

# Red meat, maize prices to remain high due to drought

A farmers' association says the impact of last year's drought will be felt by consumers until at least the end of this year. The African Farmers Association of South Africa (Afasa) on Monday told News24 that it would take months for the prices of maize and meat to go down.



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"Most livestock farmers have lost out so bad and the only time they will see recovery could be late next year. But crop farmers, especially maize producers, will start to count harvests later this year," said Afasa's Limpopo president Tshianeo Mathidi.

He said recent rains had given farmers some hope. "Rain does not mean that higher prices as a result of a food shortage are automatically over. We are still replanting and livestock just recovering," said Mathidi.

"A price drop will not happen now. There are fewer suppliers, as very few farmers were producing during drought." Intense hot weather and dry conditions in 2015 and 2016 ruined crops and left farmers out of production.

Mathidi said if the government did not help farmers start up their operations again, consumers might not see a drop in maize and red meat prices. The majority of farmers were left broke due to the drought, and returning to regular farming would be an uphill battle, he added.

"Most farmers will not recover because they are still struggling to service loans, and they won't secure additional loans, so the only way for them to recover will be through government intervention," said Mathidi.

*Source: News24*

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