

Poor rains delay plantings other parts of South Africa

KwaZulu-Natal: Amazing agricultural recovery

The farming sector in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) is growing at a 12% clip thanks to good rains, while the country's key maize-growing areas have delayed plantings due to the unseasonably dry weather.

A report last week by Agbiz chief economist Wandile Sihlobo, says despite late rains, summer crop farmers are still upbeat about the prospects for the coming season, and plantings are expected to be the highest in the last three years.

Expectations are that plantings will be about 7% higher than last year, or roughly 3.9 million hectares, driven in part by better domestic market prices for maize, sunflower seed, soybeans and groundnuts.

Farmers, however, are delaying plantings as a result of low soil moisture and the late arrival of seasonal rains on the Highveld.

"There are prospects for good rainfall in the first week of November 2019," says Sihlobo. "In fact, the next three months might bring sufficient moisture in most parts of the summer-growing areas of South Africa. The South African Weather Service forecasts above-normal rainfall in the central to eastern regions of South Africa between November 2019 and January 2020. This could help boost soil moisture and thereafter plantings and crop-growing conditions."

Profitable macadamia and avocado plantations

Large tracts of land previously under sugar in KZN have been turned over to more profitable macadamia and avocado plantations. According to Macadamia SA, 90% of production is being exported, mainly to China.

As reported on [moneyweb.co.za](https://www.moneyweb.co.za/news/south-africa/kzns-amazing-agricultural-recovery-while-poor-rains-delay-plantings-elsewhere/) (<https://www.moneyweb.co.za/news/south-africa/kzns-amazing-agricultural-recovery-while-poor-rains-delay-plantings-elsewhere/>), Maree says the agricultural potential of the province is still growing, due to the availability of underutilised arable land in tribal areas.

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(<http://eng.unitec-group.com/>).

