SOUTH AFRICAN POULTRY ASSOCIATION

Founded 1904

Poultry Industry Stats Summary for 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. ECONOMIC OVERVIEW 4
2. LOCAL INDUSTRY OVERVIEW 6
2.1. Gross value of animal products 6
2.2. Production growth of industries 7
2.3. Consumption of animal protein sources 9
2.4. Price comparison of animal protein sources 10
2.5. Production and consumption of maize 10
2.6. Feed sales and usage 12
2.7. Feed prices 13
3. TRADE 15
3.1. Imports 15
3.2. Exports 16

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: IMF Growth projections (% change) 4
Table 2: Provincial unemployment rates 5
Table 3: Gross value of agriculture (R billion) 7
Table 4: Bird numbers in the poultry industry 8
Table 5: Production and consumption of animal proteins 9
Table 6: Production of summer crops (1 000 tonnes) 11
Table 7: Maize consumption (1 000 tonnes) 12
Table 8: Annual poultry feed sales 12
Table 9: Raw material costs of poultry feed (R/tonne) 14

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Unemployment levels per age group 5
Figure 2: The provincial distribution of jobs in the agricultural sector 6
Figure 3: Gross value of animal products 7
Figure 4: Per capita consumption of protein sources 9
Figure 5: Monthly beef, pork, chicken and egg producer prices 10
Figure 6: Maize production per province 11
Figure 7: Animal feed sales from April 2024 to March 2025 13
Figure 8: Monthly trends in poultry feed prices 15
Figure 9: Import volumes of chicken meat and eggs 15
Figure 10: Export volumes of chicken meat and eggs 16

1. ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

In its January 2026 *World economic outlook update*, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimated that the world's economy grew by 3.3% in 2025 (Table 1). Global growth is projected at 3.3% for 2026 and 3.2% for 2027. Global headline inflation is forecasted to decline from 4.1% in 2025 to 3.8% in 2026 and 3.4% in 2027.

Table 1: IMF Growth projections (% change)

Region	2024	2025	2026	2027
USA	2.8	2.1	2.4	2.0
United Kingdom (UK)	1.1	1.4	1.3	1.5
South Africa	0.5	1.3	1.4	1.5
Eurozone	0.9	1.4	1.3	1.4
Middle East and Central Asia	2.7	3.7	3.9	4.0
Emerging and developing Asia	5.3	5.4	5.0	4.8
Latin America and the Caribbean	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	4.1	4.4	4.6	4.6
Advanced economies	1.8	1.7	1.8	1.7
Emerging market and developing economies	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.1
Global economy	**3.3**	**3.3**	**3.3**	**3.2**

South Africa's average inflation rate for 2025 was 3.2%, down from 4.4% in 2024, and was the lowest rate in 21 years (source: Statistics SA (Stats SA)). The inflation rates for the years 2026, 2027 and 2028 are forecasted to be 3.3%, 3.2% and 3.0% respectively (source: South African Reserve Bank, 2026. *Monetary Policy Committee forecast report: January 2026.*). The average food inflation rate decreased from 4.6% in 2024 to 4.1% in 2025, providing some relief for lower-income households (source: Stats SA).

Official and expanded unemployment rates are shown in Table 2 (source: Stats SA, 2025. *Quarterly labour force survey: quarter 4: 2025.*). South Africa's official unemployment rate in the fourth quarter of 2025 (4Q2025) was 31.4%, marginally down from 31.9% in 4Q2024. In total, 7.836 million people aged 15–64 years were unemployed in South Africa, compared to 7.991 million in 4Q2024.

The combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force (formerly categorised as the expanded unemployment rate, including discouraged work-seekers) increased from 41.9% in 4Q2024 to 42.1% in 4Q2025 (Table 2). The unemployment rate for women was 34.6% (up from 33.9%) and for men 28.8% (down from 30.1%). The percentage of young people (15–24 years of age) not in employment, education or training was found to be 57.0% in 4Q2025. The combined rate for this category dropped from 70.3% in 4Q2024 to 68.3% (Figure 1; source: Stats SA).

Table 2: Provincial unemployment rates				
	Official unemployment rate (%)		Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force (%)	
Province	Oct–Dec 2024	Oct–Dec 2025	Oct–Dec 2024	Oct–Dec 2025
Eastern Cape	36.6	42.5	47.6	51.4
Free State	37.9	37.2	44.3	44.1
Gauteng	34.4	33.0	39.9	39.4
KwaZulu-Natal	28.6	32.3	44.7	47.1
Limpopo	31.9	28.2	46.5	46.1
Mpumalanga	34.7	32.3	47.2	46.3
Northern Cape	27.4	27.1	39.8	42.9
North West	41.3	35.1	52.8	50.9
Western Cape	19.6	18.1	24.9	23.7
South Africa	**31.9**	**31.4**	**41.9**	**42.1**

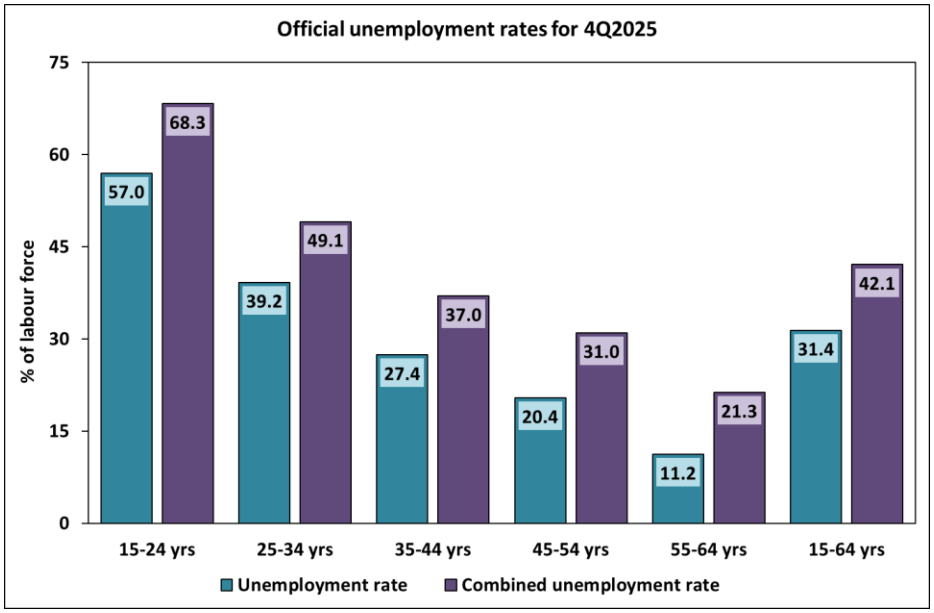


Figure 1: Unemployment levels per age group

Of the 17.099 million people employed in 4Q2025, 12.303 million (72.0%) were in the formal sector, 3.667 million (21.4%) in the informal sector, and 1.129 million (6.6%) in private households.

Year-on-year employment in the agricultural sector increased by 26 000 jobs (+2.8%), from 924 000 to 950 000. A total of 669 000 (70.4%) of these employees were men and the remaining 281 000 women. The majority of the agricultural jobs were in Western Cape, followed by Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga (Figure 2) (source: Stats SA, 2025. *Quarterly labour force survey: quarter 4: 2025.*).

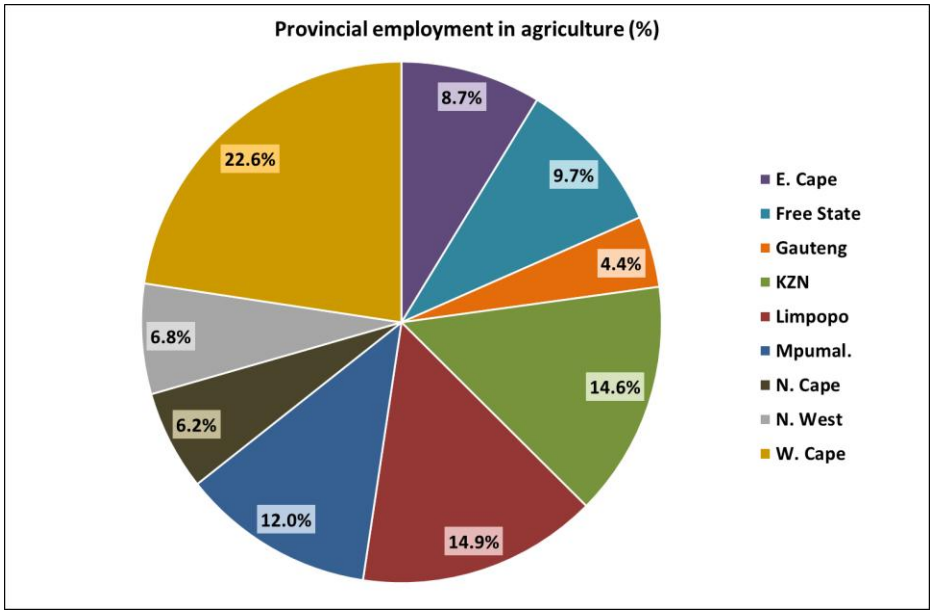


Figure 2: The provincial distribution of jobs in the agricultural sector

2. LOCAL INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

2.1. Gross value of animal products

Table 3 shows the gross value of primary agricultural production for 2024 and 2025 (source: DoA). The department uses egg and chicken pricing from Stats SA in their calculations of gross value. The combined farm income for poultry meat and eggs for 2025 was R91.40 billion compared to R87.95 billion in 2024; an increase of 3.9%. In the field crops sector, the gross value of maize increased by 32.6%, while for sunflower seed and soya beans it increased by 9.1% and 28.2% respectively.

In rand value, the poultry industry remains the largest sector of South African agriculture at 18.2% of all agricultural production (down from 19.3% in 2024), and 44.2% of all animal products (down from 44.4%). The beef industry, its nearest rival, contributed 9.9% to turnover of all agricultural production and 24.1% of all animal products (Figure 3; source: DoA). Total animal products contributed 41.3% to the gross value of total agricultural products in 2025 (down from 43.6% in 2024).

Table 3: Gross value of agriculture (R billion)					
Sector	**2024**	**2025**	**Annual % change**	**% of animal products**	**% of grand total**
Total field crops	112.34	136.52	21.5		27.2
Total horticulture	144.53	157.76	9.1		31.5
Wool	5.56	7.92	42.6	3.8	1.6
Mohair	1.53	1.96	28.8	0.9	0.4
Karakul pelts	0.00	0.00	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ostrich feathers and products	1.02	1.03	0.9	0.5	0.2
Poultry meat	72.09	74.41	3.2	36.0	14.8
Eggs	15.86	16.99	7.1	8.2	3.4
Cattle and calves slaughtered	47.29	49.78	5.3	24.1	9.9
Sheep and goats slaughtered	9.80	10.53	7.4	5.1	2.1
Pigs slaughtered	11.47	12.08	5.3	5.8	2.4
Milk	28.34	26.74	-5.6	12.9	5.3
Other livestock products	5.24	5.41	3.3	2.6	1.1
Total animal products	198.19	206.87	4.4	100.0	41.3
Grand total	**455.07**	**501.14**	**10.1**		**100.0**

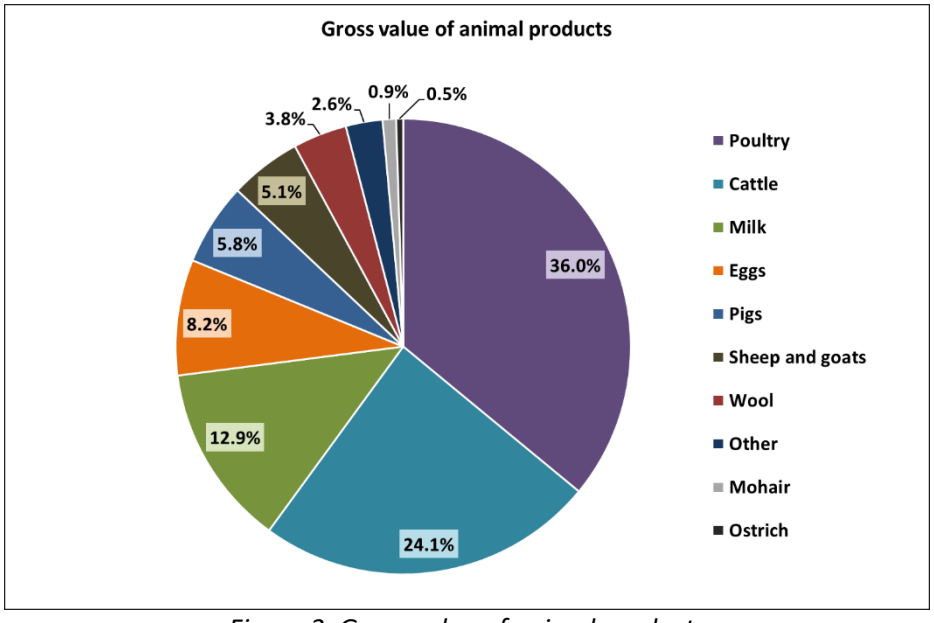


Figure 3: Gross value of animal products

2.2. Production growth of industries

Table 4 summarises the bird numbers in the egg and broiler industries, showing the average number of birds (including males, where appropriate) on farms during the year. Some of the statistics are provided

by producers and the remainder are estimated using SAPA's forecasting models. Almost 76% of the birds in the South African poultry industry are used for meat production, while the remaining 24% are used for table egg production.

Table 4: Bird numbers in the poultry industry

Broiler industry	**Birds**	**% of total**
GGP, GP*	622 512	
Breeder rearing**	4 285 187	
Breeder laying	7 069 706	
Broilers	102 582 925	
Total broiler	114 560 330	75.6
Egg industry	**Birds**	**% of total**
GP rearing and laying*	24 288	
Parent rearing*	156 981	
Parent laying*	529 549	
Pullets **	8 198 156	
Laying hens	27 978 576	
Total egg	36 887 550	24.4
Poultry industry	**151 447 880**	

* Supplied by producers

** Based on data supplied by hatcheries

- **Broiler industry**

The number of day-old female parents placed during 2025 increased by 0.7% compared to 2024, while the average number of broiler breeders increased by a marginal 0.4%. The average size of the broiler breeder flock is expected to shrink by 1.6% in the first five months of 2026 compared to the same period in 2025.

There was a 2.5% annual increase in day-old chick production in 2025, with a total hatch of 1 203 million chicks. The number of broilers slaughtered for the year was 1 135 million; a 2.0% increase compared to 2024.

- **Egg industry**

In 2025, day-old pullet production dropped by 0.4%, while the number of layer replacements housed increased by 25.3%.

The national layer flock expanded by 34.4% in 2025. The average hen number is expected to increase by 18.5% in the first four months of 2026 compared to the same period in 2025. Similarly, the average number of cases of eggs per week for the first four months of 2026 is expected to be 18.8% higher.

2.3. Consumption of animal protein sources

In 2025 consumption of poultry products amounted to 2.848 million tonnes. In comparison, 1.513 million tonnes of beef, pork, mutton and goat were consumed (Table 5; source: DoA). The per capita consumption of poultry products exceeds the consumption of all the other animal protein sources, although milk follows closely behind poultry meat. The combined per capita consumption of poultry meat and eggs in 2025 was 44.37 kg, compared to 42.54 kg the previous year (Figure 4; source: DoA).

Table 5: Production and consumption of animal proteins

Protein source	Production (1 000 tonnes)			Consumption (1 000 tonnes)			Per capita (kg)		
	2024	2025	% change	2024	2025	% change	2024	2025	% change
Poultry meat	1 915	1 941	1.4	2 287	2 287	0.0	36.0	35.9	-0.1
Milk	3 883	3 912	0.7	3 785	3 753	-0.8	35.4	34.7	-2.1
Beef	1 102	982	-10.9	1 072	960	-10.5	16.8	15.1	-10.6
Eggs	433	568	31.1	434	561	29.0	6.6	8.4	28.7
Pork	366	375	2.5	375	381	1.8	5.9	6.0	1.6
Mutton, goat	168	156	-7.1	185	172	-7.2	2.9	2.7	-7.3
Total	**7 866**	**7 933**	**0.9**	**8 139**	**8 113**	**-0.3**	**103.6**	**102.8**	**-0.8**

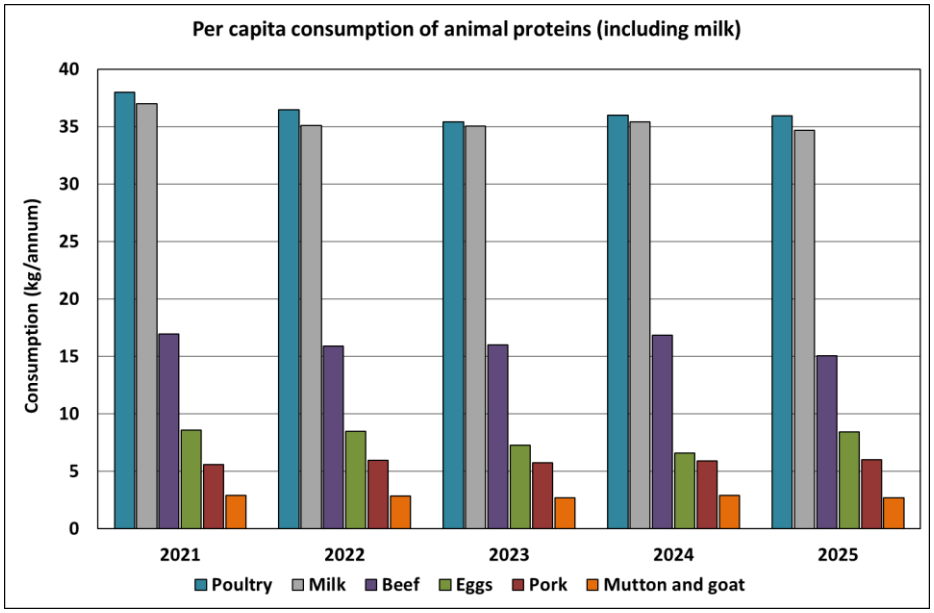


Figure 4: Per capita consumption of protein sources

The poultry sector provided 65.3% of animal protein (excluding milk) consumed in the country; up from 62.5% in 2024. If milk is included, then poultry meat and eggs contributed 35.1% to animal protein consumed; up from 33.4% in 2024 (source: DoA).

2.4. Price comparison of animal protein sources

On a rand-per-kg basis, eggs were the most affordable animal protein source in 2025 at R31.05/kg (a 15.0% annual decrease), followed by chicken (R33.66/kg; +5.8%) and pork (R35.16/kg; +9.7%) (Figure 5; source: AMT, SAPA). The average prices for beef A2/A3 and C2/C3 were R67.64/kg (+23.3%) and R55.92/kg (+24.5%) respectively.

The supply of beef was severely constrained by rampant foot-and-mouth disease outbreaks in cattle herds across the country. Several pig farms were also affected by the disease in the second half of the year.

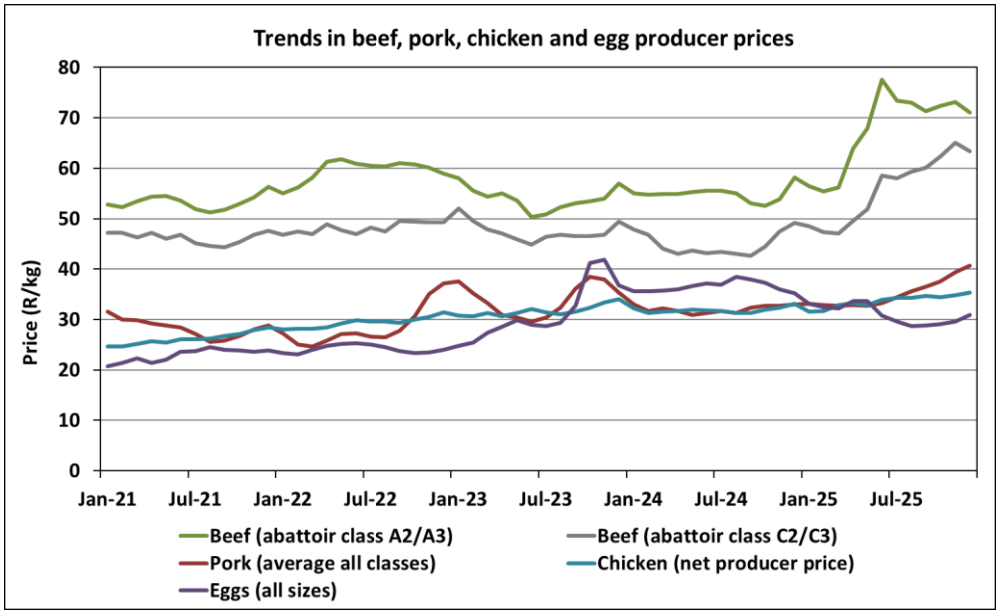


Figure 5: Monthly beef, pork, chicken and egg producer prices

2.5. Production and consumption of maize

Maize production in South Africa is concentrated in Free State, Mpumalanga and North West. In the 2024/25 season, the crop harvest from these provinces was 41.2%, 24.6% and 16.1% respectively. In total, 82.0% of the recent maize crop was grown in these three provinces (Figure 6; source: Crop Estimates Committee (CEC)).

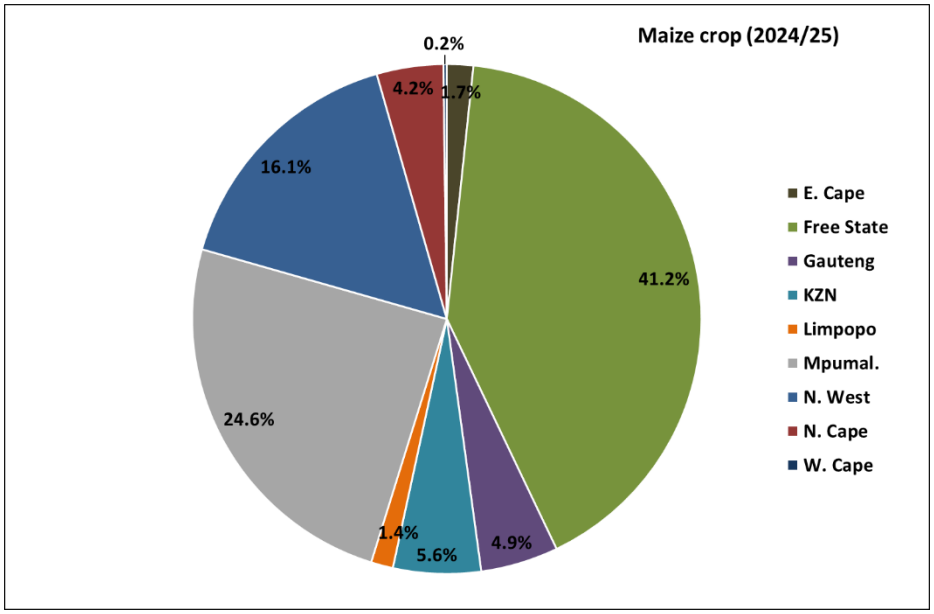


Figure 6: Maize production per province

The crop season runs from May to April and the CEC reported that the total maize crop for 2024/25 was 16.65 million tonnes; a 29.6% annual increase (Table 6). The estimated maize crop for the 2025/26 season, based on the area planted, is 16.126 million tonnes (-3.1%).

Table 6: Production of summer crops (1 000 tonnes)

Crop	2023/24	2024/25	% of total	% change	2025/26*	% change
White maize	6 055	8 450	50.8	39.6	8 510	0.7
Yellow maize	6 795	8 200	49.2	20.7	7 617	-7.1
Total maize	12 850	16 650	100.0	29.6	16 126	-3.1
Sunflower seeds	632	700		10.8	754	7.8
Soya beans	1 848	2 800		51.5	2 661	-4.9

* CEC forecast: 26 February 2026

Free State farmers play a pivotal role in the production of sunflower seeds and soya beans. In the 2024/25 summer season, 54.1% and 45.9% of these two crops respectively were grown in that province.

In 2025 maize production contributed R70.69 billion to the gross value of agricultural products compared to R53.29 billion the previous year (source: DoA).

The total South African consumption of maize for 2024/25 was 11.57 million tonnes, of which 6.13 million tonnes was used for animal feed (Table 7) (source: South African Grain Information Service).

Table 7: Maize consumption (1 000 tonnes)					
Crop	**2023/24**	**2024/25**	**% change**	**Animal feed**	**%**
White maize	6 483.2	4 918.4	-24.1	97.3	2.0
Yellow maize	5 308.1	6 649.5	25.3	6 027.8	90.7
Total	**11 791.3**	**11 567.9**	**-1.9**	**6 125.0**	**52.9**

2.6. Feed sales and usage

The poultry industry remains the largest customer of AFMA. A total of 7.014 million tonnes (+3.5%) of animal feed was sold in the period from April 2024 to March 2025. Poultry (including ostriches) consumed 4.505 million tonnes with the bulk thereof going to the broiler industry (Table 8; source: AFMA). In total, 64.2% of AFMA's animal feed sales (up from 63.8%) went to the poultry industry (Figure 7).

Table 8: Annual poultry feed sales					
Feed type	**April 2023 - March 2024**		**April 2024 - March 2025**		
	Tonnes	**%**	**Tonnes**	**%**	**% change**
Broiler	2 975 827	68.9	3 083 162	68.4	3.6
Layer	781 890	18.1	823 486	18.3	5.3
Breeder	558 043	12.9	586 961	13.0	5.2
Ostrich	5 999	0.1	11 843	0.3	97.4
Poultry	**4 321 759**	**100.0**	**4 505 452**	**100.0**	**4.3**

National feed production during 2024/25 was estimated to be 12.450 million tonnes; a 2.3% annual increase. AFMA sales (7.249 million tonnes, including feed derived from concentrates) therefore represented 58.2% of the national feed produced (source: AFMA).

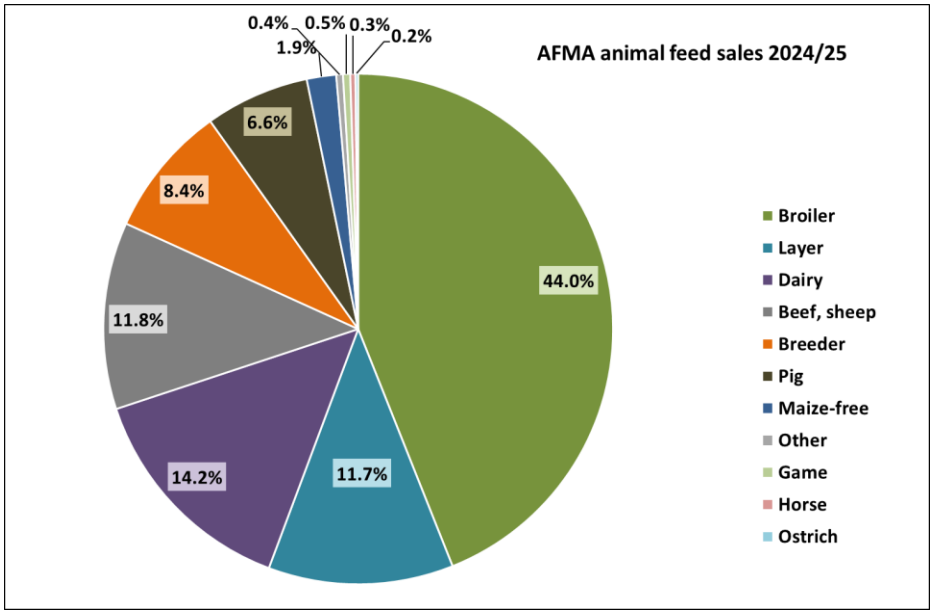


Figure 7: Animal feed sales from April 2024 to March 2025

2.7. Feed prices

The annual average raw material costs for the different poultry feeds are shown in Table 9. These costings are based on feed ingredient prices and a standardised formulation and exclude delivery, additives and mixing costs (source: H. Koster).

Table 9: Raw material costs of poultry feed (R/tonne)			
Ration	**2024**	**2025**	**% change**
Broiler			
Prestarter	6 986	6 175	-11.6
Starter	7 064	6 241	-11.7
Grower	7 013	6 238	-11.1
Finisher	6 955	6 232	-10.4
Post finisher	6 955	6 232	-10.4
Broiler breeder			
Starter	5 555	5 037	-9.3
Grower	5 153	4 758	-7.7
Developer	5 282	4 868	-7.8
Layer 1	5 588	5 211	-6.7
Layer 2	5 556	5 202	-6.4
Pullet			
Starter	6 022	5 542	-8.0
Grower	5 317	4 939	-7.1
Developer	5 061	4 671	-7.7
Layer			
Layer 20	5 263	4 918	-6.5
Layer 40	5 216	4 881	-6.4
Layer 60	5 088	4 790	-5.9
Layer breeder			
Phase 1	5 552	5 202	-6.3
Phase 2	5 420	5 085	-6.2

Figure 8 shows the trends in poultry feed costs for the past five years, with forecasts to July 2026 (source: H. Koster). The formulations were substantially revised from September 2023, bringing them in line with the specifications and raw materials being used by the feed milling industry to meet the nutrient requirements of today's genetic stock. This is why the graph shows a jump in the prices of all five diets between August and September 2023. In addition, more categories were added in response to requests from producers.

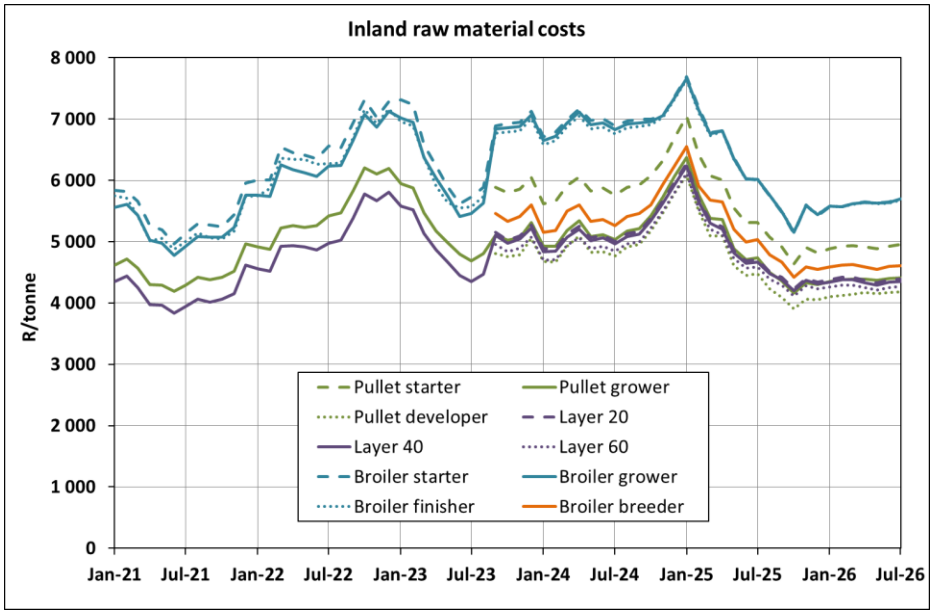


Figure 8: Monthly trends in poultry feed prices

3. TRADE

3.1. Imports

Chicken and egg imports for 2025 decreased by 7.2% and 87.4% respectively (Figure 9). Imports of fertilised eggs for both the broiler and egg industries made up the bulk of the egg imports the previous year. The total free on board (FOB) value of these imports was R4.840 billion (-11.9%), with chicken contributing R4.700 billion (97.1% of the total) and eggs R0.139 billion.

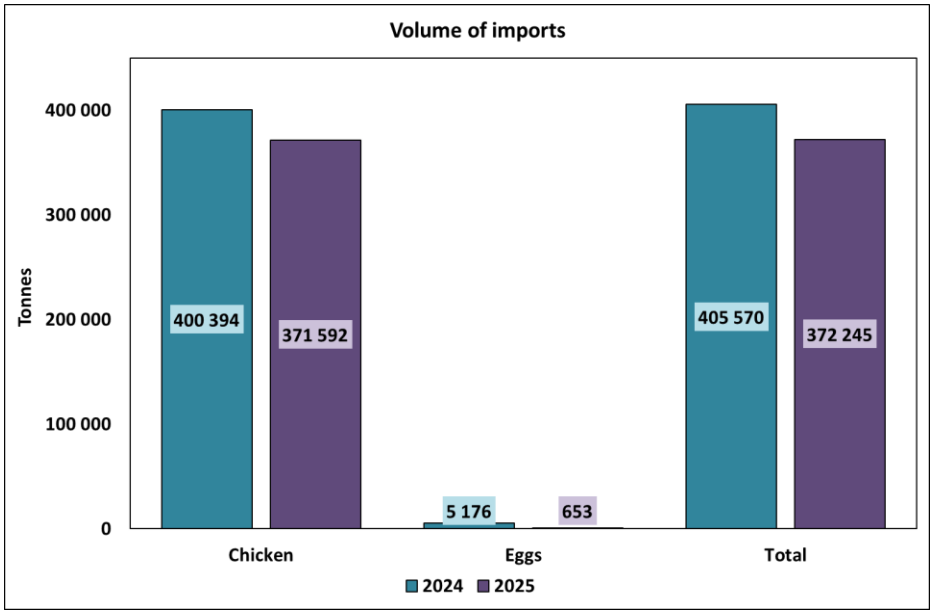


Figure 9: Import volumes of chicken meat and eggs

3.2. Exports

In 2025 the combined volume of chicken and egg exports dropped by 18.6%, although egg exports grew by 94.6% while chicken exports shrunk by 26.4% (Figure 10). The total FOB value of the exports was R1.916 billion (-4.9%), with chicken contributing R1.443 billion (75.3% of the total) and eggs R0.472 billion.

Exports of chicken meat were hampered by the country's HPAI positive status. Farms affected by H7N6 in 2023 were still officially under quarantine, and new outbreaks of H5N1 occurred in the second half of 2025.

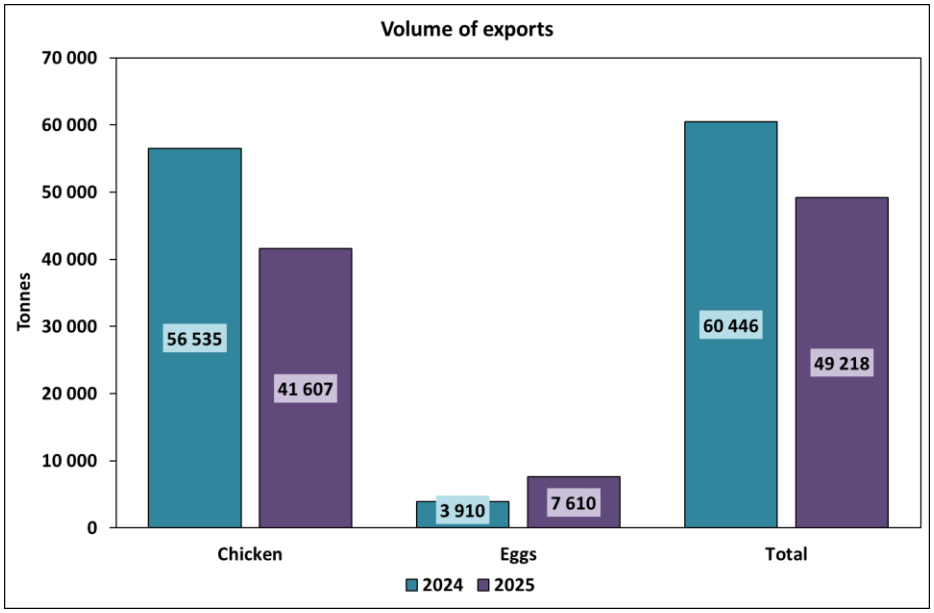


Figure 10: Export volumes of chicken meat and eggs