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**Be smart –  
Farm Digitally**



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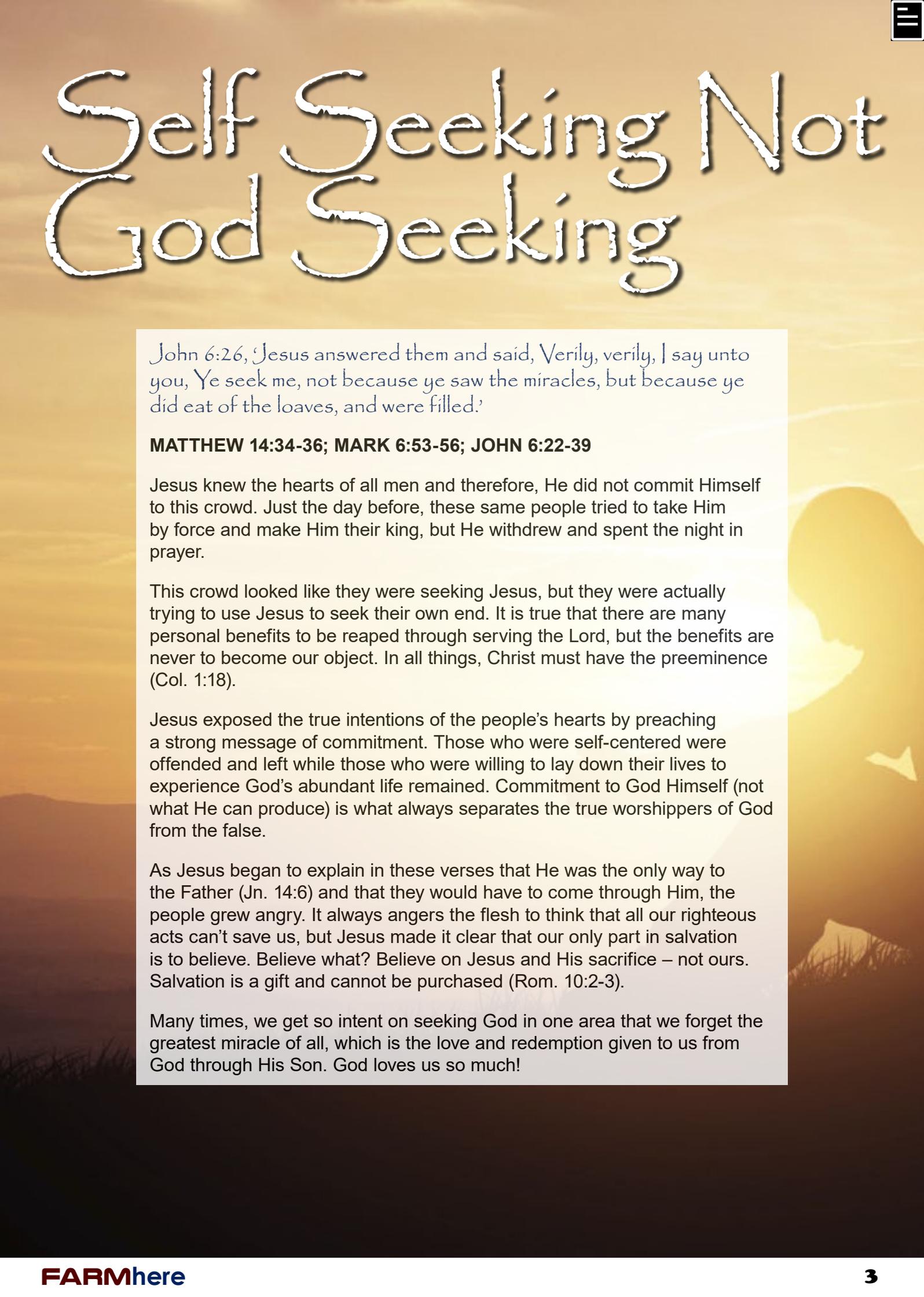
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Photo by Christine Vosloo Fotografie



# Self Seeking Not God Seeking

John 6:26, Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

**MATTHEW 14:34-36; MARK 6:53-56; JOHN 6:22-39**

Jesus knew the hearts of all men and therefore, He did not commit Himself to this crowd. Just the day before, these same people tried to take Him by force and make Him their king, but He withdrew and spent the night in prayer.

This crowd looked like they were seeking Jesus, but they were actually trying to use Jesus to seek their own end. It is true that there are many personal benefits to be reaped through serving the Lord, but the benefits are never to become our object. In all things, Christ must have the preeminence (Col. 1:18).

Jesus exposed the true intentions of the people's hearts by preaching a strong message of commitment. Those who were self-centered were offended and left while those who were willing to lay down their lives to experience God's abundant life remained. Commitment to God Himself (not what He can produce) is what always separates the true worshippers of God from the false.

As Jesus began to explain in these verses that He was the only way to the Father (Jn. 14:6) and that they would have to come through Him, the people grew angry. It always angers the flesh to think that all our righteous acts can't save us, but Jesus made it clear that our only part in salvation is to believe. Believe what? Believe on Jesus and His sacrifice – not ours. Salvation is a gift and cannot be purchased (Rom. 10:2-3).

Many times, we get so intent on seeking God in one area that we forget the greatest miracle of all, which is the love and redemption given to us from God through His Son. God loves us so much!

# Be smart – FARM DIGITALLY

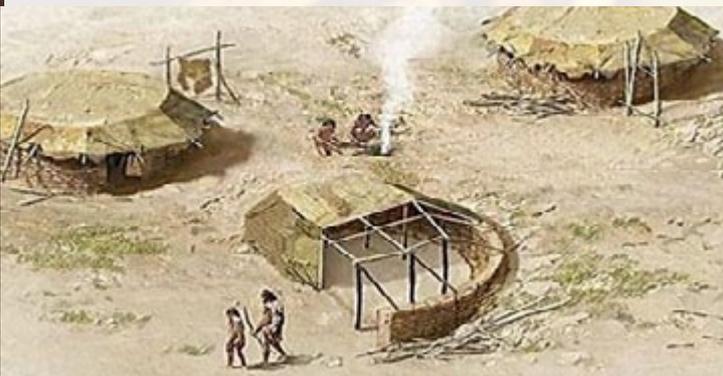


**Dr Tobias Doyer**  
CEO, Grain SA

**Agriculture is as old as human history. From humble beginnings of subsistence farming to today's technologically driven agriculture, the journey to produce food has been marked by increasing ingenuity, perseverance, and a relentless pursuit of efficiency.**

According to archaeologists, agricultural seed breeding technology laid the foundation for the first steps humanity took towards civilised society as we know it today. About 12 000 years ago, a few members of the society known as the Natufians started experimenting with wild rye by nurturing the plants and selecting higher-yielding plants for breeding.

This enabled the Natufian society to transform from nomadic hunter-gatherers to semi-sedentary producers. They did not have to spend all their time foraging for food but could live off the bounty provided by genetic manipulation, which allowed time for the specialisation of labour and the



development of new technologies that laid the foundation for modern society.

The Natufians used breeding technology to manipulate the genetic makeup of cereal grasses and producers have continued this application of technology since then to advance human well-being and wealth. Producers have indeed always been at the forefront of either developing or applying technology.

Most of us have heard the tales of how farms converted from animal-drawn technology to tractors and remember being awestruck by the first self-propelled combine harvester. That monstrously big machine swallowed the maize plants and in a huge cloud of dust and noise dramatically spat out the stalks, silk, and leaves at the back and golden grain in the hopper. Some of us can recall the sensation of hessian on our fingers as we wrestled 90 kg or 200 lb maize bags filled by the threshing machine. And later, the frustration of trying to keep up with soil chemistry and calculating the correct quantities that needed to be applied.

We now live in even more amazing times where we experience fast technological leaps. Advances

in genetics, plant breeding and crop management techniques have ushered in an era of high-yield varieties and intensive farming practices. This – along with the merging of digital technologies, data analysis, and precision farming techniques – means that grain production has now become a science where the full yield potential of every hectare can be optimally utilised.

Producers have equipped themselves with GPS-guided tractors and drones fitted with multispectral cameras, accessing a multitude of tools and technologies designed to optimise every aspect of crop production. Remote sensing, satellite imaging, and artificial intelligence help producers make informed decisions about soil, fertiliser, plant, irrigation, and pest management, while robotics and automation have drastically changed methods of planting, weed control, and harvesting.

Worldwide, producers have embraced these new technologies with enthusiasm, driving global food production to unprecedented levels. These technologies not only provide solutions to current challenges but also serve as a tool to build a resilient and sustainable agricultural sector for future generations.

It is against this backdrop that the theme for NAMPO Harvest Day 2024 will be 'Agriculture in a digital age'. The focus on digital innovation at NAMPO will provide a unique opportunity for producers to explore the new frontiers of agricultural advancement and its costs. The

survival of the modern producer depends on his ability to evaluate and apply good cost-benefit analysis to continuously stay ahead of the cost-price squeeze in order to continue farming profitably in a highly competitive international grain market.

One cannot help but look forward with excitement and anticipation to spend a day at NAMPO – surrounded by many local and international innovations, all holding the promise of sustainable and profitable agricultural production. All of this amidst an atmosphere of camaraderie and goodwill among all the producers, visitors, and participants who are passionate about agriculture.

This direct interaction and exchange of information between grain producers, suppliers, traders, and manufacturers at the NAMPO Harvest Day are not only a unique experience but also a privilege. The knowledge gained and the contacts made – all in one visit and one place – are invaluable for food producers to improve their agricultural practices, reduce costs, and increase profitability. NAMPO, as an agricultural trade show, is indeed beneficial for the entire agricultural value chain. It is a place where successful business can be conducted in a pleasant and informal environment.

In short, if you want to reap the benefits of the latest digital advancements in agriculture, a visit to this year's NAMPO Harvest Day is a must. We will once again enjoy discussing the subject we love most – successful farming.

***See you at NAMPO***



20  
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14 - 15  
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# New Plant-Based Coating Can Keep Your Avocados Fresh for Twice as Long

**Thanks to a food technology startup called Apeel Sciences, eating fresh avocados will soon be a lot easier.**

The Bill Gates–backed company has developed a coating designed to keep avocados fresh for up to twice as long as traditional fruit, Bloomberg reports, and these long-lasting avocados will soon be available at 100 grocery stores across the Midwestern U.S. Thirty or so of the grocery stores involved in the limited rollout of the Apeel avocado will be Costcos, so feel free to buy in bulk.

Getting an avocado to a U.S. grocery store is more complicated than it sounds; the majority of avocados sold in the U.S. come from California or Mexico, making it tricky to get fruit to the Midwest or New England at just the right moment in an avocado's life cycle.

Apeel's coating is made of plant material—lipids and glycerolipids derived from peels, seeds, and

pulp—that acts as an extra layer of protective peel on the fruit, keeping water in and oxygen out, and thus reducing spoilage. (Oxidation is the reason that your sliced avocados and apples brown after they've been exposed to the air for a while.) The tasteless coating comes in a powder that fruit producers mix with water and then dip their fruit into.

## **Apeel**

According to Apeel, coating a piece of produce in this way can keep it fresh for two to three times longer than normal without any sort of refrigeration or preservatives. This not only allows consumers a few more days to make use of their produce before it goes bad, reducing food waste, but can allow producers to ship their goods to farther-away markets without refrigeration.

Avocados are the first of Apeel's fruits to make it to market, but there are plans to debut other Apeel-coated produce varieties in the future. The company has tested its technology on apples, artichokes, mangoes, and several other fruits and vegetables.

[Source: coating-keeps-avocados-fresh-longer-apeel-bill-gates](#)



# DAM LEVELS

As at 10 May 2024



May		
	2023	2024
Eastern Cape	76%	84%
FreeState	98%	87%
Gauteng	99%	90%
KwaZulu-Natal	91%	92%
Limpopo	89%	85%
Mpumalanga	98%	97%
North West	87%	76%
Northern Cape	95%	80%
Western Cape	54%	60%

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# Foot and mouth disease detected at two farms in Humansdorp

**All animals on neighbouring farms and communal areas declared disease-free**



Foot and mouth disease is highly transmissible and causes lesions and lameness in cattle, sheep, goats and other cloven-hoofed animals, but does not affect humans.

Image: Aurélie Le Moigne/123rf.com/ File photo

There has been an outbreak of foot and mouth disease at two dairy farms in Humansdorp in the Eastern Cape, the department of agriculture, land reform and rural development said on Wednesday.

It said preliminary investigations indicated this to be a new infection and further investigations to identify the source of the outbreak were ongoing.

“Animals in neighbouring farms and communal areas have tested negative. This is good news as it makes the case to be isolated to these two farms belonging to the same owner,” the department said.

The Eastern Cape provincial veterinary services placed the affected farms under quarantine. Immediate neighbours were placed under precautionary quarantine, pending clinical and serological investigation to determine their status.

The department said animals newly brought onto a farm must be kept separate from the resident herds for at least 28 days. It advised farmers to not allow animals onto the farm without a health clearance from a veterinarian at origin of the animals.

The department said foot and mouth disease is a controlled and notifiable disease in terms of the Animal Diseases Act. Any person who knows about the presence or suspicion of the disease must immediately report it to the nearest state veterinarian.

Source: TimesLIVE (8 May 2024)



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# Warm, dry winter still on the cards for SA, rains of La Niña beckon

Workers load sugar cane on to a truck in a field at a farm in Driekoppies, Mpumalanga. (Photo: Guillem Sartorio / Bloomberg via Getty Images)

**Most of South Africa is still expected to have a warm and dry winter, according to the SA Weather Service's latest seasonal Climate Watch. There is an increasing likelihood of the La Niña weather pattern forming soon, according to international forecasts, which should hopefully herald a wet summer.**

"The... multi-model rainfall forecast indicates mostly below-normal rainfall over most of the country during May-Jun-Jul (MJJ), Jun-Jul-Aug and Jul-Aug-Sep, except for some parts over KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga for MJJ where above-normal rainfall is expected," says the latest Climate Watch, which looks five months ahead.

"Minimum and maximum temperatures are expected to be mostly above-normal countrywide for the forecast period," it adds.

Winter is the dry season on the Highveld and much of the interior of the country, but it looks to be both drier and warmer than usual as the legacy of the drought unleashed by El Niño lingers.

"The anticipated below-normal rainfall coupled with above-normal temperatures are likely to increase water losses and reduce water storage levels through evapotranspiration and drought, among other factors, particularly in parts of the North West, Free State and Limpopo where a number of settlements are experiencing ongoing drought," the Climate Watch says.

The SA Weather Service's observations still see a fading El Niño in play, while other international forecasters such as the Australian Bureau of

Meteorology say it is now over and that what is known as the El Niño-Southern Oscillation is currently in neutral territory.

This is a bit academic for South Africans as El Niño retracts its claws in this region at this time of the year anyway.

"El Niño does not have an effect on our weather this time of the year, so whether or not it is dying or still going is irrelevant," Willem Landman, a professor of meteorology at the University of Pretoria, told Daily Maverick.

More importantly, [Landman's forecast](#) sees La Niña emerging towards springtime in these parts.

This is in line with most international forecasts, some of which see La Niña lifting off by July.

El Niño, triggered by a warming of surface temperatures in the eastern Pacific, generally brings drought to southern Africa. The last one devastated the region's staple maize harvest this year, among other impacts.

But some sectors, such as citrus, have escaped relatively unscathed, thanks in part to good moisture levels last spring which were a legacy of the previous prolonged La Niña event.



La Niña arises when surface temperatures in the eastern Pacific cool, and its return will be welcome – provided the possible downpours don't get too intense.

Too much rain makes no grain and both weather patterns are becoming more extreme because of human-caused climate change.

The potential for too much rain is a concern in the early winter season in parts of KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga, which are expected to be unseasonably wet.

“There is an increased risk of waterlogging in areas receiving excessive rainfall, which can cause crop damage,” the Climate Watch warns.

Meanwhile, below-normal rainfall during the wet winter season in the southwestern parts of South Africa also poses challenges for agriculture as well as wider water supplies.

On a brighter note, the milder winter should help Eskom to keep the lights on during the season of peak household demand and means South Africans won't have to bundle up so much.

The weather is often a double-edged sword, but at least El Niño has now been blunted.

**By Ed Stoddard**

Source: <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/warm-dry-winter-still-on-the-cards-for-sa-rains-of-la-nina-beckon>



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# Psalm 100:5

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“For the LORD is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and His faithfulness continues to each generation.”

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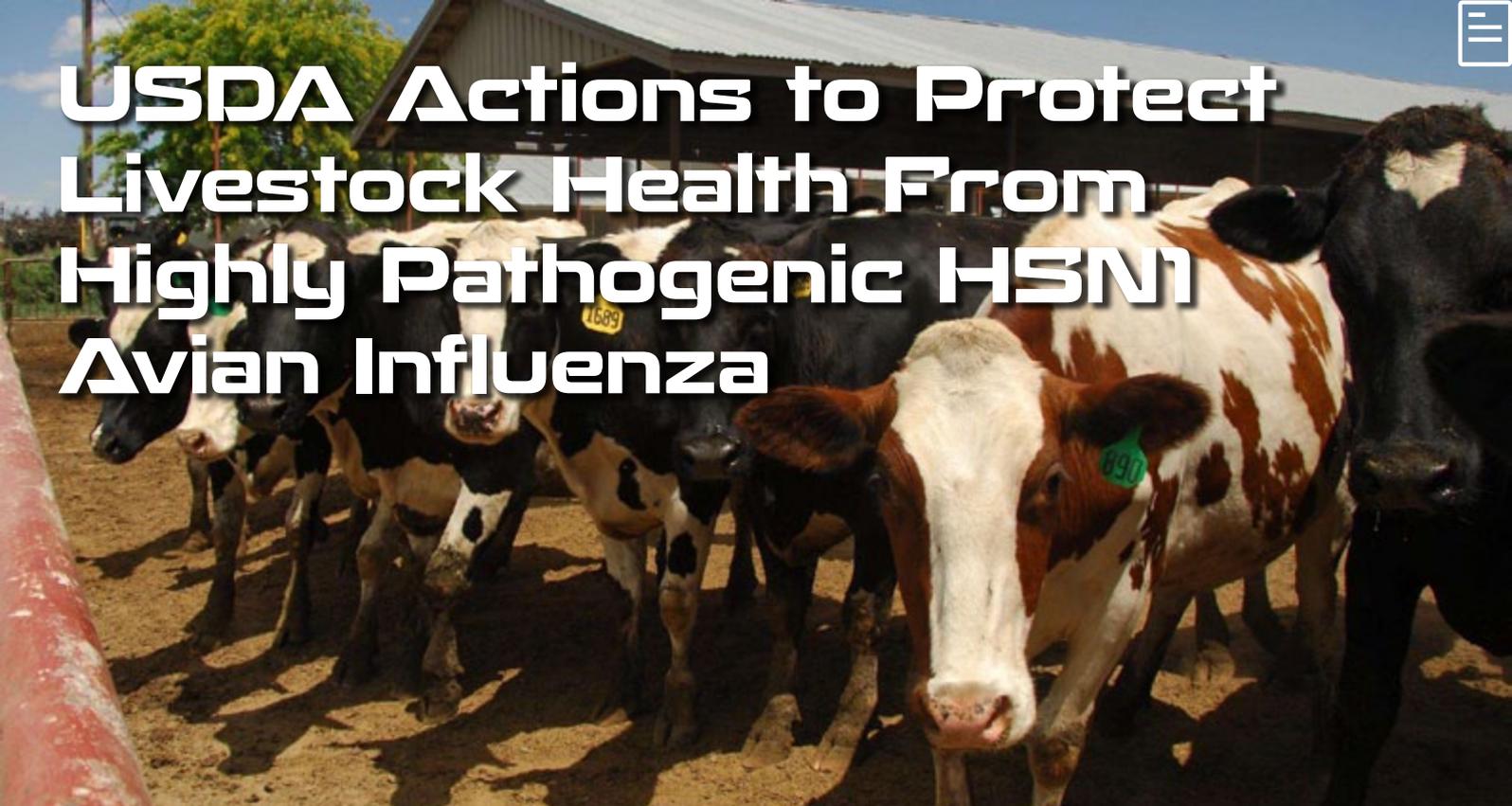
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# USDA Actions to Protect Livestock Health From Highly Pathogenic H5N1 Avian Influenza

## Federal Order to assist with developing a baseline of critical information and limiting the spread of H5N1 in dairy cattle

WASHINGTON, April 24, 2024 – To further protect the U.S. livestock industry from the threat posed by highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza, USDA is sharing a number of actions that we are taking with our federal partners to help us get ahead of this disease and limit its spread.

Today, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced a Federal Order requiring the following measures, effective Monday, April 29, 2024:

### Mandatory Testing for Interstate Movement of Dairy Cattle

- Prior to interstate movement, dairy cattle are required to receive a negative test for Influenza A virus at an approved National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratory.
- Owners of herds in which dairy cattle test positive for interstate movement will be required to provide epidemiological information, including animal movement tracing.
- Dairy cattle moving interstate must adhere to conditions specified by APHIS.
- As will be described in forthcoming guidance, these steps will be immediately required for

lactating dairy cattle, while these requirements for other classes of dairy cattle will be based on scientific factors concerning the virus and its evolving risk profile.

### Mandatory Reporting

- Laboratories and state veterinarians must report positive Influenza A nucleic acid detection diagnostic results (e.g. PCR or genetic sequencing) in livestock to USDA APHIS.
- Laboratories and state veterinarians must report positive Influenza A serology diagnostic results in livestock to USDA APHIS.

USDA has identified spread between cows within the same herd, spread from cows to poultry, spread between dairies associated with cattle movements, and cows without clinical signs that have tested positive. On April 16, APHIS microbiologists identified a shift in an H5N1 sample from a cow in Kansas that could indicate that the virus has an adaptation to mammals. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted further analysis of the specimen sequence, which did not change their overall risk assessment for the general public, because the substitution has been seen previously in other mammalian infections and does not impact

viral transmission. Additionally, APHIS' National Veterinary Services Laboratories found H5N1 in a lung tissue sample from an asymptomatic cull dairy cow that originated from an affected herd and did not enter the food supply.

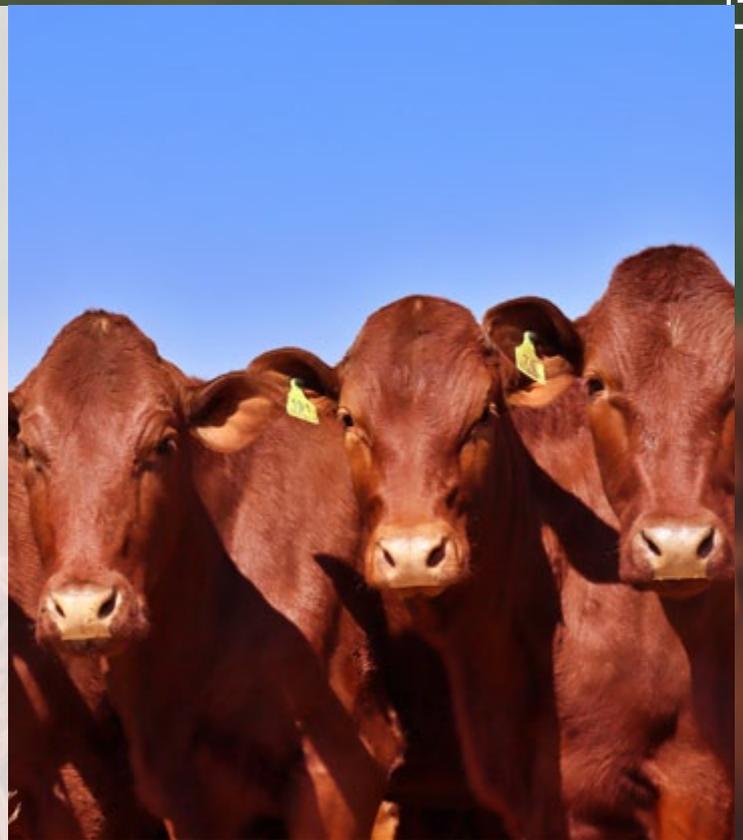
The novel movement of H5N1 between wild birds and dairy cows requires further testing and time to develop a critical understanding to support any future courses of action. This Federal Order is critical to increasing the information available for USDA. Requiring positive test reporting will help USDA better understand this disease and testing before interstate movement will limit its spread.

While we are taking this action today, it is important to remember that thus far, we have not found changes to the virus that would make it more transmissible to humans and between people. While cases among humans in direct contact with infected animals are possible, our partners at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) believe that the current risk to the public remains low.

Additionally, we continue to see affected cows recover after supported care with little to no associated mortality. We also continue to work with our partners in the states and industry to emphasize the critical importance biosecurity plays in limiting disease spread for all livestock and poultry.

You may view the Federal Order, which is effective on Monday, April 29, 2024.

Further, in an effort to maximize understanding and research on H5N1 in dairy cattle, on April 21, APHIS made publicly available 239 genetic sequences from the U.S. H5N1 clade 2.3.4.4b influenza virus recently found in samples associated with the ongoing HPAI outbreak in poultry and wild birds, and the recent H5N1 event in dairy cattle. APHIS has also offered virus samples to interested researchers to facilitate epidemiological study. Increasing our understanding of this disease and how it spreads is critical to stopping it. This is why APHIS is urging dairy cattle producers and those who work in or with the industry to share epidemiological information from affected farms, even if they are not planning to move cattle interstate. APHIS further urges producer participation in public health assessments to continue to confirm worker safety and monitor for any potential changes in the virus that could impact transmissibility.



In addition, our partners in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration released an update on the ongoing work to ensure continued effectiveness of the federal-state milk safety system. It is important to emphasize that, based on the information and research available to us at this time, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and USDA believe that our commercial milk supply is safe because of both the pasteurization process and the required diversion or destruction of milk from sick cows. Pasteurization has continuously proven to inactivate bacteria and viruses in milk. The FDA and USDA continue to work closely to collect and evaluate additional data and information specific to avian influenza in dairy cattle and to support state counterparts as this emerging disease in dairy cattle is managed.

As USDA continues to take steps to protect the health of livestock, the Department continues to work closely with federal partners at the CDC on protecting the health of people and FDA on protecting the safety of the food supply. The U.S. government is committed to addressing this situation with urgency.

To learn more about USDA's response to HPAI in dairy cattle, visit [www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/livestock](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-detections/livestock).

Source: <https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2024/04/24/usda-actions-protect-livestock-health-highly-pathogenic-h5n1-avian>



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# South Africa's summer crop production estimate has been lifted mildly

Agricultural Market Viewpoint with Wandile Sihlobo

**Many, including myself, may have been a bit pessimistic about the 2023/24 summer crop growing conditions when we signalled a potential further downward revision of the harvest estimate this month.**

The data released last week by the Crop Estimates Committee showed mild upward adjustments in the crop size from last month's figures. South Africa's 2023/24 summer grains and oilseed harvest is estimated at 16,0 million tonnes, up 1% from last month.

Indeed, this is not a cause for celebration. The figure does not change the reality that we have been through a challenging season of El Niño-induced drought and heatwave in February and March that weighed on the summer grains and oilseed harvest in various regions of the country. The current estimated harvest of 16,0 million tonnes is down 20% from the 2022/23 production season.

## Maize

A closer look at the data shows that white and yellow maize harvest could be 6,4 million tonnes (up 2% m/m) and 6,9 million tonnes (roughly unchanged from last month). These revisions place the total maize production estimate at 13,3 million tonnes (up 1% m/m).

When viewed annually, white maize harvest is down 25%, with yellow maize down 13% from the

2022/23 season. The expected harvest of 13,3 million tonnes is down 19% from the 2022/23 season.

If it materializes, the expected harvest will be sufficient to meet South Africa's annual maize consumption of roughly 12,00 million tonnes, leaving the country with a small export volume. Still, we will likely see prices remaining elevated for some time because of the potentially tight supplies.

The Southern African regional demand, particularly for white maize, also remains a significant upside driver of prices.

## Oilseeds

The 2023/24 soybean harvest remained unchanged from last month, estimated at 1,8 million tonnes (down 35% y/y). This annual decline results from lower yields in various regions of South Africa. We now believe South Africa may not play a robust position in soybean exports like the previous season. If anything, soybean oilcake imports this new season are now a possibility.

Meanwhile, the sunflower seed harvest estimate

was lifted from last month by 4% to 615 000 tonnes (down 15% y/y). The area plantings are moderately down from the previous year, which means the primary driver of the annual decline in the harvest is the expected poor yields, especially as most of South Africa's sunflower seed is planted in the western regions that experienced dryness and heatwave in February and March.

### Concluding remarks

The recent rains in much of South Africa's summer crop-growing regions are too late. The damage to the crop occurred in February and March during the heatwave and the El Niño-induced dryness. The current crop forecasts reflect this challenge, as the major crops are down notably compared to the 2022/23 production season.



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# 2024 Across-breed EPD table and improvements

## A look at across-breed EPD tables and improvements for 2024.

Larry Kuehn and Mark Thallman

Across-Breed EPD (ABEPD) Adjustment Factors: National Cattle Evaluation (NCE), and the resulting Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs), have resulted in substantial genetic change since their inception in the 1970s. However, EPDs are generally only comparable within breed because of differences in the genetic base. Since 1993, the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC) has produced a table of factors to adjust the EPDs of cattle so that the merit of individuals can be compared across breeds. Adjustment factors for carcass traits have been calculated since 2009 and carcass weight was added in 2015; to be included, breeds must have carcass data in the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC) database and report their carcass EPDs on an actual carcass basis using an age-adjusted endpoint.

Bulls of different breeds can be compared on the same EPD scale by adding the appropriate adjustment factor to the EPDs produced in the most recent genetic evaluations for each of the eighteen breeds. Normally, the EPDs of animals from different breeds cannot be compared because many breed associations compute their EPDs in separate analyses and each breed has a different base point. The across-breed adjustment factors allow producers to compare the EPDs for animals from different breeds for these traits; these factors reflect both the current

breed difference (for animals born in 2021) and differences in the breed base point. The AB[1] EPDs are most useful to commercial producers purchasing bulls of more than one breed to use in crossbreeding programs. For example, in terminal crossbreeding systems, AB-EPDs can identify bulls in different breeds with high growth potential or favorable carcass characteristics.

The factors are derived by estimating breed differences from the USMARC germplasm evaluation program and adjusting these differences for the EPDs of the sires that were sampled in the system. Traits for which factors are estimated are birth weight, weaning weight, yearling weight, maternal weaning weight (milk), marbling score, ribeye area, backfat depth (fat), and carcass weight (Table 1). The factors adjust the EPDs to an Angus base (chosen arbitrarily).

As an example, suppose a Red Angus bull has a carcass weight EPD of + 20.0 lb and a Hereford bull has a carcass weight EPD of + 75.0 lb. The across-breed adjustment factors for yearling weight (see Table 1) are -5.4 lb for Red Angus and -66.4 lb for Hereford. The AB-EPD is  $20.0 \text{ lb} - 5.4 \text{ lb} = 14.6 \text{ lb}$  for the Red Angus bull and  $75.0 \text{ lb} - 66.4 = 8.6 \text{ lb}$  for the Hereford bull. The expected carcass weight difference of offspring when both are mated to cows of another breed (e.g., Braunvieh) would be  $14.6 \text{ lb} - 8.6 \text{ lb} = 6 \text{ lb}$ .

Brahman EPDs for marbling score are reported on a different scale than the other breeds with marbling score EPDs. For Brahman 400 = SI00 and 500 = Sm00 whereas for the other breeds,

4.00 = SI00 and 5.00 = Sm00 meaning the Brahman EPDs are reported on a scale that is 100 times higher. As a result, EPDs from other breeds need to be multiplied by 100 after being adjusted to Brahman, and Brahman EPDs need to be divided by 100 prior to applying the adjustment factors. For instance, to adjust a Simmental bull with a marbling score EPD of 0.15 to compare to Brahman bulls using the factors from Table 1, add the Simmental factor, subtract the Brahman factor, and then multiply by 100:  $(0.15 + (-0.13) - (-0.65)) * 100 = 67$ . Similarly, to adjust a Brahman bull with a marbling score EPD of 40 in order to compare to Simmental bulls using the same factors, first divide by 100, then add the Brahman factor, and subtract the Simmental factor:  $40 / 100 + (-0.65) - (-0.13) = -0.12$ .

One major change was implemented with this update. In the past, yearling weight EPD adjustment factors were derived using a BIF adjusted yearling weight using USMARC weight data. With this update, we analyzed BIF adjusted postweaning gain rather than yearling weight and the factors were derived as a sum of weaning weight and postweaning gain factors. Postweaning gain, rather than yearling weight, is used in most genetic evaluations and is desirable because the postweaning portion of yearling weight should not include maternal effects. The resulting factors are somewhat different from previous updates as a result with the largest changes being for breeds with low maternal effects. However, we believe the new factors and breed differences should more accurately represent national cattle evaluations.

It is important to note that the table factors (Table 1) do not represent a direct comparison among the different breeds because of base differences between the breeds. They should only be used

Table 1

TABLE 1: JANUARY 2024 ADJUSTMENT FACTORS TO ADD TO EPDs OF EIGHTEEN DIFFERENT BREEDS TO ESTIMATE ACROSS BREED EPDs

Breed	Birth Wt. (lb)	Weaning Wt. (lb)	Yearling Wt. (lb)	Maternal Milk (lb)	Marbling Score*	Ribeye Area (in <sup>2</sup> )	Fat (in)	Carcass Wt. (lb)
Angus	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.00	0.00	0.000	0.0
Hereford	0.8	-11.9	-26.6	-11.1	-0.30	0.06	-0.073	-66.4
Red Angus	2.1	-17.4	-20.8	1.5	-0.61	0.31	-0.033	-5.4
Shorthorn	3.9	-19.1	-25.1	0.2	-0.07	0.35	-0.038	-0.4
South Devon	3.0	-32.9	-58.0	10.8	-0.08	0.41	-0.063	-8.5
Beefmaster	3.2	27.5	10.0	4.0				
Brahman	8.3	61.9	18.8	6.5	-0.65	0.17	-0.156	-34.5
Brangus	2.9	26.1	15.4	13.7				
Santa Gertrudis	4.4	42.9	47.4	18.2	-0.42	0.21	-0.072	2.3
Braunvieh	1.4	-16.6	-43.1	17.7	-0.07	0.43	-0.071	-7.4
Charolais	7.1	6.6	-12.9	-2.5	-0.31	0.85	-0.199	8.7
Chiangus	2.5	-16.4	-30.6	0.0	-0.40	0.47	-0.113	-28.9
Gelbvieh	3.0	-7.5	-16.3	7.2	-0.48	0.73	-0.104	-14.4
Limousin	1.5	-3.3	-16.3	-5.4	-0.38	0.72	-0.080	-5.3
Maine-Anjou	1.7	-25.5	-41.4	-7.9	-0.46	0.97	-0.169	-34.4
Salers	2.1	-11.4	-20.8	5.3	-0.25	0.60	-0.077	-7.7
Simmental	1.8	-10.6	-18.9	1.2	-0.13	0.52	-0.064	-0.2
Tarentaise	2.2	28.5	8.3	17.8				

\*Marbling score units: 4.00 = SI<sup>00</sup>; 5.00 = Sm<sup>00</sup>. Note that Brahman EPDs for marbling are reported on a scale where 400 = SI<sup>00</sup> and 500 = Sm<sup>00</sup>. When converting sires from other breeds to a Brahman basis, the adjusted EPD should be multiplied by 100. Likewise, when Brahman EPDs are adjusted to other breeds, the EPD should be divided by 100 before adding the adjustment factor.



to compare the EPDs (AB-EPDs) of animals in different breeds. To reduce confusion, breed of sire means (i.e., one half of full breed effect; breed of sire means predict differences when bulls from two different breeds are mated to cows of a third, unrelated breed) for animals born in 2022 under conditions similar to USMARC are presented in Table 2.

The adjustment factors in Table 1 were updated using EPDs from the most recent national cattle evaluations conducted by each of the eighteen breed associations (current as of January 2024). The breed differences used to calculate the factors are based on comparisons of progeny of sires from each of these breeds in the Germplasm Evaluation Program at USMARC in Clay Center, Nebraska. These analyses were conducted by USMARC geneticists Larry Kuehn (email: Larry.Kuehn@ars.usda.gov; ph: 402-762-4352) and Mark Thallman (email: Mark.Thallman@ars.usda.gov; ph: 402-762-4261).

Source: <https://www.feedstuffs.com/beef/2024-across-breed-epd-table-and-improvements>

Table 2

TABLE 2: BREED OF SIRE MEANS FOR 2022 BORN ANIMALS UNDER CONDITIONS SIMILAR TO USMARC

Breed	Birth Wt. (lb)	Weaning Wt. (lb)	Yearling Wt. (lb)	Maternal Milk (lb)	Marbling Score*	Ribeye Area (in <sup>2</sup> )	Fat (in)	Carcass Wt. (lb)
Angus	84.7	540.6	980.8	521.4	6.26	13.72	0.664	922.4
Hereford	87.0	517.9	926.8	509.7	5.34	13.52	0.598	872.4
Red Angus	83.8	522.2	947.1	521.9	5.92	13.51	0.637	888.9
Shorthorn	89.0	499.5	903.7	536.6	5.42	13.72	0.532	869.0
South Devon	87.2	502.7	897.9	521.2	5.39	13.73	0.508	855.1
Beefmaster	87.0	529.2	920.8	507.7				
Brahman	94.1	558.4	923.0	506.3	4.86	13.54	0.504	859.2
Brangus	86.9	523.8	924.2	516.4				
Santa Gertrudis	88.0	528.2	926.2	512.0	5.15	13.29	0.577	871.7
Braunvieh	87.2	509.0	889.7	527.1	5.47	14.24	0.479	849.0
Charolais	89.4	542.0	961.5	515.8	5.32	14.58	0.472	901.9
Chiangus	88.4	508.2	909.2	509.4	5.44	13.95	0.518	870.4
Gelbvieh	86.4	537.1	955.5	524.6	5.33	14.31	0.527	887.9
Limousin	86.0	537.4	949.5	514.0	5.28	14.57	0.530	895.1
Maine-Anjou	86.4	491.6	880.8	506.7	5.18	14.31	0.457	849.8
Salers	85.4	518.2	923.0	518.7	5.25	14.25	0.501	868.2
Simmental	86.7	541.5	961.6	518.3	5.54	14.43	0.515	898.2
Tarentaise	86.1	517.3	897.9	513.6				

\*Marbling score units: 4.00 = SI<sup>00</sup>; 5.00 = Sm<sup>00</sup>

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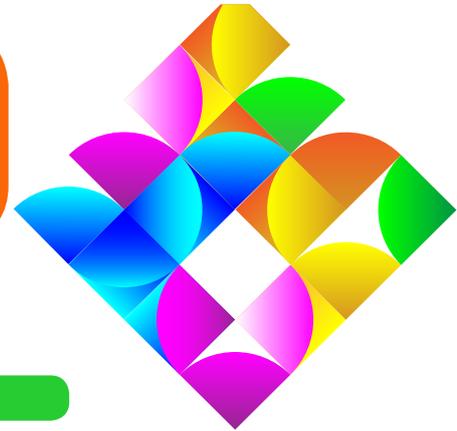
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# Why do male chicks play more than females?

Study finds answers in distant ancestor

**Play is widespread, but far from ubiquitous, across the animal kingdom. Especially common in mammals, play is also known to occur in taxa as diverse as birds, fish, octopuses, and even insects. But what is its function, given that natural selection never selects fun for its own sake? One prominent hypothesis is that play is beneficial to individuals because it allows them to practice skills needed later in life.**

Now, a study in [Frontiers in Ethology](#) has shown that male baby chickens play far more than females. This result is of interest given that domestic chickens are directly descended from a species – red jungle fowl – with a pronounced difference between the sexes in morphology, coloration, and behavior.

“Here we show for the first time that there are clear sex differences in the age-related development of play in chickens,” said first author Rebecca Oscarsson, a PhD student at Linköping University in Sweden.

“This difference is mainly because males engage more in social and object play.”

Red junglefowl were domesticated by humans between 7,000 and 8,000 years ago in mainland Southeast Asia. Multiple hybridization events took place since then, so that modern domestic chickens also carry genes from green, Sri Lankan, and grey junglefowl. In each of these species, males are more colorful, aggressive, and vigilant than females, and provide food for their mates.

## Playpens

The researchers incubated white leghorn eggs from a farm, and determined the sex of each newborn chick from the length of its wings. They kept the chicks in cages with a sawdust floor, a heat-roof, and food and water throughout the experimental period. They then transferred the chicks to larger arenas or ‘playpens’ twice per week. The scientists observed the chicks for 30 minutes in these playpens and scored the occurrence within 15-second intervals of play by each chick. The chicks were observed on 15 different days, when they were between six and 53 days old.

The researchers distinguished 12 distinct play behaviors. Examples of locomotor play were frolicking and wing flapping. Object play included chasing an object or pecking at it or exchanging it with another chick. Social play included sparring, jumping, and sparring stand-offs.

10 minutes into the observations, the observer introduced a fake rubber worm into the playpen.

This served to stimulate another type of object play: worm-running, where a chick carried the worm in its beak and ran around with it. Worm-running may be the play equivalent of 'tidbitting', a series of courtship behaviors while manipulating food items, which is done exclusively by adult males and directed at females.

## Males play more

Object play was more frequently seen than social play, while locomotor play was least common. Both females and males showed every type of playful behavior. However, the frequency of play differed between them: male chicks played more overall than females. This was due to males engaging more often in object and social play, while there was no difference between the sexes in the frequency of locomotor play.

The frequency of play also depended on age since hatching: for males, this peaked around 43 days for males, and around 36 days in females, before gradually declining at later ages.

The researcher concluded that these sex differences in chicks in the frequency of play can be explained by the high degree of sexual dimorphism

of adult junglefowl. This means that male chicks would benefit more from practicing various skills related to physical ability and social tactics.

## Practice for later in life

"We still don't know the adaptive function of play for any species," said author Dr Per Jensen, a professor at Linköping University and Oscarsson's academic supervisor.

"However, the present study indicates that a possible function is to prepare animals for specific challenges they may encounter later in life. In a species like the chicken, where only males compete for territories, it makes sense that they engage in more social play as young."

"Many questions remain unanswered with respect to the adaptive functions of play, for example its effects on later cognitive abilities. We now plan to look into the neurobiological and genetic mechanisms of play. For example, it's possible that the early development of the cerebellum is linked to play behavior," said Jensen.

Source: <https://www.feedstuffs.com/poultry/why-do-male-chicks-play-more-than-females-study-finds-answers-in-distant-ancestor>

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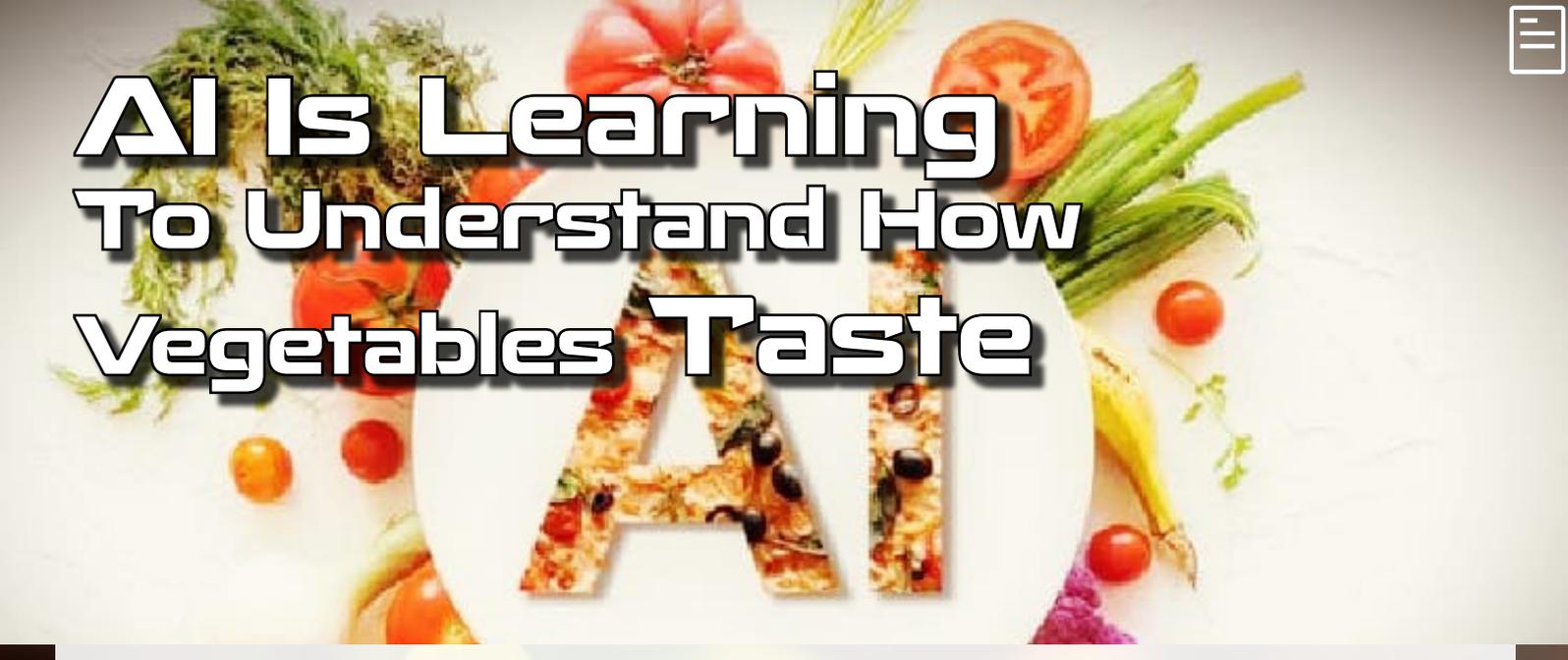
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# AI Is Learning To Understand How Vegetables Taste

**They use robotics, machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) to automate farming and perfect the growing of greens and vegetables. With steady growth, the vertical farming market was had an estimated value of \$4.4 billion in 2019 and is expected to reach \$15.7 billion by 2025.**

They use robotics, machine learning and artificial intelligence (AI) to automate farming and perfect the growing of greens and vegetables. With steady growth, the vertical farming market was had an estimated value of \$4.4 billion in 2019 and is expected to reach \$15.7 billion by 2025.

Fifth Season is a vertical farm in Pittsburgh that uses super-stack software and robotics to run their fully automated farming systems. And, by combining big data and AI, they have created the optimal grow recipe that determines the best flavor for the plants they grow.

“The role of AI in determining flavor is to leverage big data and AI to ensure you achieve the target flavor — sweetness, spiciness, bitterness, total degree of flavor and texture,” said Austin Webb, CEO of Fifth Season.

“Our plant’s individualized grow recipe is the unique mix of the different LED lights,” said Webb. “The plants go through the grow room with a QR code that communicates that plant’s route and tells the automated system where each plant needs to be throughout the process.”

Webb says their super stack system, which serves as ‘the brain’ of the vertical farm maps, maps out each plant’s route through the grow room based on its grow recipe and then moves the plants where they need to go.

*“We use AI and data to find improvements in all aspects of crop quality, even beyond what humans think they know about flavor profiles. We call this proactive, deterministic growing compared to traditional farming, including greenhouse growing, where you have to be reactive based on weather and sunlight conditions,” said Webb. “We then leverage human/chef feedback on what tastes the best and what texture is best and [...] combine that qualitative data with the 26K quantitative data points for every tray of greens per lifecycle.”*

“From there, we tweak our grow recipes to build the best flavor. For some vegetables, like tomatoes, experts have leveraged Brix scores, but [...] we measure flavor quality based on these factors: sweetness, spiciness, bitterness, the total degree of flavor, texture and color,” said Webb. “Humans don’t need to guess what iron content or Brix score is best; the brain in our farms can do that. Humans tell the grain what tastes best, and the brain will compute and tweak the grow recipes from there.”

Darryn Keiller, CEO and founder of WayBeyond, says that to impact flavor, you either have to change the genetics of the crop or alter the existing biochemical profile.

“For example, growers can impact flavor by adjusting light and nutrients, which can then



enhance the texture (crunch, thickness) or flavor (increased sweetness or bitterness),” said Keiller. “Once you determine the key characteristics you want in a crop, you then use machine learning or AI to automate and optimize the production process for consistent growth and be responsive to changing consumer preferences.”

“Currently, vertical farms utilize seed stock bred for outdoor farming. Using AI technology, they can create their breeding stock (or lines) better suited for indoor environments. It’s about refining your research and development and creating genetics perfect for your environment and management practices while ensuring continuous improvement of commercial production. The potential is huge.”

Webb adds that many indoor growers sought to build an outdoor farming system that can thrive indoors; however, Fifth Season chose to apply smart manufacturing principles to agriculture that would enable them to grow food in a new way.

“We grow more than 15K pounds a week of fresh food with 90% less water than what would be required to grow that amount of fresh food on a traditional outdoor farm – and that is done on a footprint of just 25,000 square feet,” added Webb.

Webb believes that scaling viable vertical farming operations that can crack code on both the technology and the consumer experience to deliver consistently fresh, nutritious and clean produce changes the consumer shopping significantly.

“It changes our entire definition of what fresh can and should taste like; it changes the ease of access and availability and convenience to fresh food, which brings so much value to consumers,” said Webb. “It’s another avenue for shoppers to access the freshest, highest-quality food at retail with produce that has a much longer shelf life than we’re accustomed.”



Source: <https://www.farmingportal.co.za/index.php/agri-index/74-tegnology/7046-ai-is-learning-to-understand-how-vegetables-taste>

Photos: Agritech Future





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# Working with nature: The 'knitty' gritty of regenerative wool farming in the Karoo



Written by: Dominic Naidoo

**Recent research delves into the motivations driving Karoo wool farmers and designers towards regenerative agriculture, the challenges they face, and the implications for sustainability in South Africa's agricultural sector. Picture: Supplied / Holly Kane**

In a recent study, Holly Kane, as part of her Honours research at the University of Cape Town, delved into the complexities of regenerative agriculture (RA) practices within the wool value chain in the Karoo.

By focusing on commercial and communal farmers, trainers of regenerative agriculture techniques, and designers utilising wool in their products, Kane aimed to uncover the underlying motivations and barriers surrounding the adoption of RA.

"I have always been interested in the intersection of fashion and sustainability," Kane told IOL.

"I read a news article which spoke about regeneratively farmed wool, and how it could be used to fight climate change. I later looked at the academic research on the subject, and was quite surprised to see how controversial it is."

Opinions on regenerative agriculture vary widely, from claims of it being the ultimate solution to climate change, to criticisms stating it fails to sequester carbon effectively. Settling the debate is challenging due to limited research on the topic, as funding tends to prioritise research with commercial applications.

Despite this, regenerative agriculture is gaining popularity among farmers due to its cost-effectiveness, as it discourages the use of expensive machinery and inputs like pesticides.



Recent research delves into the motivations driving Karoo wool farmers and designers towards regenerative agriculture, the challenges they face, and the implications for sustainability in South Africa's agricultural sector. Picture: Supplied / Holly Kane

"However," Kane explains, "researching regenerative agriculture is complex due to differing definitions and practices, which vary from farm to farm based on individual contexts."

Meanwhile, the fashion industry has embraced regenerative agriculture without fully understanding its controversies, overlooking other

sustainable farming methods like conservation agriculture, permaculture, and agroforestry.

Key findings from the research revealed diverse motivations among stakeholders. Commercial farmers were primarily driven by the desire for improved resilience and environmental benefits, as well as industry pressure to provide sustainably certified wool.

Communal farmers cited a deep-rooted care for the land, alongside incentives such as access to markets, income from carbon credits, and better opportunities at auctions.

Designers, influenced by increasing consumer demand for sustainable products and personal ideals of environmental care, also showed a keen interest in regenerative wool farming.

However, the study also uncovered significant challenges and barriers hindering the widespread adoption of RA practices. A lack of knowledge and support, administrative burdens, and resistance to change were identified as key obstacles for farmers.

Additionally, financial considerations posed significant challenges, with transitioning to RA often involving new expenses and potential short-term financial setbacks. Furthermore, disconnects in the value chain, including limited traceability between farmers and their wool, and a lack of consumer awareness, further complicated the adoption process.

The research also highlighted points of controversy, particularly regarding the financial implications of transitioning to RA and the need for more comprehensive research in this field.

Critics raised concerns about the reductionist approaches used in existing studies and biases in funding towards industrial agriculture.

Kane's research underscored the influence of top-down decision-making processes, with pressure from the fashion industry and carbon market driving the adoption of RA practices, often without adequate support for farmers in transitioning.

Contextual considerations, including the historical legacy of apartheid and the role of consumer demand, were also acknowledged as significant factors shaping the landscape of regenerative wool farming in the Karoo.



Recent research delves into the motivations driving Karoo wool farmers and designers towards regenerative agriculture, the challenges they face, and the implications for sustainability in South Africa's agricultural sector. Picture: Supplied / Holly Kane

In light of these findings, Kane emphasised the need for greater support and resources for farmers transitioning to RA, including financial incentives and knowledge sharing.

Hoping to see more conversations happening across the value chain within the industry, Kane said that the “current fashion industry separates farmers, designers and manufacturers. In order for there to be positive changes in the industry, we need to open up conversations between these stakeholders in order to promote traceability and reduce greenwashing.”

“I also hope that South Africa will start processing more of its own wool. Currently, 90% of our wool is exported, 80% of which goes to China. This represents a huge loss of potential income, and makes SA vulnerable to global market conditions.”

Efforts to ensure that RA initiatives genuinely benefit the environment and local communities, rather than serving as greenwashing tools, were deemed essential. As South African farmers grapple with the challenges of sustainability within the agricultural sector, Kane's research provides valuable insights and recommendations for stakeholders across the wool value chain, hopefully paving the way for more informed decision-making and meaningful interventions in regenerative wool farming practices.

Source: <https://www.iol.co.za/news/environment/working-with-nature-the-knitty-gritty-of-regenerative-wool-farming-in-the-karoo-3c1b6da9-8de8-4890-bce9-80b3ba5ecad4>



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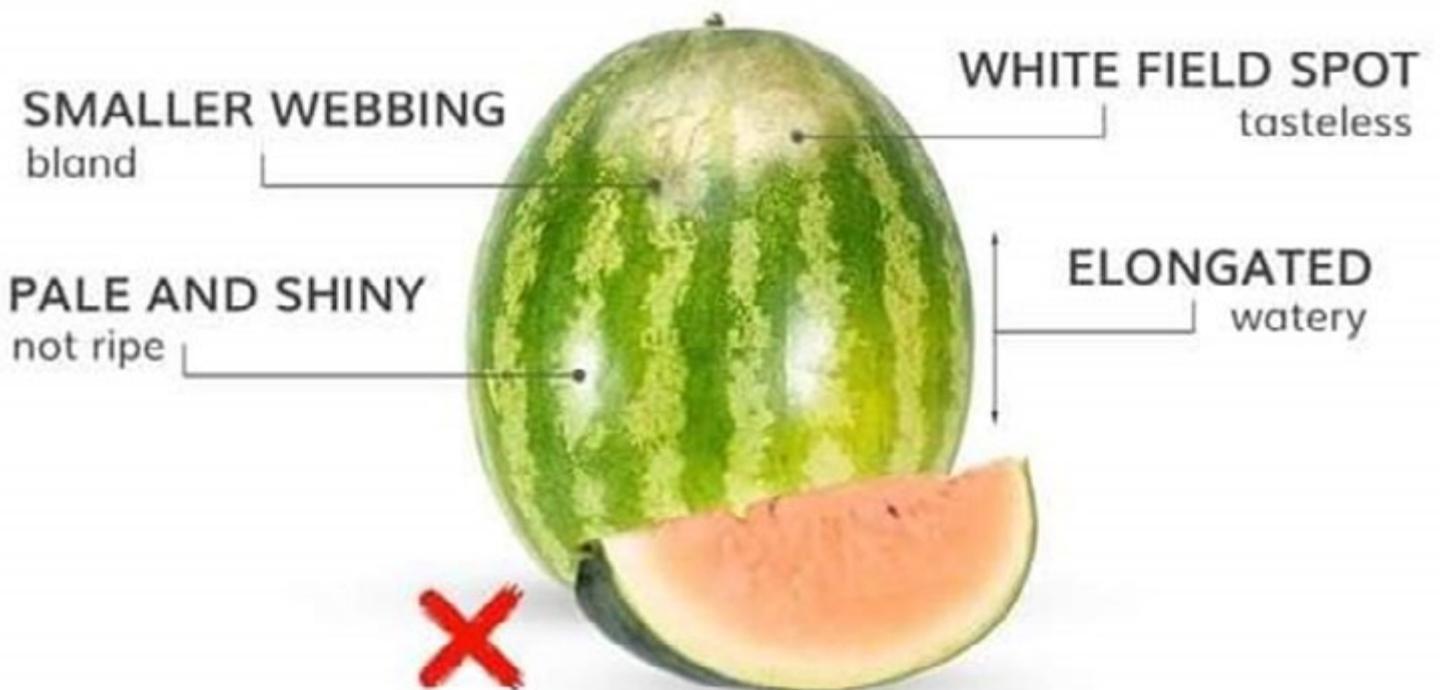
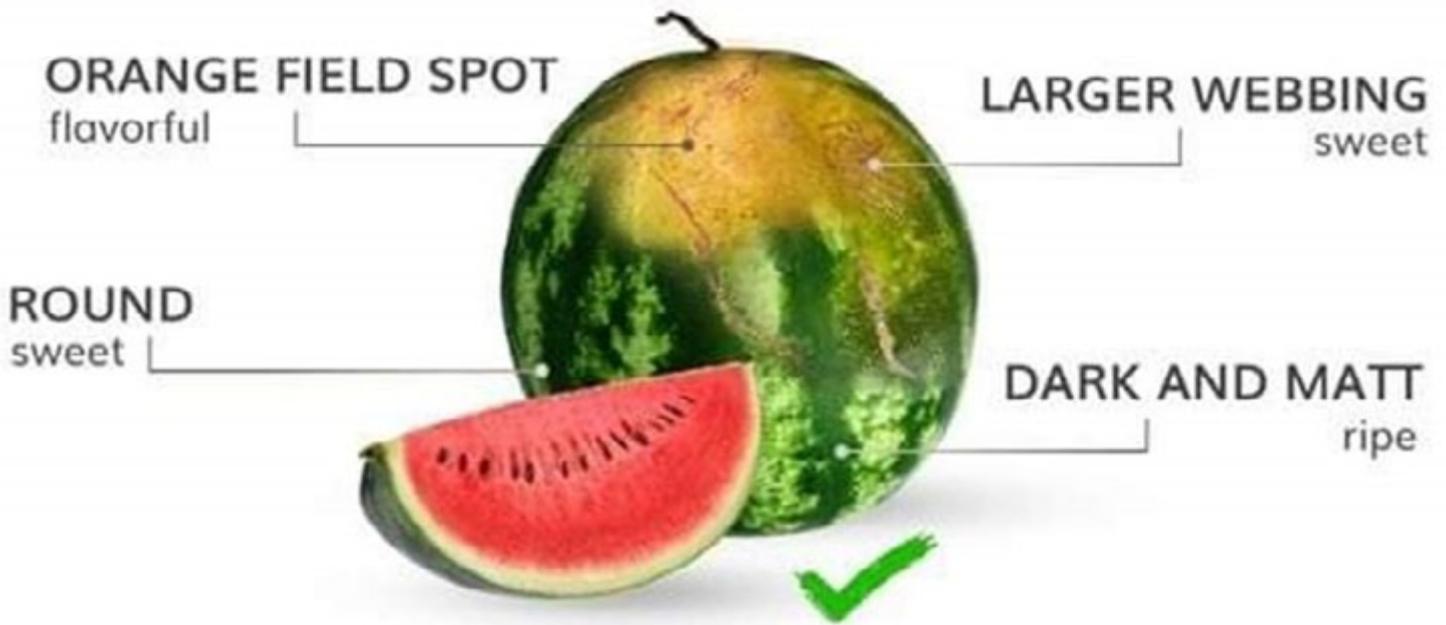


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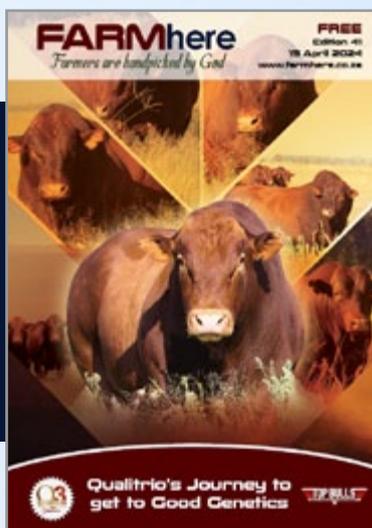
# Interesting Fact



## How to Pick a Good Watermelon



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# ATKA 8STE KIMBERLEY VEILING

DONDERDAG 16 MEI 2024 OM 11:00

Kimberley Veemark



GASVERKOPER



NOORD-KAAP



### AANBOD:

- 20 x Dorper Ramme
- 15 x Wit Dorper Ramme
- 20 x Dorper Ooie
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- 5 x Boerbok ramme
- 10 x Boerbok Ooie
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**Corrie Avenant** 082 338 5906 & **Izak Brow** 073 021 9367 (ATKA)  
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**37 Bulle 25 Vroulike diere**

**Vic Roos 082 805 3932**

**GPS : S 26° 04' 22.70" E 30° 15' 53.50"**



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# AL Badenhorst Boerdery

# WILDVEILING

## SATERDAG 25 MEI 2024

### 11:00 - ANNEX - HOPETOWN

KOORDINATE: S29°51.04 E 024°16.45

## SPESES OP VEILING:

- Kalahari Springbokke
- Swart Springbokke
- Wit Springbokke
- Koper Springbokke
- Bont en Koning Springbokke
- Damera Springbokke
- Rooibokke
- Swart Rooibokke
- White Flank
- Blesbokke
- Geel Blesbokke

- Rooi Ribbokke
- Bergskape
- Blouwildebeeste
- Swartwildebeeste
- Gemsbokke
- Goue wildebeeste
- Steenbökkies
- Koedoes
- Rooihartebeeste
- Swartwitpense



**NAVRAE:** Riaan Badenhorst 082 498 3662 / Marietjie Badenhorst 082 809 4775  
Jannie van der Westhuizen 083 969 4236 / Allan Sinclair (Afslaer): 082 528 0059

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**AFSLAERSNOTA:** Volgens verkoopvoorwaardes TERME STRENG KONTANT (onder sekere voorwaardes), dag van veiling.  
**Volgens FICA wetgewing:** Alle kopers moet bewys van ID en woonadres verskaf.

**LIGGING:** PLAAS "ANNEX" IS GELEË 45 KM SUID VANAF HOPETOWN, 25 KM WES VANAF ORANIA, 75 KM NOORD WES VANAF VAN DER KLOOFDAM



DONDERDAG | 30 MEI 2024

PARYS AFRI-DOME

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# SENTRAAL STREEK BRANGUS OPMARS NA DIE NOORDE XI



Andre Pretorius  
Fotografie



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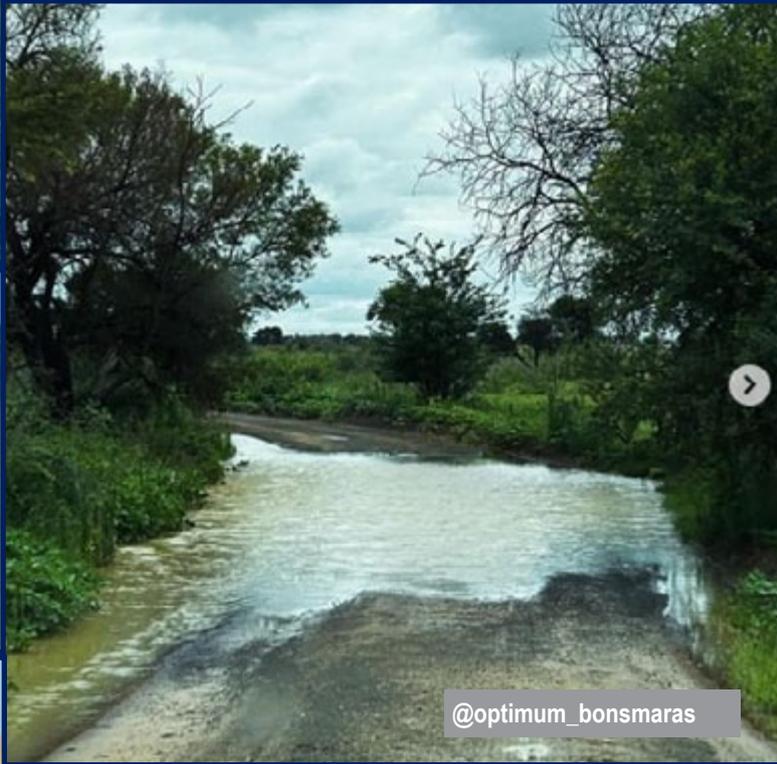
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# What's happening in Markets



## Beef

A2/3 = R 54.86

B2/3 = R 47.59

C2/3 = 43.60

Weaner Calf = R 32.44



## Sheep

A2/3 = R 83.00

B2/3 = R 53.90

C2/3 = R 52.20

Feeder Lamb = R 40.21



## Goats

Ewes = R 42.06

Kids <30kg = R 50.71

Kids 30-40kg = R 46.32

Kids > 40kg = R 46.77



## Chicken

Frozen = R 34.89

Fresh = R 35.10

IQF = R 31.01



## Pigs

Porkers = R 30.95

Baconers = R 30.39



## Safex

Maize = R 4940 /t

Soybean = R 8753 /t

Sunflower = R 8890 /t

Wheat = R 6357 /t



## Exchange rate

R / \$ = R 18.40

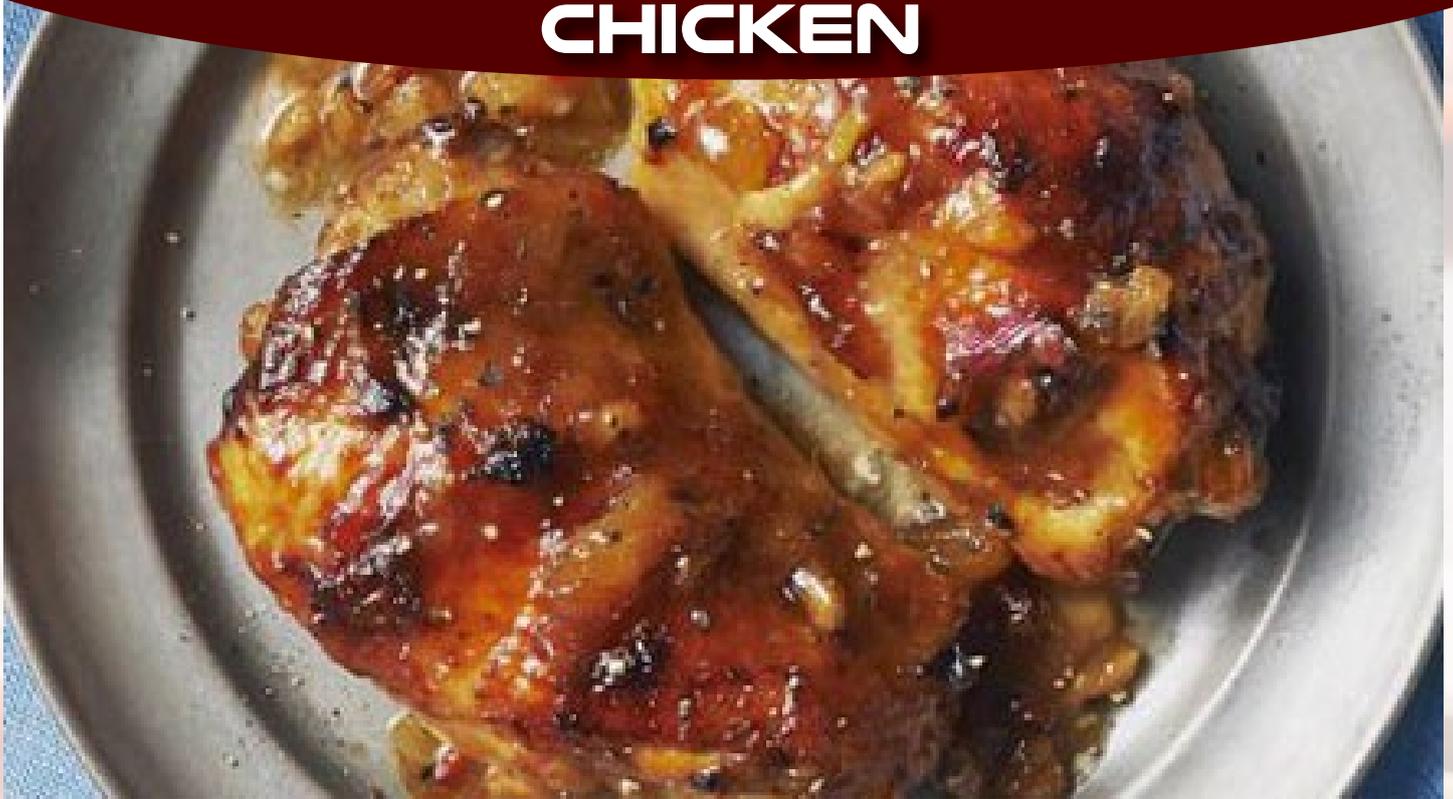
R / £ = R 23.11

R / € = R 19.85

As at 14 May 2024  
[www.amtrends.co.za](http://www.amtrends.co.za)

# RECIPE

## SOUTH AFRICAN CHUTNEY CHICKEN



Top chicken thighs with garlic, chilli and mango chutney for an easy meal that takes just 5 minutes to prep – then simply roast in the oven

### Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 1 red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped
- 6 tbsp mango chutney
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 6 tbsp mayonnaise
- 8 chicken thighs, skin on and bone in
- green salad, to serve

### Method

#### STEP 1

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium heat and cook the onion, garlic and chilli for a few mins until softened. Stir in the chutney, Worcestershire sauce and mayonnaise. Taste and season.

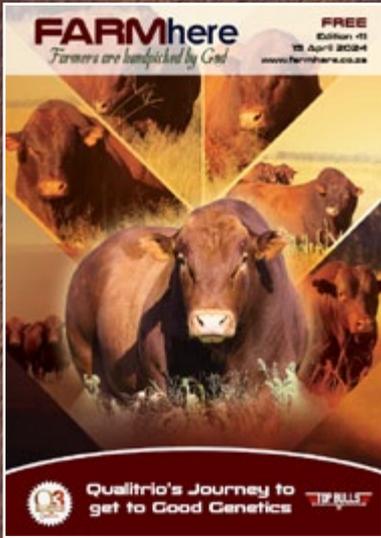
#### STEP 2

Arrange the chicken on a foil-lined baking tray and spoon over the chutney mixture. Roast the chicken in the oven for 40-45 mins until cooked through and sticky. Serve with a green salad.

Source: <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/south-african-chutney-chicken>



# PREVIOUS EDITIONS



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# FARMhere

*Farmers are handpicked by God*

Isaiah 66:1

This is what the LORD says: 'Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool.'

- The Lord has the final authority over all things.
- He is still in control of heaven and earth no matter how things may appear.
- At the same time He knows what is happening in your life.
- Give Him the right of way to rule and reign over your situation and circumstances.

Prayer: Lord, I recognise that You are still on the throne. No situation in the world today is beyond Your reach and no situation that I may be facing is too difficult for You. Rule and reign in my life today, I pray. Amen.

*Lizelle*

Thank you for reading our magazine! Forward this inspirational magazine to your friends and family via WhatsApp so that they also can be part of our agri family.

[www.farmhere.co.za](http://www.farmhere.co.za)

Photo by Christine Vosloo Photography