



28 March 2026

JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT

AgriSA and Agbiz call for urgent fuel price adjustment mechanism to stabilise rural supply

AgriSA and Agbiz, representing the full agricultural value chain in South Africa, today called on the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy to urgently consider a temporary adjustment to the current fuel pricing mechanism in response to emerging supply constraints in rural areas.

This follows the completion of a joint survey conducted on 24 and 27 March 2026 among farmers and fuel retailers servicing the agricultural sector. While public statements have indicated that national fuel supply remains stable, the survey results point to a more nuanced reality at farm level.

Across multiple regions, respondents reported constrained supply and increasing instances of rationing, with retailers limiting volumes due to uncertainty around replenishment. These constraints are beginning to affect normal farming and agribusiness operations at a critical time in the production cycle.

AgriSA and Agbiz emphasise that the current situation does not appear to be driven by a single identifiable factor, but rather by a combination of global oil market volatility, supply chain dynamics, and behavioural responses within the market. In such conditions, pricing signals play a critical role.

To stabilise the situation and reduce the risk of further disruption, AgriSA and Agbiz have proposed:

- An immediate, out-of-cycle fuel price adjustment to better reflect current market conditions
- The introduction of temporary more regular reviews, instead of the standard monthly adjustment, for the duration of the current energy price volatility.

“This is in line with what associations representing fuel retailers has also asked for. These measures are not intended to increase costs to the sector, but rather to ensure that pricing reflects underlying conditions more accurately, thereby reducing incentives for panic buying or supply withholding,” the organisations said.

Fuel represents a significant input cost in agriculture, typically accounting for between 12% and 18% of production costs. Any disruption in availability, particularly during peak planting, harvesting, or transport periods, poses a direct risk to food production, supply chains, and ultimately food security.

AgriSA and Agbiz reaffirm their support for a well-functioning and stable fuel supply system, and stress the importance of proactive, proportionate policy responses in times of volatility.

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