



WESTERN CAPE AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT PERFORMANCE IN THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2025

1. Introduction

One of the Western Cape government's main priorities is to stimulate economic growth that leads to job creation. This will be accomplished supporting market growth, improving the business environment and supporting growth opportunities (WCG, 2023). The high levels of unemployment in the country are concerning, and the Growth of Jobs Strategy (G4JS) provides a blueprint for the province to achieve significant economic growth of 4-6% per annum. With a conservative goal of creating at least 6000 new jobs by 2035.

This report analyses the agricultural labour market performance in the Western Cape, based on the second quarter labour force survey statistics for 2025 (Q2_2025) from Statistics South Africa. The next sections present an overview of employment and performance of various sectors in this quarter (Q2_2024), followed by a discussion of jobs in agriculture and agri-processing.

2. Overview of employment

Figure 2.1 presents employment numbers by sector in the province in absolute numbers in Q2_2025. There were 2 744 099 employed individuals in the Western Cape in Q2_2025. The sectors with the largest share of employment in the province are community and social services 20.8% (571 237 jobs), and finance 20% (549 554 jobs), trade 19.5% (534 600), other manufacturing (excl. agri-processing) 11% (200 690 jobs), construction 8.2% (224 004 jobs), agriculture (incl. forestry and fisheries) 7% (202 120 jobs), transport 6.6% (194 974 jobs), agri-processing 4% (100 484), private household services 6% (165 435 jobs), utilities 0.4% (11 961 jobs) and mining 0.1% (2 705 jobs). Overall employment in the Western Cape decreased by 4% (115 121 jobs), with only three of the ten sectors showing positive quarterly growth, namely trade at 9%, private households at 4% and utilities at 6%. However, this growth was not sufficient to offset the job losses in other sectors of the economy.

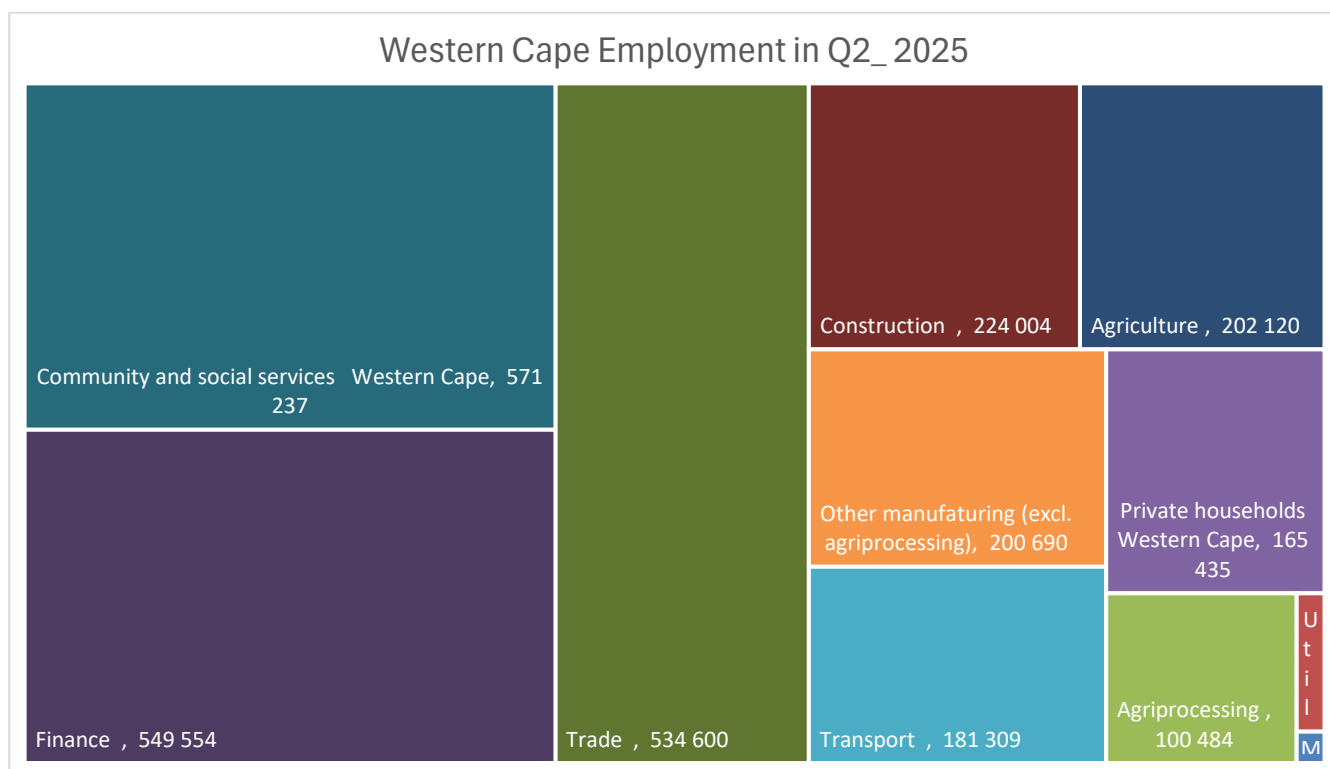


Figure 2.1: Western employment breakdown by sector Q2_2025

Source: (Stats SA, 2025)

3. Agricultural labour market performance

Figure 3.1 illustrates trends in agricultural employment across the nine provinces of South Africa in the period Q2_2023 to Q2_2025, ranked by the number of jobs. For the period under review, the Western Cape is a leading employer of the agricultural labour force, followed by KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Eastern Cape, and others. Figure 3.2 shows the Western Cape agriculture and agri-processing sectors' employment numbers for the period Q4_12 to Q2_2025.

Overall, both agricultural and agri-processing jobs show an upward trend (see trend line). Both sectors combined recorded 302 604 jobs in Q2_2025, contributing 11% to total provincial employment. Table

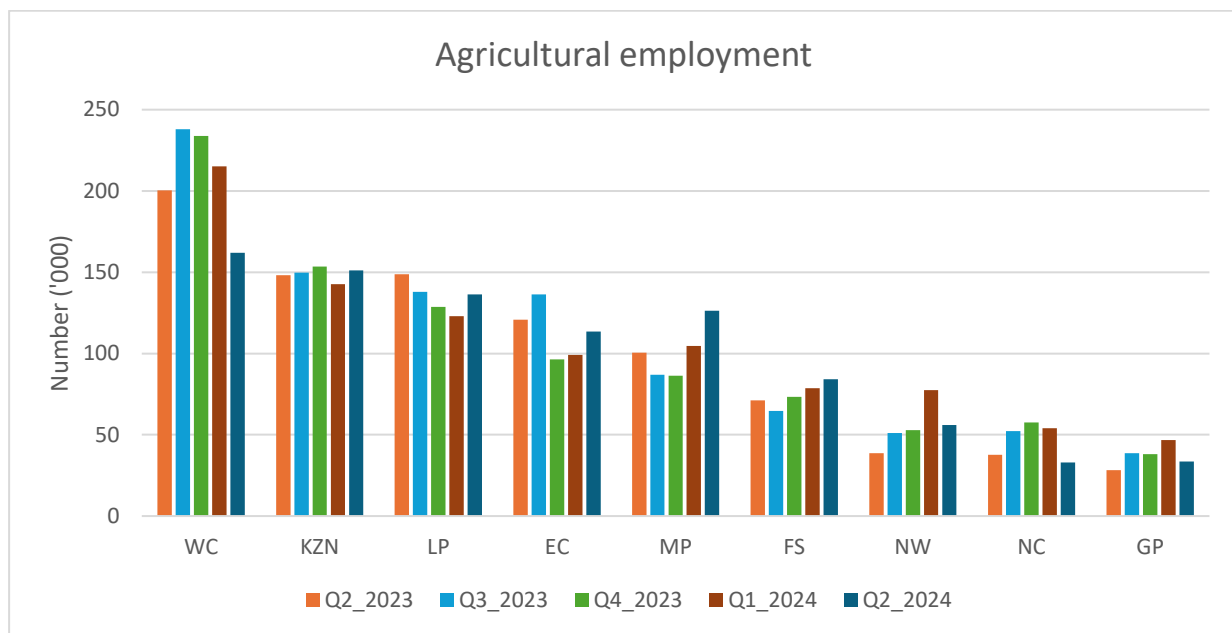


Figure 3.1: Agricultural employment trends per province Q2-2023- Q2_2025
Source: (Stats SA, 2025)

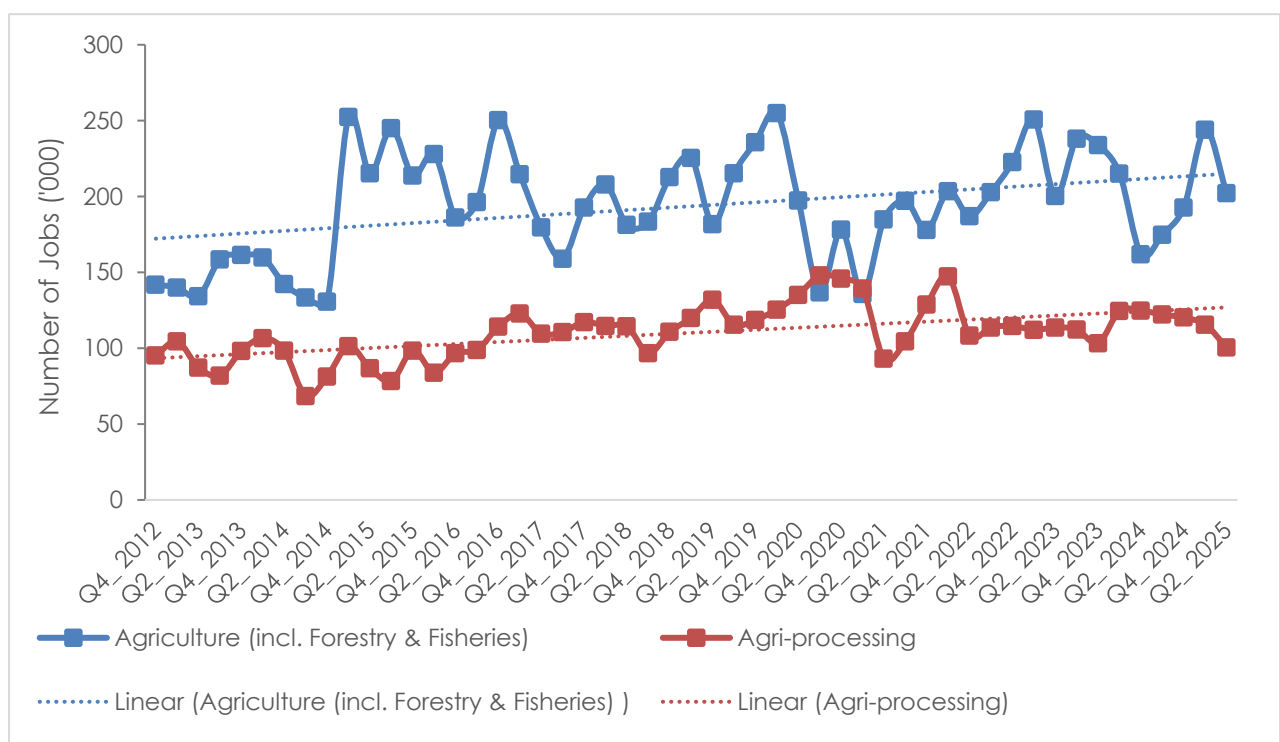


Figure 3.2: WC primary and agri-processing employment trends, Q4_2012 to Q2_2025
Source: (Stats SA, 2025)

Table 3.1 illustrates a disaggregation of the primary agriculture and agri-processing employment by agricultural industries in the Western Cape based on Statistics South Africa data (Stats SA, 2025a). It can be noted that a significant share of agricultural employment in the province is in the growing of crops at 81% (163 007), followed by farming of animals at 11% (22 125) and the remaining 8% (16 989) distributed in other primary agriculture sub-sectors. The agricultural sector

is important to the economy of the province and creates jobs in the rural areas, absorbing low, semi-skilled and skilled labour force.

Furthermore, a total of 100 484 additional jobs are in the agri-processing sector. It can be observed in the table that a significant share of jobs in agri-processing are in the manufacture of other food products 38% (38 030 jobs), followed by Production, processing and preservation of meat, fish, fruit, vegetables, oils and fats which account for 37% (36 755 jobs), manufacture of beverage 17% (16 930 jobs) and the remaining 8.7% in other related agri-processing sectors.

Table 3.1: WC jobs in Agric & Agri-processing industries in Q2, % of total & growth rates

Agriculture (incl. Forestry & Fisheries)	Number of Jobs (Q2_ 2025)	Relative % share (Q2_ 2025)	q/q % change (Q2_ 2025)	y/y % change (Q2_ 2025)
Growing of crops	163 007	81	-19	27
Farming of animals	22 125	11	-16	29
Growing of crops combined with farming of animals (mixed farming)	8 904	4.4	82	73
Agricultural and animal husbandry services, except veterinary activities	847	0,4	-	-
Game hunting, trapping and game propagation, including related services	970	0,5	-	17
Forestry and related services	1 185	0.6	-70	-67
Logging and related services	.	-	-	-
Ocean and coastal fishing	5 084	2.5	-11	136
Total for agriculture	202 120	100	-17	25
Agri processing	Apr-Jun 2025	Relative % share (Q2_ 2025)	q/q % change (Q2_ 2025)	y/y % change (Q2_ 2025)
Production, processing and preservation of meat, fish, fruit, vegetables, oils and fats	36 755	36.6	10	-25
Manufacture of dairy products	4 603	4,6	-15	-20
Manufacture of grain mill products, starches and starch products and prepared animal feeds	4 163	4.1	45	40
Manufacture of other food products	38 030	37.8	-22	-16
Manufacture of beverages	16 933	16,9	-24	-22
Total for agri-processing	100 484	100	13	19
Combined Agric + Agri-processing	302 604		-16	6

Source: Stats SA, 2025

4. Bibliography

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