

South Africa boasts a rich and diverse natural environment with a spectacular diversity of vegetation types, climate, and soil types. Ranging from sub-tropical to Mediterranean the country can be divided into distinct farming regions with activities ranging from intensive crop production in winter and high summer rainfall areas to cattle farming in the bushveld and sheep farming in more arid regions. Climate- soil combinations mean that only 12% of South Africa's land is suited to the production of rain-fed crops with only 3% of its landmass considered truly fertile.

South Africa's agricultural sector is one of the world's most diverse with activities including intensive crop farming to vegetable, fruit, nut and grain production as well the entire range of livestock farming including poultry, beef, mutton, pork, as well as the more exotic ostrich and crocodile farming operations. The country has a sophisticated agribusiness sector producing food and raw materials as well as providing significant employment in the rural areas and contributing towards South Africa's economic growth.

The well-developed and globally competitive agricultural sector is supported by an advanced and competitive agro-processing industry coupled with an effective and technologically adept post-harvest logistics sector. Coupled with a world-class business sector the country provides a springboard for companies wishing to invest in or market to Southern Africa. The sector is characterized by a far greater degree of mechanisation and technology. The country is the largest exporter of agricultural products in Africa.

## South African Agricultural Landscape in Numbers



**4.1% of GDP**

**R277 078 million**

\* Estimated gross production value for 2018 / 2019 season

Gross agricultural production for the 2018 / 2019 season by commodity type

**49.2%**

Animal Products

**30.3%**

Horticultural Products

**20.5%**

Field Crops

Despite an ostensibly small share of total GDP, primary agriculture functions as an important generator of foreign exchange through exports and serves as a significant employer, particularly in rural areas. Agriculture's vital role in the South African economy is further underscored through its valuable backward and forward linkages throughout other sectors.

Backward Linkages are created through purchases of farm inputs such as fuel, fertiliser, chemicals, equipment, and machinery. In addition, the growing supply of services such as connectivity, cloud & IoT data platforms and software as a service create linkages in the technology sector. Forward linkages into the manufacturing sector are established through the supply of a variety of raw materials to the manufacturing industry.