agriculture
Department:
Agriculture
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Agro-processing Annual Brief for 2025

Directorate: Agro-processing Support

Highlights of 2025

In 2025, the agro-processing sector's seasonally adjusted volume of production contracted further by 0,7%, similar to the previous year's contraction of 0,7%.

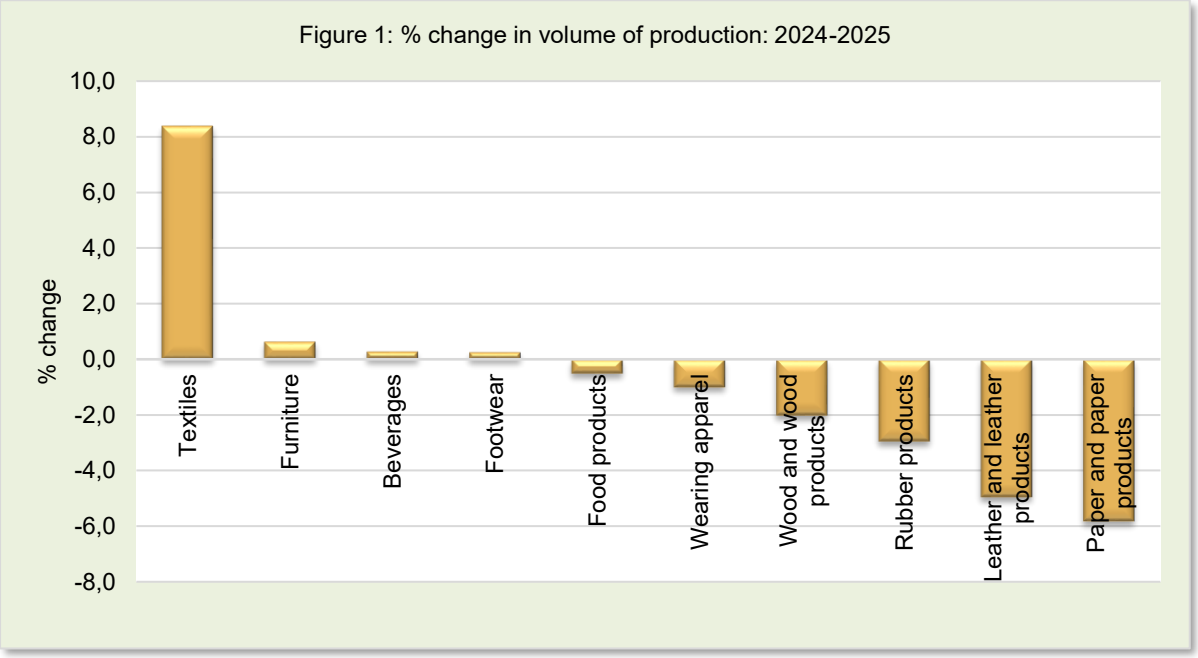
In 2025, the annual agro-processing sector's seasonally adjusted value of sales moderated by 2,6% from a 4,4% growth in 2024.

The agro-processing sector's trade deficit rebounded by 12,4% in 2024 from a 27,7% growth in 2023; this translates to a trade deficit of R53,18 billion in 2024 from a trade surplus of R47, 32 billion in 2025.

The annual employment in the agro-processing sector decelerated by 0,6% in 2025 following a 0,2% contraction recorded in 2024, which translates to 2 625 jobs created in 2025.

1. Volume of production

Figure 1: % change in volume of production: 2024-2025

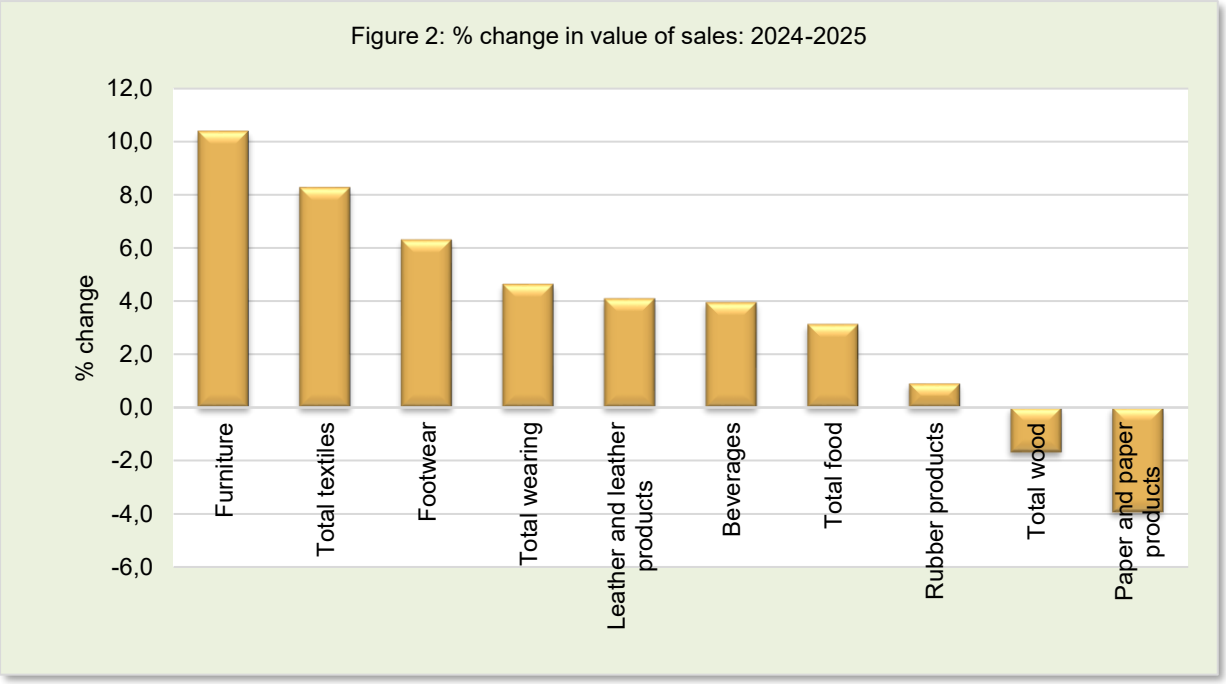


Source: Statistics SA, 2026

In 2025, the agro-processing sector's seasonally adjusted volume of production contracted further by 0,7%, similar to the previous year's contraction of 0,7%. The divisions that contracted in 2025 were: wood and wood products (2,0%) and paper and paper products (5,8%), however, textiles (8,4%) and footwear (0,3%) divisions rebounded; wearing apparel (1,0%) and rubber products (3,0%) divisions receded further; furniture (0,6%) division expanded; beverages (0,3%) division moderated and food products (0,5%) and leather and leather products (0,5%) divisions decelerated as presented in Figure 1.

2. Sales

Figure 2: % change in value of sales: 2024-2025

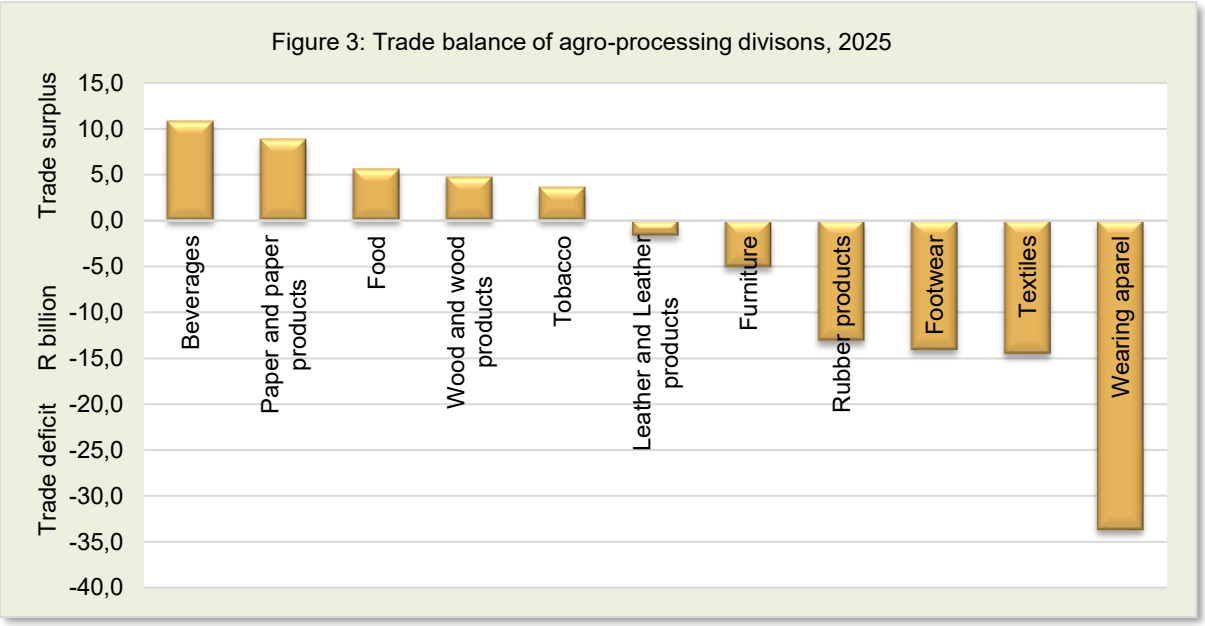


Source: Statistics SA, 2026

In 2025, the annual agro-processing sector's seasonally adjusted value of sales moderated by 2,6% from a 4,4% growth in 2024. Therefore, sales increased from R1 155 358,4 million in 2024 to about R1 185 491,0 million in 2025. Most of the seasonally adjusted value of sales divisions moderated during the period, and those divisions were: wearing apparel (4,6%), leather and leather products (4,1%) and beverages (4,0%), however, furniture (10,4%), textiles (8,3%) and food products (3,1%) divisions rose and wood and wood products (1,7%) and paper and paper products (3,9%) divisions contracted, while footwear (6,3%) and rubber products (0,9%) divisions rebounded as depicted in Figure 2.

3. Trade

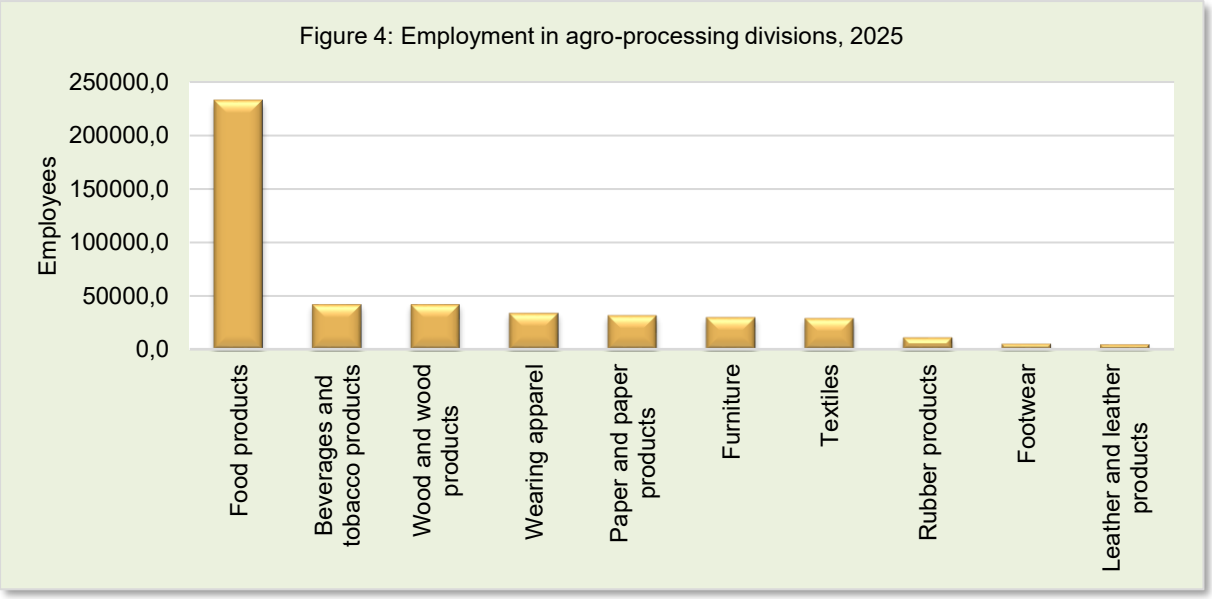
Figure 3: Trade balance of agro-processing divisons, 2025



Source: Quantec, 2026

The agro-processing sector's trade deficit contracted by 8,8% in 2025 from a 12,7% growth in 2024. Therefore, the trade deficit narrowed from R53,3 billion in 2024 to R48,7 billion in 2025. The following divisions registered a trade surplus during the period: beverages (R10,8 billion), paper and paper products (R8,9 billion), food products (R5,8 billion), wood and wood products (R4,8 billion) and tobacco (R3,7 billion). However, wearing apparel (R33, 8 billion), textiles (R14 6 billion), footwear (R14,1 billion), rubber products (R13,1 billion), furniture (R5,1 billion) and leather and leather products (R1,7 billion) divisions registered a trade deficit in 2025 as shown in Figure 3.

4. Employment



Source: Statistics SA 2026

Figure 4 above shows the employment in the agro-processing divisions in 2025. The employment in the agro-processing sector decelerated by 0,6% in 2025 following a 0,2% contraction recorded in 2024, which represents 2 564 jobs shed in 2025. In 2025, the following divisions in the agro-processing divisions shed jobs: beverages and tobacco (2 416), wearing apparel (2 140), paper and paper products (1 237), rubber products (1 169), furniture (811) wood and wood products (541), leather and leather products (227), textiles (176) and footwear (104). Conversely, food products division created 6 265 jobs in 2025.

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