

Drought and disease development in maize

Adverse environmental conditions and disease are placing increasing pressure on maize crops in South Africa, says Dr Belinda Janse van Rensburg, researcher at the ARC-Grain Crops Institute...



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Maize production is highly dependent on climatic conditions, with temperature and precipitation being the main drivers. Hot, dry weather in the maize production areas of North West, Free State and Limpopo is believed to be caused by cyclones in the Indian Ocean, which absorb the moisture from the subcontinent's interior. When these conditions prevail, a smaller maize crop will be harvested, which in turn will increase the price of white and yellow maize used as animal feed.

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