

■ OPINION

PODCAST: South Africa's agricultural sector will likely see a mixed recovery in 2025

As close observers of the sector know, the quarterly data tends to be somewhat volatile

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by WANDILE SIHLOBO



Picture: GALLO IMAGES/DARREN STEWART

South Africa's agricultural sector is in a recovery phase, and the figures for the second quarter of 2025 signal a mild improvement. Agricultural gross value added expanded by 2.5% quarter on quarter (seasonally adjusted) in Q2. This follows the 18.6% quarter-on-quarter growth in Q1. The expansion was primarily due to the improved performance of certain field crops and the horticulture subsectors.

As close observers of the sector know, the quarterly data tends to be somewhat volatile, influenced by times of harvest and crop deliveries, among other factors. It is because of such issues that the Q2 growth figure was much softer after a good start to the year.

We experienced a delay in our summer grain harvest, with more momentum occurring at the start of Q3. We have ample summer grain and oilseeds, estimated at 19.55Mt (up 26% year on year). But the season was late by a month and a half because of the prolonged summer rains, among other factors.

We still have to contend with foot-and-mouth disease and a few avian influenza cases, particularly in Q2. Foot-and-mouth disease vaccines arrived only in Q2 for the start of the vaccination campaign.

But not all crops were late. The citrus harvest season started in Q2, and we have an ample harvest. Farmers moved quickly to take advantage of the tariff pause window in the US, adding to the general upside in the Q2 performance, though much softer than the start of the year.

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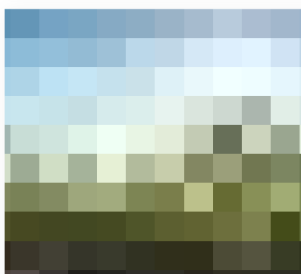
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