

BFAP Baseline 2018 released

The Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP) launched its *Baseline 2018 and Agricultural Outlook 2018-2027* on 15 August. The outlook covers agricultural production, consumption, prices and trade in South Africa for the period 2018 to 2027.

It was also a celebration of the 15th year that BFAP has guided the policy arena, generating intelligence for the agro-food industry, partnering with private and public sector stakeholders, and to inform on relevant issues. BFAP used this opportunity to launch a brand-new corporate identity that personifies its objective of producing rigorous multi-disciplinary analyses to support strategic and operational decision-making.

The *Baseline 2018* was presented by Dr Tracy Davids of BFAP who gave an outlook of agricultural production, farm level analyses, consumption, food prices and trade, integrated markets, within the context of the current uncertainty regarding land reform policies. The information is based on assumptions about a range of economic, technological, environmental, political, institutional, and social factors. The baseline represents a benchmark of what could happen under a particular set of assumptions. Inherent uncertainties, including policy changes, weather, and other market variations ensure that the future is highly unlikely to match baseline projections. Recognising this fact, BFAP incorporated scenario planning and risk analyses in the process of attempting to understand the underlying risks and uncertainties of agricultural markets.

[Click here](#) to download the *Baseline 2018*.

Introductory speakers were Hugo Pienaar from The Bureau for Economic Research, Prof Patrick Westhoff from the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI), University of Missouri and Dr Holger Matthey from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations. The presentations were followed by a panel discussion on land reform in South Africa and its impact on uncertainty, growth and jobs. In closing the event, Wessel Lemmer, senior agricultural economist at ABSA AgriBusiness, echoed the words of Prof John Westwood: In times of significant uncertainty, it is important in any industry, including agriculture, for a company to stay focused on its core business and to benchmark this against best practice worldwide. To be average is no longer good enough.