

## Power Down...Potatoes Up

*Here's why potato costs have risen...*



**13, October 2023, Pretoria, South Africa –** Noticed that you are spending a little more on potatoes than usual? Mzansi, we see you! We know that amidst the context of increasing food prices, which include items like carrots, butternut, and eggs, adding one of the country's beloved vegetables to that list has been challenging for the nation's spud lovers. As such, we are here to explain exactly what's happening.

Firstly, it's important to note that farmers have no control over pricing. Prices are determined by fresh produce markets, responding to market dynamics like supply and demand, and are influenced by seasonal variations, product availability and grading.

One of the primary factors contributing to the price increase is the significant impact of load shedding on the industry, which has hindered

farmers from maintaining consistent irrigation practices. Consequently, they've had to scale back their usual produce planting.

This challenge has been further exacerbated by escalating input costs (like fertiliser), linked to current geopolitical factors. Additionally, in the past year, other commodities have displayed higher profitability than potatoes, prompting many farmers to reduce their potato cultivation. Furthermore, specific regions have encountered reduced yields, compounding the overall issue.

But there is some good news! In the coming months, we're looking forward to a notable boost in production from the Limpopo Province. This optimistic outlook follows a less-than-ideal growing season in the region due to unusually cold weather during the previous harvest.

### **Potato Power?**

Ultimately, the potato is a staple food, a culinary delight, and a nutritional powerhouse that brings people together regardless of borders or backgrounds. One potato constitutes a meal and what most people don't know, is that if you were stranded on a desert island with nothing more than potatoes – you'd survive!

This is because potatoes are a year-round source of all the essential nutrients your body requires. They contain a significant amount of chromium, which plays a crucial role in regulating blood sugar levels. Potatoes offer more potassium than a medium-sized banana (180g with skin), and are also rich in vitamin C, vitamin B6, magnesium, folate, iron, fibre, and other essential nutrients. Ultimately, this versatile vegetable is a heart-healthy, gluten-free, low-sodium, and satisfying addition to your diet.

Going forward, as with all commodities, prices will, of course, fluctuate based on market conditions. However, South Africans can be assured that all sector players, including producers, are working closely together to address current and potential issues, ensuring that households across the country will have access to delicious, quality potatoes.

Even though potato prices are up, we know that South Africans will find it difficult to pass up a crispy slap chip, and who can watch rugby without potato crisps?

Hang in there, life is better with potatoes (we promise).

**Why not join the Potato Nation?** Step into a comprehensive hub dedicated to everything potato-related – offering recipe inspirations, healthy insights, nutritional facts, news and exciting potato-related giveaways.

To join us in celebrating the journey of South African potatoes, spanning from farm to table, visit: <https://potatonation.co.za/>

Want to know what potato prices and volumes are doing daily? Download the Potatoes SA App from Google Playstore!

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#### **About Potatoes SA**

Potatoes SA is the representative body of the South African potato industry, comprising potato producers, processors, marketers, and other role players. The organisation aims to promote a sustainable potato industry by addressing various industry challenges, providing support to producers, conducting research, and facilitating collaboration among industry stakeholders.

For more visit: <https://www.potatoes.co.za/>