

# TRADE PROBE

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agriculture, land reform  
& rural development

Department:  
Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Promoting market access for South African agriculture

# FOREWORD

Welcome to the eighty-ninth(89th) issue of the Trade Probe publication produced under the Markets and Economic Research Centre (MERC) of the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC). The Trade Probe is co-produced by the NAMC and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD). This issue focuses on the impact of global dynamics and conflicts on the food system in South Africa. There are several topics covered in this issue, including the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on South African oil prices, the impact of South Africa's anti-dumping duties on poultry imports, and the motivation behind the rise in sunflower oil prices. The current issue of the Trade Probe aims to inform policymakers, farmers, traders, and other stakeholders about factors impacting the food system, market opportunities, and potential products demanded by local and international markets based on the mandate of the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC).

## REPORT STRUCTURE

### Trade Analysis

1. The impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on South African oil price
2. Household welfare impact of South Africa's anti-dumping duties imposed on poultry imports and the Russia-Ukraine crisis
3. The justification behind increasing South Africa's sunflower oil price

### Trade Opportunities

4. Global fertiliser prices expected to affect South Africa's prices
5. South Africa should be aggressive in diversifying its markets for citrus fruits: A case of citrus black spot.

### Trade News

6. Expensive fertiliser pushes farmers to organic farming
7. Department to handover a multimillion-rand farm to smallholder farmers in Limpopo
8. Minister Didiza pleased with South Africa's summer crop planting estimates despite heavy rains

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# The impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on South African oil price

*By Ms. Fezeka Matebeni*

Global oil markets have remained volatile since the outbreak of COVID-19. Oil prices decreased to US\$ 40 a barrel in April 2020, then fluctuated throughout 2021. However, in March 2022, the oil price increased to US\$ 123 per barrel due to global dynamics and geopolitics (Geopolitical Intelligence Services, 2022).

As a result of COVID-19, global oil demand decreased by 20%, resulting in a decline in prices. Oil prices began to rise as the world market recovered from COVID-19. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine in February 2022 and the subsequent economic sanctions imposed on Russia by major economies such as the European Union (EU) and the United States of America (USA) caused significant disruptions in the global oil market. Russia is the world's third-largest oil producer, behind the USA and Saudi Arabia. According to International Energy Agency (IEA), Russia's total oil production was

11.3 million barrels per day (mb/d) in early 2022, while the US and Saudi Arabia produced a total oil production of 17.6 mb/d and 12 mb/d, respectively. Russia is also the world's largest exporter of oil to the world markets and the second-largest crude oil exporter after Saudi Arabia (IEA, 2022). This article evaluates the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on South Africa's oil market.

Since the USA and EU imposed sanctions against Russia, the international oil traders have increasingly shifted away from Russia's oil to avoid secondary sanctions (Secondary sanctions refer to direct sanctions imposed on countries that continue to do business with Russia). Consequently, there has been a significant oil shortage in the global market due to the economic sanctions imposed on Russia. As a net oil importer, South Africa is adversely affected by the increasing oil shortage on the global market. Therefore, oil prices in the local



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market have risen since the conflict between Russia and Ukraine began. The government has temporarily waived the fuel levy as a policy measure to assist farmers and South Africa at large. On 3 May 2022, the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (2022) announced the changes to the fuel levy, which immediately decreased the local oil fuel price by 12 cents per litre, thus bringing some much-needed relief to consumers and farmers. The price of diesel, which directly impacts the farming operations in the country, was also reduced by 98 cents, significantly influencing the local food value chain.

Food markets are highly integrated with the oil market; hence, any oil market changes directly impact farmers' ability to operate profitably. The Russia-Ukraine conflict indirectly impacts farmers as they have to bear the brunt of growing diesel prices in the local market. Since most food in South Africa is transported by road, it affects both farmers and consumers. According to Road Freight Association (2022), about 88% of all goods are transported on the road in South Africa. In agriculture, 81% of maize, 76% of wheat, and 69% of soya beans are transported by road, which links the food system with the oil market.

Considering that most of South Africa's agricultural produce is transported on rural roads, the rising price of fuel, particularly diesel, threatens food affordability, contributing to the growing number of people facing food insecurity. StatsSA estimates that 25% of the country's population cannot afford food. The NAMC's food cost report for April 2022 estimates that the typical food basket cost approximately R1 046.68. StatsSA further states that annual consumer price inflation (CPI) increased to 5.9% in March 2022, which gives cause for concern about the cost of living in the country. The rising fuel prices are likely to cause more increases in the cost of a typical food basket in the near term. With food and other essential needs being the primary drivers of increased CPI, the Russia-Ukraine war continues to cause a considerable knock-on effect on the price of fuel and diesel. Global shocks always have the most significant impact on the world's most marginalised people. Several factors are causing the global oil market to fluctuate, likely increasing inflation.





# Household welfare impact of South Africa's anti-dumping duties imposed on poultry imports and the Russia-Ukraine crisis

By Dr. Moses Lubinga



The invasion of Ukraine by Russia is one of the primary drivers of the soaring food prices across the globe (Arezki 2022; USDA-FAS, 2022), and price hikes are not anticipated to recede in the near term (Selier 2022, Vaitilingam 2022). Considering that Russia and Ukraine are among the leading suppliers of wheat and maize to the global market, as well as fertilisers, oil and gas, this presents a serious concern for the livelihoods of many households. In South Africa, fertiliser and crude oil prices directly affect the poultry industry since feed costs bear 70% of broiler production costs. Thus, the high cost of agro-inputs is directly affecting the production capacity of the poultry industry. The South African Poultry Association (SAPA) requested an anti-dumping duty on chicken bone-in portions from Brazil, Denmark, Ireland, Poland and Spain in December 2021 after complaints that there was dumping in South Africa, negatively impacting the local poultry industry. Provisional anti-dumping duties retrospectively took effect from 17 December 2021 and shall be in force until 14 June 2022.

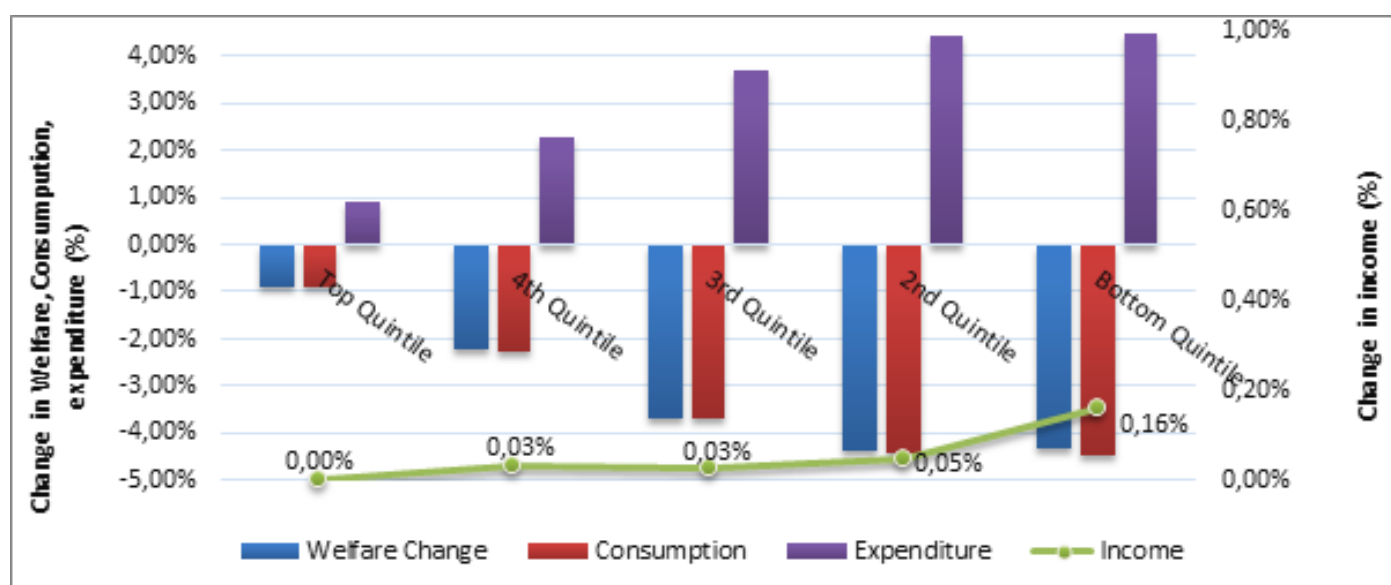
According to the Government gazette (2022), duties significantly vary depending on the type of bone-in chicken portion and the country of origin. On average, bone-in chicken imports originating from Brazil are subject to a 265% duty, while imports from Poland, Denmark, Ireland, and Spain command 96.9%, 67.4%, 158.4%, and 85.8% duty, respectively. This article highlights the estimated impact of provisional anti-dumping duty on households' welfare in South Africa. In line with Deaton (1989), Moratti and Natali (2012), and Artuc et al. (2019), two proxies were used to measure household welfare, namely real income and consumption. The Tariffs database of Household Impacts was used to simulate the first-order distributional impact of the provisional anti-dumping duty on bone-in chicken imports originating from Brazil, Denmark, Ireland, Poland and Spain

As shown in **Figure 1**, it appears that the duty has a negative impact on the overall welfare of South African households over the short term. The estimates are based on the assumption that: (i) the provisional anti-dumping duties imposed on bone-



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in chicken imports have been fully passed along to consumers, and (ii) the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war also impacts chicken import prices. As a result of an estimated 3.15% increase in chicken meat prices, households' overall welfare was reduced by about 3.1%. Accordingly, households' welfare decreased by about 3.1% after imposing provisional anti-dumping duties.



**Figure 1: Impact of provisional anti-dumping duty on households in South Africa**

Source: Author's computation based on Household Impacts of Tariffs database

Though the positive overall income gain of 0.05% indicates that some revenue is being received, especially by households under the bottom quintile, households spend about 3.15% more due to the estimated decrease in chicken consumption. In all cases, households falling under the bottom quintile and the second (2nd) are the most affected, in that order.

## Conclusion

It is imperative to reconsider the provisional duties imposed on bone-in chicken imports despite the soaring commodity prices resulting from the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war despite the anti-dumping duty being a good tool for protecting the domestic industry. Therefore, households are expected to be less susceptible to food price inflation, ensuring their food security in the short term (at least until the war ends).

# The factors underpinning the rise in South Africa's sunflower oil price

By Mr Lucius Phaleng

Most plant-based oils are derived from crops such as soybeans, rapeseed, canola, palm, and sunflower seeds. Approximately 80% of the world's plant-based oil production is used for human consumption, and the remainder is used as animal feed (Ritchie, 2021). South Africa is one of the world's largest sunflower seed producers, producing an average of 696 thousand tonnes per annum and accounting for a 3% share in world sunflower seed production. In South Africa, sunflower production is the third-largest grain crop, whereas maize and wheat occupy the first and second positions, respectively (DALRRD, 2021).

About 60% of oilseeds produced locally are made of sunflower, reflecting the importance of this crop in South Africa. The Free State, North West and some areas of Limpopo are the country's primary producers of sunflower seeds, collectively accounting for 98% of the total production. Sunflower oil prices have risen recently despite the

country's significant production of sunflower seeds. This article aims to identify and assess the factors driving the rising price of sunflower oil.

The figure below shows the sunflower seed production and area planted between the 1995/96 and 2020/21 production seasons. During the period under review, the area planted with sunflowers decreased. Land reform programmes, soil erosion and crop substitution, may be contributing factors (S&D E, 2022). In the same period, the production of sunflower seeds has moved sideways, indicating that yields, production technology, and agricultural practices have improved to enable high production volumes. Sunflower production is projected to reach 741 thousand tonnes in the 2021/2022 production season due to good rains and a larger planting area after some farmers could not plant maize because of high fertiliser prices and excessive rains (South African Crop Estimate Committee, 2022).

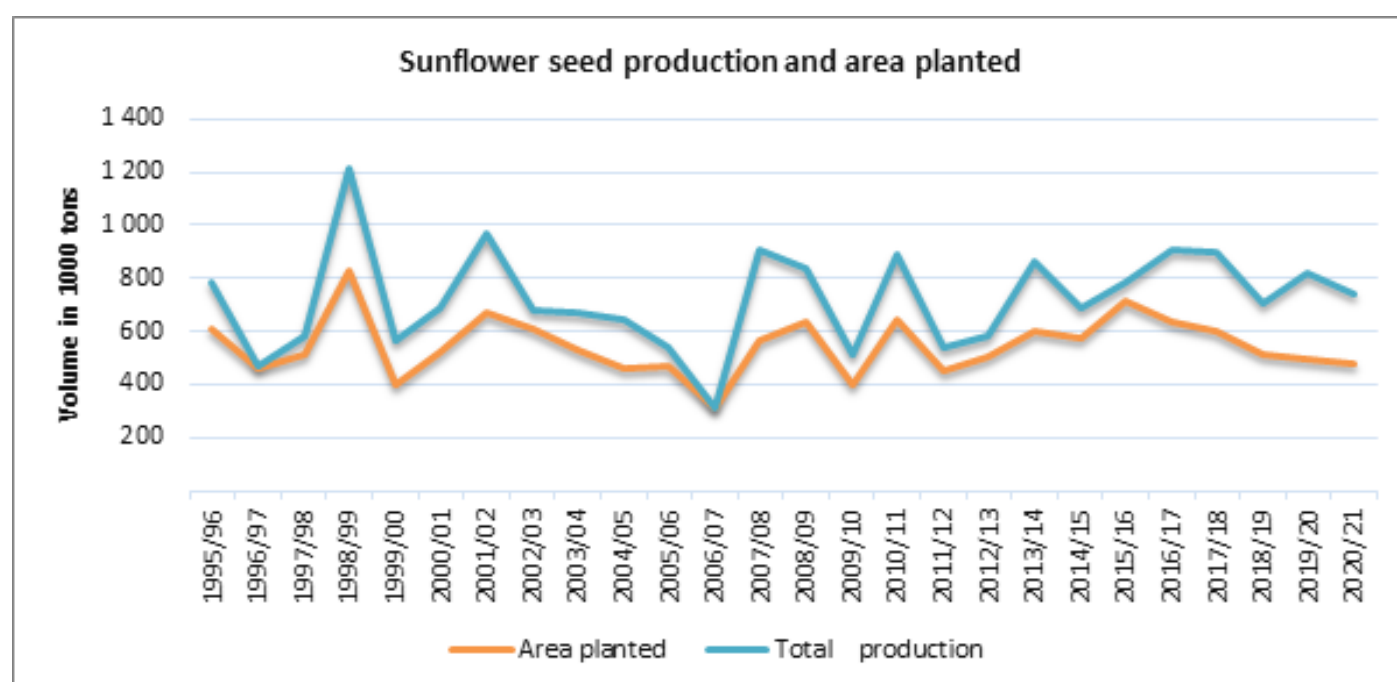


Figure 2: sunflower seed production and area planted

Source: DALRRD (2022)





Prices for sunflower oil have risen due to a variety of factors. In the past four months, the South African sunflower oil has increased by up to 45-55%. Amongst the factors driving the prices is the shortage of sunflower supply in the global market due to the ongoing conflict in Russia and Ukraine. The export bans and other trade-distorting measures instituted by various countries in the world have also caused sunflower prices to increase. The lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on trade flows and logistical constraints has also added pressure on the global supply of sunflower seed in the global market. Ukraine and Russia are the world's leading exporters of sunflower oil, accounting for XX% of total exports, according to Trade Map (2022). Globally, sunflower oil is in short supply due to the ongoing conflict. As a result, sunflower oil prices are increasing. The South African food system is closely connected to the global food chain and is affected by changes in the global marketplace. Due to the growing shortage of sunflower seeds, some countries have instituted trade-distorting measures, such as a ban on sunflower seeds, wheat, and palm oil exports. Despite the shortage in the global market, South Africa has alternative markets where it can source sunflower seeds and other grain products. Some alternative sunflower seed sources include Bulgaria, Argentina, The Netherlands, Hungary and Turkey.



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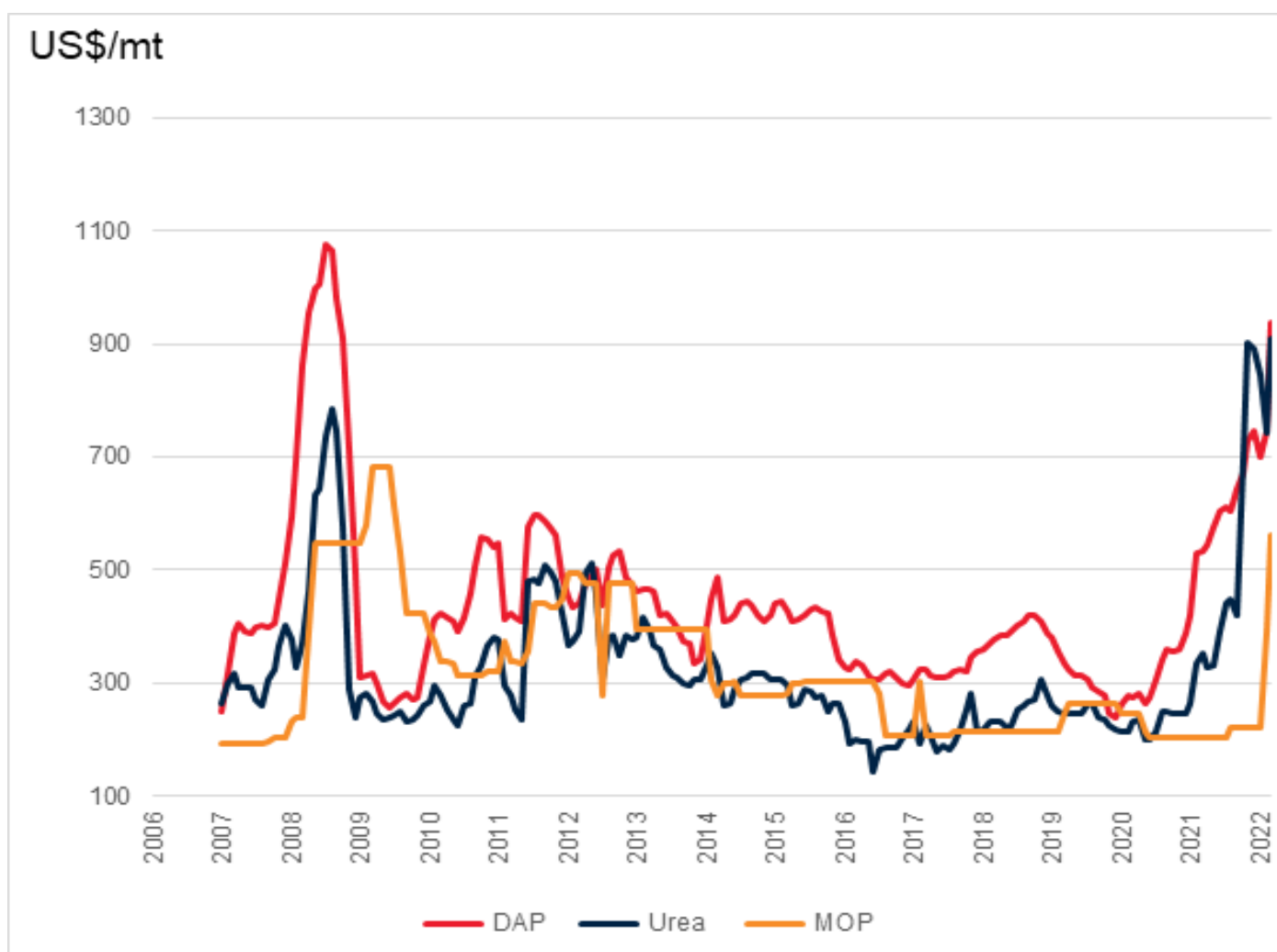


## Global fertiliser prices expected to affect South Africa's prices

By Ms. Onele Tshitiza

Fertilisers play an essential role in producing crops and pastures for animal feed. In value terms, the most traded fertilisers are mineral or chemical nitrogenous fertilisers such as urea, followed by mineral or chemical fertilisers containing two or three fertilising elements, i.e., nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium (NPK). According to the European Commission, urea is the world's most widely used nutrient fertiliser. Over the past few years, fertiliser prices have risen steadily, and the recent conflict between Russia and Ukraine has exacerbated this trend. The Russian Federation accounted for 15.2% of the value of world exports in 2021, followed by China at 13.3%, Canada at 8.1%, and Morocco at 7% (Trademap, 2022).

Baffeswee and Koh (2022) report that fertiliser prices rose by 30% from January to April 2022 due to higher input costs, such as natural gas utilised in the production of ammonia in Europe and higher coal prices used in China. The rise in prices has also been attributed to disruptions of supply caused by economic sanctions against Russia and export restrictions in China. Over time, the global price of fertilisers has surged, as shown in **Figure 4**. The price of diammonium phosphate and urea reached above US\$ 900 per tonne on average in 2022 from approximately US\$ 300 per tonne in 2020. If the bottlenecks are not resolved, prices are likely to increase.



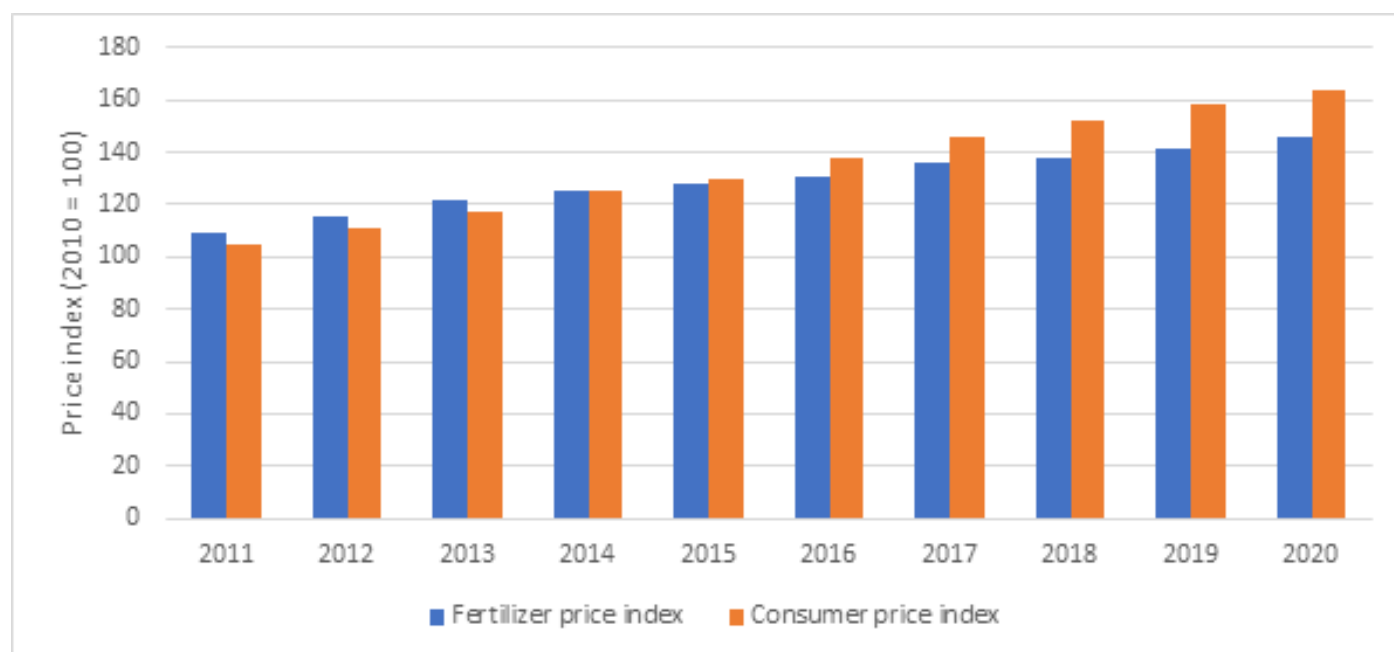
**Figure 3: Fertiliser prices of urea, muriate of potash and diammonium phosphate**

Source: Bloomberg; World Bank

Note: DAP = diammonium phosphate. MOP = muriate of potash. The last observation took place in March 2022

The rise in fertiliser prices is coupled with rising production costs and global staple commodity prices, which are likely to affect food prices. According to the FAO (2022), the food price index moved to 158.5 points in April 2022 due to declines in the prices of vegetable oils and cereals. Prices are likely to increase because of shortages of cereals and oils from Russia and Ukraine, as well as rising prices of fuel, gas, and other raw materials used to produce fertilisers. South Africa has not been exempted from rising input costs, especially fertiliser costs. Based on South Africa's tariff book, fertilisers are imported duty-free. Fertiliser is an essential input that accounts for approximately 35% of production costs in crops such as maize and sunflower (Daily Maverick, 2022). Based on value, South Africa imported the majority of its fertilisers from Saudi Arabia (20.2%), Russia (14.7%), Qatar (13.6%), and China (10.3%) in 2021 (Trademap, 2022). The supply of both China and Russia has been restricted, and South Africa might need to find alternative sources of supply. Based on

**Figure 5**, there has been a significant increase in fertiliser prices in South Africa between 2010 and 2020. Compared to 2010, the price of fertiliser increased 41.2% in 2019 and 46.1% in 2020. These figures will likely continue to rise in the future. Increases in production inputs affect producers and consumers, leading to further food insecurity in the country as vulnerable households struggle to afford food due to food inflation and an elevated unemployment rate. There has been an increase in South Africa's consumer price index (CPI) in recent years. In 2020, the CPI had grown by 63.5% from 2010. Considering the above-mentioned social problems in the country, this is a serious concern.



**Figure 5: South Africa's fertiliser and consumer price index (2010 = 100)**

Source: DALRRD, 2022



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### Conclusion

As agricultural input prices rally due to the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine, food prices are expected to increase for products that depend on inputs such as fertilisers, vegetable oils and fuel South Africa imports. It is estimated that about 80% of South Africa's fertiliser needs are imported, which will subsequently impact local input prices and consumer prices. A call is being made for the country to prioritise its local production of fertilisers in the longer term and to invest in its own processing of essential fertilisers to ensure the sector's sustainability and food security. In addition, importers must find alternative sources of fertilisers to the large suppliers in conflict. Should input and food prices continue to rise, the government will have to devise interventions in the form of relief for producers and poorer households due to the country's high unemployment and food insecurity levels



## South Africa should be aggressive in diversifying its markets for citrus fruits

*By Mr. Kayaletu Sotsha*

South Africa is one of the world's largest exporters of citrus fruit (TradeMap, 2022). The country's citrus exports in 2021 were US\$1.88 billion. The Netherlands accounted for 20.5% of citrus exports; the United Kingdom (UK) 9.2%; the UAE 7.5%; the Russian Federation 7%; and the USA 6.7%. Citrus exports to the European Union have fluctuated over the years due to sanitary and phytosanitary issues like Citrus Black Spot. After falling 17% in 2018, citrus exports to the UAE are increasing. Other markets such as the USA are also gaining momentum. Citrus exports from South Africa have increased in recent years as market access conditions to the USA have improved.

The Citrus Growers Association and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development have collaborated to expand export opportunities and improve access to selected markets such as the USA, Japan, the Philippines and other countries. For example, the USA Embassy in South Africa indicated that the US government had announced that it would open new ports to import citrus products from South Africa in 2021. The value of South African citrus exports to the USA is expected to increase in 2022 compared to the R18 million exported in 2021. This article explores South Africa's potential to diversify its citrus exports.

In the TradeMap (2022), it is evident that, outside of the EU, the UK, the USA, and the United Arab Emirates, the Far Eastern countries offer opportunities for diversifying citrus exports from South Africa. As of 2021, the Far East market accounted

for just over 15% of the value of South African citrus exports, including China (6,5%), Hong Kong (3,6%), Malaysia (2,7%), Japan (1%), Singapore (0,8%), Taipei (0,5%), the Korean Republic (0,3%), Indonesia (0,1%) and the Philippines (0,1%). Notably, 82% of this share goes to China, Hong Kong and Malaysia, with the rest of the countries contributing 18%. The Korean Republic and the Philippines, although contributing less than one per cent of the citrus export value in 2021, offered the second (R13 442/tonne) and third (R13 159/tonne) highest unit values after the USA (18 117/tonne). As with the USA, the unit value offered by the Korean Republic has constantly been increasing for three consecutive years between 2019 and 2021. S

Between 2017 and 2021, the Philippines grew 42.3% in unit value from R5569/tonne to R13159/tonne. This growth rate, however, declined by 4.2% between 2020 and 2021. The Far Eastern market has R711 million in export potential considering Indonesia, China, Malaysia, Japan, Thailand, and the Philippines. In this market, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Hong Kong and Japan have the highest demand potential for South Africa's citrus – although Japan is offering less in terms of the unit value.

As indicated by the existing export potential in countries such as Germany, the EU remains the largest market for South African citrus exports. Citrus Black Spots (CBS) and other non-tariff factors are making this market more competitive, despite South African citrus exports meeting rigorous sanitar



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and phytosanitary standards to maintain global competitiveness. Therefore, the government and other stakeholders must support the industry and improve local operational capacity and efficiency along with efforts to secure new market opportunities and retain those already in place. In addition to the new developments in the USA market, the Far East market offers South Africa an opportunity to diversify its markets for citrus exports while maintaining its position as a leading citrus exporter.



## Expensive fertiliser pushes farmers to organic farming



As fertiliser prices have skyrocketed in recent weeks, the sustainability of crop farming has become increasingly questionable. The COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine at the end of February have disrupted the supply chain for crucial fertiliser components such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. As a result of the global shortages, prices have steadily increased, reaching Sh6,000 per 50-kilogramme bag, nearly double the price one year ago. It has become increasingly difficult for farmers to afford these necessary farm inputs, which are crucial for better yields and pest management or minimise their costs by reducing the amount of land they cultivate. The choice is a bit more complicated for small-scale farmers. Their family sustenance relies on farming ventures, so they must utilise every inch of their small acreage and all the inputs they can obtain to bring about higher yields.

Link: Tralac (<https://www.tralac.org/news/article/15593-tralac-daily-news-25-april-2022.html>)

## Department to handover a multimillion-rand farm to smallholder farmers in Limpopo



As part of the Land Redistribution Programme, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development will, on Friday, 1 April 2022, hand over prime agricultural land to two smallholder farmers who have successfully applied for land allocation through the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy. The property described as Portions 0, 1 and 2 of the farm Noord Braband 114 KQ is 2 399 hectares in extent and is being acquired for R23 610 000,00 (twenty-three million, six hundred and ten thousand) in order to facilitate the transition of emerging farmers to commercial farming by creating jobs, enhancing food security, and decongesting communal lands. The cattle and crop farm is located in the Thabazimbi Local Municipality in the Waterberg District of the Limpopo Province, and it will be awarded to a young male and female farmer.

Link: DALRRD (<http://www.thedtic.gov.za/south-africa-recognises-the-need-to-strengthen-trade-relations-with-spain-deputy-minister-majola/>)



## South Africa recognises the need to strengthen trade relations with Spain



The Deputy Minister of Trade, Industry and Competition, Mr Fikile Majola, says South Africa hopes to strengthen and deepen bilateral trade cooperation with Spain. His announcement follows a meeting with Spain's Secretary of State for Industry, Commerce and Tourism, Her Excellency, Ms Xiana Mendez. They met at the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (the DTIC) offices in Sunnyside, Pretoria, at Spain's request to discuss bilateral and investment cooperation. Localisation and industrialization strategies were key focus areas on the agenda, along with steel, renewable energy and automotive sectors. As of 2020, Spain was South Africa's fourth-largest export destination in the European Union (EU), after Germany, Netherlands and Belgium, and its fourth-largest import source from the EU (after Germany, Italy and France). Globally, Spain ranks as the 20th largest export destination and the 12th most significant source of imports for South Africa. The bilateral trade between the two countries peaked in 2018, at R51.7 billion, before falling to R38.8 billion in 2019. Deputy Minister Majola described Spain as a vital and strategic ally at this time when South Africa is executing its Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan following the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. As South Africa continues to implement the master plans for economic growth, the automotive, steel, and poultry sectors are also critical areas where it seeks to strengthen investment and cooperation.

Link: DALRRD (<http://www.thedtic.gov.za/south-africa-recognises-the-need-to-strengthen-trade-relations-with-spain-deputy-minister-majola/>)



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