



e-Newsletter

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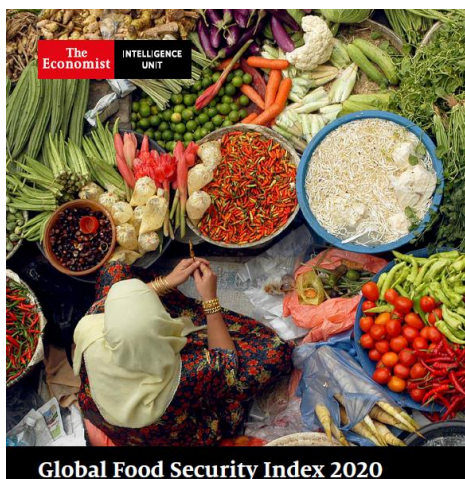
Agbiz responds to 2021 Budget Speech: inclusive growth and fiscal consolidation critical for South Africa's future



"In the most challenging budget for South Africa since the advent of democracy in 1994, Minister Tito Mboweni and his team have, within major constraints, provided the most reasonable balance in stimulating economic growth and consolidating the fiscal framework. With the previous national budget of February 2020, South Africa was already in an unenviable and constrained position of endemic low economic growth, constrained tax revenue and higher unemployment," Dr John Purchase, CEO of Agbiz, said. "The Covid pandemic, and the resultant lockdown measures, subsequently hit the South African economy very hard, with an expected 7,2% contraction

in GDP in the 2020/21 financial year, and many people losing their livelihoods and employment. Our biggest risk was that the ballooning national debt from just over 60% of debt to GDP ratio to over 90% would trigger a sovereign debt crisis and result in South Africa defaulting on its interest and debt repayments. Please [click here](#) for the full Agbiz media statement.

Agbiz participates in launch of the *Global Food Security Index*



Global Food Security Index 2020

The latest [Global Food Security Index \(GFSI\)](#), developed by The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) and supported by Corteva Agriscience, was launched earlier this week. Agbiz CEO Dr John Purchase was one of the panellists at the virtual launch event. The *GFSI* considers food affordability, availability, quality and safety, alongside natural resources and resilience, across 113 countries. The index is based on a dynamic benchmarking model constructed from 59 qualitative and quantitative indicators that measure the drivers of food security in developing and developed countries. This report is based on research conducted by the EIU between April and September 2020. The 113 countries included in the *GFSI* cover five regions—Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa, and North America. In addition to the global report, reports for each region are also available, providing deeper analysis of region-specific performance in the 2020 index. Please

[click here](#) to view a video recording of the event.

POPIA : Information regulator issues guidelines for the development of codes of conduct effective 1 March 2021



On 22 February 2021, the South African Information Regulator published guidelines to develop codes of conduct under the Protection of Personal Information Act No. 4 of 2013 (POPIA). It is probable that organisations that fall within the same industry will encounter similar or even identical data protection issues. Codes of conduct provide such organisations with useful guidance on industry-standard approaches to these issues. By developing and implementing codes of conduct, organisations are in a better position to demonstrate to individuals that it takes their data protection rights seriously. This, in turn, may persuade those individuals to do business

with that organisation rather than with its competitors. The South African economy is saturated by a plethora of industries/industry sectors, and professional and vocational bodies. All these industry bodies have distinct and unique ways of managing their business, profession or vocation to an extent that there is not a one-size-fits-all compliance approach across all industries. As a consequence, industry-specific dynamics ought to inform the way forward considering the impact of POPIA industry members. Read more in the [Data Protection and Privacy E-Bulletin](#) published by Werksmans.

AGRIBUSINESS RESEARCH

SA set to have its largest summer grain and oilseed harvest on record in 2020/21 production season



2021 promises to be another good year for South Africa's agricultural sector, at least from a production front. The data released yesterday by the Crop Estimates Committee (CEC) show that South Africa's 2020/21 summer grain and oilseed production could increase by 5% y/y to 18,5 million tonnes. While this is still the first production estimate for this season, with eight more to follow, this could be the largest on record if it materializes. The crop increases are expected in all summer grains and oilseeds, except sunflower seed, whose harvest is set to fall 10% y/y, primarily on the back of a decline in area plantings. In the [linked article](#), Agbiz chief economist Wandile Sihlobo discusses the latest data.

SA agricultural employment down 8% y/y in Q4, 2020



Although South Africa's agricultural economy performed robustly in 2020, and possibly grew by between 10-13%, according to our and the Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy estimates, employment numbers remain disappointing. The data released by Statistics South Africa this week show that South Africa's primary agricultural jobs were down 8% year on year in the fourth quarter of 2020, with 810 209 people employed. There was a decline in employment across most provinces except for the Eastern Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga, which registered job gains from the last quarter of 2019. The most considerable headcount losses were in the Western Cape,

amounting to about 51 000 below 2019. KwaZulu-Natal followed this, with jobs down by 21 000 compared to the last quarter of 2019. Wandile Sihlobo discusses the latest data in the [linked article](#).

Things are looking up for Zimbabwean agriculture



Business Day.

Global grain market players and analysts depend on major organisations such as the International Grains Council and the US department of agriculture for production estimates. However, these organisations could have an incorrect view of Zimbabwe's 2020/2021 grain production this time around. Both organisations forecast 908 000 tonnes, 17% higher than the previous season, which is still well below Zimbabwe's annual requirement of 1.8 million to 2 million tonnes. If correct, this would mean the country remains a net importer of maize until 2022. Read more in the [linked article](#) by Wandile Sihlobo, written for and first published in

AGBIZ GRAIN

Leaf Services appointed to do inspections at silos



published in *Landbouweekblad*, Wessel Lemmer discusses the impact of this appointment. Please [click here](#) to read.

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and rural Development (DALRRD) appointed Leaf Services in 2016 to grade grains and oilseeds at silos. Meanwhile, the department gained new insights and decided to inspect only the grading function, instrumentation and staff capabilities at silos. Leaf Services announced on February 1 that their services will start nationwide on 1 April. Wessel Lemmer, general manager of Agbiz Grain, elaborates on the new inspection service in an interview on *RSG Landbou*. Click on [the link](#) to listen to the interview or watch a [PlaasTV interview](#) on the same topic. In an article written for and first

LABOUR RELATIONS

NMW exemption process



The national minimum wage (NMW) increase was announced on 8 February 2021. Given the steep rise (16.2%) in farmworker wages, some employers might find themselves in a situation where they cannot afford the NMW. In such a case, a very particular process needs to be followed. In cases where producers cannot afford the NMW, an exemption process was launched with the NMW in 2019. This can be accessed [here](#). It is very important to note that if an employer is trading at a loss, the exemption will automatically be granted. Jahni de Villiers of Labour Amplified discusses this subject in the [linked article](#).

OTHER NEWS

BUSA: Cargo movement update



The *BUSA: Cargo movement update* - the 26th of its kind - contains a consolidated overview of the South African supply chain and the current state of international trade. As the second wave of infections is clearly behind us, new cases of Covid-19 have continued to decrease markedly, averaging approximately 1 981 per day (down from 2 488 the previous week). South Africa remains at 16th position globally, with the total number of cases recorded now amounting to 1 498 76617 at the time of writing.

After the previous week's news revolving around Astra Zeneca's poor trial results, better news can be divulged this week as the country finally commenced with its vaccine roll-out programme. A keen eye will now be turned to the programme's progress, as the persistent hurdles experienced to date do not give rise to any optimism looking ahead. Globally speaking, more than 185 million people have now been given at least one dose of vaccine, which constitutes 2.5%21 of the world's population as of writing. The constituency vaccinated has now far exceeded the total number of Covid-19 cases. Unfortunately, many scientists believe that the coronavirus is here to stay and will likely become endemic. Please [click here](#) to peruse.

Update on suspected Rift Valley fever case in the Free State



The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) would like to update the nation on the reports of a suspected Rift Valley fever (RVF) in the Free State. Government veterinary services were alerted when a laboratory test result for RVF was received that required further investigation. The provincial veterinary services have since conducted a follow-up investigation on the suspect farm and did not find sufficient epidemiological evidence of RVF. Additional testing of samples also excluded RVF. This means that for 2021, no outbreak of RVF has been confirmed in the country. Please [click here](#) to read the DALRRD media statement.

Erratic weather and conflict threaten food security in Mozambique



Erratic weather conditions and conflict curb 2021 production prospects in the northern provinces of Mozambique, likely increasing the levels of food insecurity, according to a report on Mozambique prepared by the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) of the Markets and Trade Division of the FAO. Rainfall deficits since the start of the cropping season in northern Cabo Delgado and Nampula provinces have negatively affected crops, curbing cereal production prospects in 2021. The ongoing conflict in Cabo Delgado and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have heightened households' vulnerability and are expected to aggravate conditions in 2021. The 2021 cyclone season is still active and more cyclones could further undermine food availability and access in the north. Please [click here](#) to peruse.

Late summer rain to continue



It has become progressively wetter during the last few days as upper-air conditions improved and tropical Cyclone Guambe on the coast of Mozambique moved out southeastwards. Large amounts of moisture moved into the country from the north as anticyclonic circulation gave way to a northerly flow with a trough to the southwest. Conditions will remain favorable for further showers and thundershowers especially over the central to eastern and southeastern areas during the remainder of the week and into the weekend. While cloudy and cool conditions with widespread rain will initially occur over the central parts, the main area of activity will shift somewhat northeastwards during the week but is expected to move back into the central areas by later this weekend. Temperatures will be near normal for this time of the year, but it will become hot over the western parts and winter rainfall region during the week, spreading to the Karoo by the weekend. During this entire time, however, large amounts of moisture in circulation will result in scattered to widespread thundershowers over most of the summer rainfall region, including the important grain-production areas. Read more in the latest edition of [Cumulus](#), compiled by AgriSeker.

Flying autonomous robot can spot and pick ripe fruit



There is a global shortage of seasonal fruit pickers, as a result of the enforced Covid-19 travel restrictions. As it is getting harder to find fruit pickers to harvest the world's orchards, some farmers are turning to AI drones to pick their crops. Now an Israeli company, Tevel Aerobotics Technologies, has developed a flying autonomous robot (FAR) that utilizes artificial intelligence (AI) to identify and pick the ripest fruit. It combines artificial intelligence with computer vision, advanced robotics, aeronautical engineering, state-of-the-art flight control, and data

fusion and perception. Read more in the [linked article](#), first published on *Inceptivemind.com*.

MEMBERS' NEWS

First virtual Southern Hemisphere Fresh Fruit Trade congress to be launched in March 2021

The Southern Hemisphere Association of Fresh Fruit Exporters will launch its very first annual Southern Hemisphere Fresh Fruit Trade Congress on 25 March 2021. With the defining theme "Keeping the world supplied", this first edition will be dedicated to giving exclusive insights and market intelligence on the current production and trading situation for key temperate fruit crops under pandemic conditions with contributions from all eight Southern Hemisphere suppliers: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, New Zealand, Peru, Uruguay, and South Africa. Southern Hemisphere exporters contribute 11 million tonnes of exported temperate fruit with a market value of \$14 billion and play a significant role in the availability of healthy food choices. Please [click here](#) for more information.

Cova newsletter on the budget speech

The *Budget Speech Newsletter* by Cova Advisory summarises the main points of Minister Tito Mboweni's 2021 budget speech. Please [click here](#) to peruse.

Get the latest news from the FPEF

Keeping it Fresh, the newsletter of the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum, contains all the recent relevant news and developments. Please [click here](#) for the latest edition

The latest news from SATI

The *SATI Trade Newsletter* provides an overview of the latest activities in the table grape industry. Please [click here](#) for the latest edition.

Weekly newsletter from CGA

Justin Chadwick, CEO of the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern African, shares the latest news in the citrus industry in his weekly update - *From the desk of the CEO*. Please [click here](#) to peruse.

The latest news from the pork industry

Read more about the latest developments and news in the pork industry in the South African Pork Producers' Organisation's (SAPPO) newsletter, [SAPPO Weekly Update](#).

The latest news from the fruit industry from Fruit SA

Read more about the latest developments and news in the fruit industry in Fruit SA's January/February 2021 newsletter. Please [click here](#) to peruse.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Corteva media briefing of the 2020 Global Food Security Index

4 March 2021 | 14:00 | Zoom meeting

RSVP: barbra.muzata@corteva.com

GOSA Workshop: Training and Qualifications

4 March 2021 | 9:00- 11:00 | Zoom meeting

[Programme](#)

[Register](#)

Annual Southern Hemisphere Fresh Fruit Trade Congress

25 March 2021 | Virtual

[More information](#)

Second International Congress of Biological Control (ICBC2)

26-30 April 2021 | Virtual

[More information](#)

AGBIZ MEMBERSHIP

Why join Agbiz?

- Agbiz is the only organisation that serves the broader and common over-arching business interests of agribusinesses in South Africa.
- Agbiz addresses the legislative and policy environment on the many fronts that it impacts on the agribusiness environment.
- Agbiz facilitates considerable top-level networking opportunities so that South African agribusinesses can play an active and creative role within the local and international organised business environment.
- Agbiz research provides sector-specific information for informed decision-making.
- Agbiz newsletter publishes members' press releases and member product announcements.

[Please visit the Agbiz website for more information](#)



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