



15 February 2022

PRESS RELEASE

South African raisin industry suffers production losses due to above average rainfall

The South African raisin industry has been exposed to adverse climate conditions over the past month, with above average rainfalls since the start of 2022 and looming flooding conditions in the Orange River valley.

Raisins South Africa's initial crop forecast was 78 000 ton of marketable product (or 86 000 ton farmers' stock). This forecast was based on the assessment of vineyard conditions towards the end of 2021 as indicated by Ferdie Botha, Raisins South Africa.

Damages caused by high flows (3 800 cumec at peak) in the Orange River's, was limited to approximately 2.5% of total raisin hectares. The river level has since been declining to level (less than 2 000 cumec) that does not pose any risks at this stage. Over the past two weeks, Raisins SA has concluded on-farm assessments to measure actual damages suffered over the same period. Stefan Jordaan, agri-specialist of Raisins SA, said that initially brix levels of grapes were still low, even on Sultana's, with the season being 10 days late, and first rains having minimal impact on the crop. However, showers towards the end of January and early February 2022 have had a significant impact. Accordingly, our initial crop forecast has now been adjusted downwards. From our field assessments, the official crop size is now reduced to 65 000 ton marketable product (72 000 ton farmers' stock) for the 2021/22 season.

Growers continue to work closely with technical staff to manage vineyards and harvest fruit best possibly for drying. Raisins SA will continue to monitor the remainder of the harvesting season and communicate accordingly as the 2021/22 season progresses.

Crop forecasts are based on the use of Raisins SA's vine census, field assessments and co-operation amongst growers, packers and industry experts representing both the Orange- and Oliphants River regions. This committee is used by Raisins SA to update initial forecasts as the season develops. For any enquiries, please contact Bekkie van Aarde, Information and communication manager. (bekkieva@raisinsa.co.za)