ... in their pockets, as fuel prices are expected to reach their highest in three years next month.²

1.1.3 Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) confirms the presence of foot-and-mouth disease detected in Limpopo amid a deepening bird flu crisis in South Africa

On 19 September, *The Citizen* reported that the department of agriculture, forestry and fisheries (DAFF) has confirmed the presence of foot-and-mouth disease in Giyani, Limpopo, Letaba Herald reports.³

1.1.4 World Bank slashes South Africa's economic growth outlook for this year to 0.6%, from 1.1% amid reports that South Africa's second quarter growth of 2.5 percent would be insufficient to restore positive per capita gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the year

¹ Western Cape farmers expect further yield falls as drought bites, Bekezela Phakathi, Business Day, 18 September 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/national/2017-09-18-western-cape-farmers-expect-further-yield-falls-as-drought-bites/>

² Fuel price to hurt farmers, Luyolo Mkentane, IOL Business, 18 September 2017, <https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/fuel-price-to-hurt-farmers-11263489>

³ Foot-and-mouth disease detected in Giyani as agriculture grows in SA, Blake Linder, The Citizen, 19 September 2017, <https://citizen.co.za/news/1659107/fmd-detected-in-giyani-as-agri-grows-in-sa/>

On 20 September, *IOL Business* reported that the World Bank on Tuesday slashed the country's economic growth outlook for this year to 0.6%, from 1.1% it forecast earlier in the year, and said that South Africa's second quarter growth of 2.5 percent would be insufficient to restore positive per capita gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the year.⁴

1.1.5 Poultry prices surge as flu spreads to more chicken farms in South Africa

On 21 September, *Business Day* reported that RCL Foods and Quantum Foods became on Wednesday the latest major poultry producers to report cases of bird flu, whose effect is beginning to play out in higher meat prices as producers cull birds to contain the spread of the disease.⁵

1.1.6 Drought pushes farmers to suicide in South Africa

On 21 September, *Mercury* reported that the heavy drought burden facing farmers in the Eastern and Northern Cape has taken its toll and even led to the suicide of at least two farmers.⁶

1.1.7 South Africa's Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, Bheki Cele, says that there are corrupt official in his department and has called for an anti-corruption unit to be established to investigate corruption in the agricultural industry

On 21 September, *News24* reported that an anti-corruption unit should be established to investigate corruption in the agricultural industry, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery Bheki Cele said on Thursday.⁷

1.2 Water Security

1.2.1 Limpopo villages hit by poor water supply as South Africa's ailing water infrastructure takes its toll

On 18 September, *Sowetan* reported that less than ten kilometres from one of Limpopo's biggest dams, Flag Boshielo, the residents of several rural villages face a daily battle to get water.⁸

⁴ World Bank slashes South Africa's economic growth outlook, Kabelo Khumalo, *IOL Business Report*, 20 September 2017, <https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/world-bank-slashes-south-africas-economic-growth-outlook-11279840>

⁵ Poultry prices rise as flu spreads to more chicken farms, Andries Mahlangu, *Business Day*, 21 September 2017, <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/companies/land-and-agriculture/2017-09-21-poultry-prices-rise-as-flu-spreads-to-more-chicken-farms/>

⁶ Drought pushes farmers to suicide, *Mercury Reporter*, 21 September 2017, <https://www.iol.co.za/mercury/news/drought-pushes-farmers-to-suicide-11310261>

⁷ There are corrupt officials in the agriculture department – Bheki Cele, Mxolisi Mngadi, *News24*, 21 September 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/there-are-corrupt-officials-in-the-agriculture-department-bheki-cele-20170921>

⁸ A 'disgraceful' battle for water in Limpopo villages, Kyle Cowan, *Sowetan*, 18 September 2017, <http://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2017/09/18/a-disgraceful-battle-for-water-in-limpopo-villages>

1.2.2 City of Cape Town says that residents are ignoring the Level 5 water restrictions and are undeterred by the increased water tariffs as the drought crisis deepens

On 18 September, *News24* reported that many Capetonians are failing to adhere to level 5 water restrictions, with only half limiting their daily personal water consumption to 87 litres, the City of Cape Town said.⁹

1.2.3 South Africa's President Jacob Zuma says climate change is a global challenge

On 18 September, *ANA* reported that climate change is a global challenge and developing countries should be provided with adequate support for their mitigation and adaptation actions, President Jacob Zuma said on Monday.¹⁰

1.2.4 North West residents' taps run dry as scandals continue to plague South Africa's water sector

On 19 September, *Times Live* reported that a contractor in a multi-million rand water reticulation project in the North West has been accused of duping residents into signing forms confirming they had water, when all they had were dry taps.¹¹

1.2.5 ANC accuses Western Cape Premier Helen Zille for not setting an example for saving water in the drought-wracked province amid reports that a R92000 stream water purification system has been installed at her official residence

On 19 September, *TNA* reported that an extra perk of purified stream water has been added to the privileges of incumbency enjoyed by Western Cape Premier Helen Zille, who has been accused of not setting an example for saving water in the drought-wracked province.¹²

1.2.6 Department of Water and Sanitation urges Gauteng residents to use water sparingly amid reports that the South African Weather Service's forecast shows that there will be no heavy rains in Gauteng until next year

On 19 September, *Eyewitness News* reported that with the South African Weather Service forecasting no heavy rains in Gauteng until next year, the Water and Sanitation Department has urged residents to continue using water sparingly.¹³

⁹ Many Capetonians ignoring water restrictions – City, James de Villiers, *News24*, 18 September 2017, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/many-capetonians-ignoring-water-restrictions-city-20170918>

¹⁰ Climate change is a global challenge: Zuma, ANA Reporter, 18 September 2017, <https://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/climate-change-is-a-global-challenge-zuma-11267563>

¹¹ North West residents high and dry after water project 'scam', Sipho Mabena, *Times Live*, 19 September 2017, <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2017-09-19-north-west-residents-high-and-dry-after-water-project-scam/>

¹² Zille's purified stream water perk, *TNA Reporter*, 19 September 2017, <http://www.thenewage.co.za/zilles-purified-stream-water-perk/>

¹³ Gauteng residents urged to use water sparingly, Masego Rahlaga, *Eyewitness News*, 19 September 2017, <http://ewn.co.za/2017/09/19/gauteng-residents-urged-to-use-water-sparingly>

1.2.7 Nedbank’s head of infrastructure, energy and telecommunications, Mike Peo, says the impact of the drought in South Africa is being worsened by massive water losses due to inadequate maintenance of ageing infrastructure and poor management of water distribution networks

On 20 September, *Fin24* reported that South Africa’s widespread water crisis is not only being caused by a severe drought but by “political apathy”, according to an economist at Nedbank.¹⁴

2.0 Weekly Infographics: Climate Change-Food Security Nexus: Climate change could increase the risk of hunger and malnutrition by up to 20% by 2050



Figure 1. Climate Change-Food Nexus: Climate change could increase the risk of hunger and malnutrition by up to 20% by 2050

3.0 Overall Assessment

- ❖ **South Africa is urged to improve its plant and animal disease monitoring capabilities because outbreaks such as the fall armyworm and bird flu poses a major threat to food security in the country**
- ❖ **More water infrastructure investment is needed in South Africa in order to reduce water leaks and improve access to water by the marginalized rural and peri-urban communities**

¹⁴ Water scarcity could be bigger problem than energy crunch – analyst, Jan Cronje, *Fin24*, 20 September 2017, <http://www.fin24.com/Economy/water-scarcity-could-be-bigger-problem-than-energy-crunch-analyst-20170920>