



Media Release

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Attention: News Editors / Agricultural writers

THE EXTREME HOT WEATHER CONDITIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

The Agricultural Research Council (ARC) has taken note of the South African Weather Service's alert regarding the persistence of extreme weather conditions.

The forecast suggests a high likelihood of high temperatures across most parts of the country. The extremely hot weather conditions coincide with the summer and planting season in the agricultural sector.

Across most parts of the country, farmworkers spend most of their time working outdoors often undertaking strenuous work-related activities such as land preparations, planting and harvesting.

Recognising the vulnerability of farmworkers and other outdoor labourers to heat stress, the ARC advises workers and farming communities to adjust working hours to mitigate the impact. Livestock should also be a priority and should be supplied with increased water to keep them hydrated and kept in shaded areas.

"Farm workers play a very important role in the food security value chain, and it is important that we protect them as well. The heat stress can cause cardiovascular diseases and strokes. It is important to wear protective clothing and maintain hydration," said Dr Malherbe, Senior Researcher at the Agricultural Research Council's Natural Resources and Engineering (ARC-NRE).

The ARC has issued the following warning

The agricultural and farming community is urged to monitor weather conditions and plan activities accordingly. Recommendations include providing shade and sufficient water for animals while keeping activities to a minimum during the warmest parts of the day, and organising outdoor work to coincide with cooler periods, minimizing exposure to heat and exertion during hot conditions.

Ends

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About the Agricultural Research Council

The Agricultural Research Council is a premier science institution that conducts research with partners, develops human capital and fosters innovation in support of the agricultural sector. The ARC provides diagnostic, laboratory, analytical, agricultural engineering services, post-harvest technology development, agrochemical evaluation, consultation and advisory services, food processing technology services as well as various surveys and training interventions. For more information visit the ARC website at: www.arc.agric.za.