

Agricultural census to kick off soon

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Statistics South Africa (Stats SA) recently announced during a breakfast roundtable in Johannesburg, that they will be conducting a census of commercial agriculture for the 2016/2017 year. The collection of data is expected to start in September 2018 and will end in March 2019. Since 1994, this type of census has been conducted every five years, but could not be held in 2012 due to lack of funding.



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The census of agriculture provides data on the size, maturity and structure of the agriculture industry. The data includes information such as livestock numbers, the use of machinery, crop type grown and employment. According to the Food and Agriculture Organisation, these statistics are used by the country to promote fact-based planning and policy development on issues such as food security, agricultural production, rural development, economic growth and job creation.

Individual farmers can use the data to benchmark against industry best practices and make decisions on future investments. To this end, Stats SA will undertake various stakeholder consultation workshops, at national and provincial level, to determine specific data and coverage needs.

According to Joe Kgobokoe, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the information that will be obtained from farmers during this census is confidential and will be used as an aggregate and not individually. He assured the roundtable that it is pure coincidence that this census kicks off while the national debate of expropriation of land without compensation is underway.