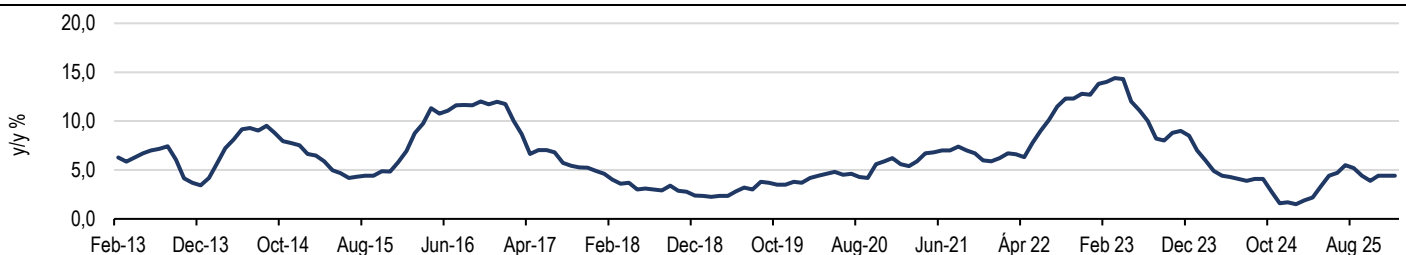


18 February 2026

SA consumer food price inflation stabilized at 4.4% in January 2026

- **South Africa's consumer food price inflation will likely moderate in 2026. Lower grain, fruit, and vegetable prices on the back of ample domestic and global supplies, and moderating vegetable oil prices, are among the factors that will underpin the softening of price inflation. Meat may also present minimal risks to inflation. We will likely see base effects on meat, along with continued cattle slaughter, though foot-and-mouth disease will also continue to help. Thus, the data released this morning by Statistics South Africa is likely on the upper side of where the food price inflation will be this year. The data show that consumer food price inflation at 4.4% in January 2026, unchanged from December 2025.**
- We saw easing in cereal product price inflation and in oils and fats. Milk, eggs and dairy products, fruit and nuts, as well as vegetables, were in deflation in January 2025. Meanwhile, meat, fish and seafood, sugar, confectionery and desserts nudged up.
- On cereal products price inflation, South Africa had an abundant harvest, with the 2024-25 summer grains and oilseed harvest estimated at 20.08 million tonnes (up 30% y/y). The new season also looks encouraging. We have been receiving favourable rainfall since the start of the season. The farmers have also planted quite a sizable area. For example, South Africa's 2025-26 preliminary area plantings for summer grains and oilseeds are 4.54 million hectares, up 2% from the previous season. In parts of Limpopo and Mpumalanga, we observed severe flooding over the past few weeks. But these came after the potato season had ended. Thus, there appears to be no notable vegetable damage.
- On meat, it is worth noting that the pace of cattle slaughter has declined somewhat, though not notably. In fact, for 2025, when foot-and-mouth disease began to intensify, cattle slaughter was down by roughly 5% from 2024. This is important context to keep in mind because it shows that meat supplies are not constrained. Another fact worth keeping in mind is that during foot-and-mouth disease outbreaks, the country is typically temporarily closed to some export markets, leading to increased domestic supplies.
- In essence, we expect South Africa's consumer food price inflation to slow in 2026. **South Africa's headline inflation was 3.5% in January 2026, from 3.6% in December 2025.**

Exhibit I: South Africa's consumer food inflation



Source: Stats SA and Agbiz Research