

# Thoko Didiza allays fears over food shortage amid Russia-Ukraine conflict

**A**griculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Minister, Thoko Didiza, has assured the country of the availability of food supplies for the coming months, amid the Russia-Ukraine conflict. "We have gained enough understanding of our available food supplies and are confident that there are sufficient supplies for South Africa and the neighbouring Southern African Custom Union (SACU) countries for the foreseeable future, and therefore [there is] no need to panic that the country could experience shortages."

The Minister made the remarks following a meeting with food processors, including leaders in the fruit and grains industry, agricultural trading groups, and farmer associations to discuss availability of food suppliers and farming inputs. The consultation was part of the Inter-Ministerial Task Team assessment of

risks to the South African economy during the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

The meeting evaluated the availability of the food supplies and farming inputs supplies for the coming months.

Didiza said the country has benefitted from good harvests of a range of crops and fruits and have already imported a large share of products that they are import-dependent on, including wheat and rice. She said industry stakeholders have committed to sharing information about the food production conditions going forward, which will enable "better planning and response should such be needed in future". "The industry role players also reflected on the need to drive long term inclusive growth in the sector. We will follow up on this call by addressing constraints to agriculture growth, including access to funding for new entrant farmers, crop and animal disease occurrences, and improving domestic fertilizer capacity.



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