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PODCAST: These are three major challenges facing SA agriculture at the start of July

22 JULY 2024 - 10:00



Picture: EMIL VON MALITZ

The start of July presented three challenges whose impact will become clearer in the weeks ahead. First, in the northern regions of South Africa, particularly in Limpopo, the potato crop has suffered losses because of frost after an unusually cold spell in the region. The most affected crops are the ones planted from May onwards. The scale and impact of the damage at the national level are yet to be clear. However, rough estimates and anecdotes from various industry players suggest that we are unlikely to experience a national crisis regarding supplies. Still, the farmers in the affected regions will suffer financial losses.

Second, the various regions of the Western Cape were affected by heavy storms. There are reports of infrastructure damage. Whether agricultural activities in the province experienced damage and what the degree of such damage could be remains unclear. We suspect the impact will mainly be on public infrastructure rather than agricultural

activities. For this region, this is a busy citrus harvesting period, and the bad weather conditions have delayed activities in some fields. Moreover, the winter crop season (that is wheat, canola, barley and oats) is at its early stages, which would have also spared the fields from major damage, given there was no heavy erosion.

Third, in the Eastern Cape, the rains in the southern regions also slowed the citrus harvest. At this early stage, we have not heard of any damage to the harvest. The field and agricultural logistics activity should gain momentum during the week as weather conditions improve. But not all things are well in the province. Foot and mouth disease remains a challenge in the dairy industry. The dairy industry and government regulators are now engaged in possible pathways to address this challenge in the province.

Listen to the podcast for more information.



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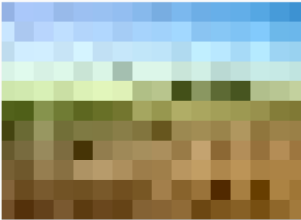
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