

AFRIFORUM
2015 FARM ATTACK REPORT
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2015: Most farm attacks in 15 years

In 2015, South African farmers and farm workers experienced the most brutal year yet with the most recorded farm attacks since the recording of farm attacks started in 1990. AfriForum and the Transvaal Agricultural Union (TAU SA) have kept record of farm attacks and farm murders over the past two years. This agricultural union is the only credible source for statistics since 1990.

Definition of a farm attack

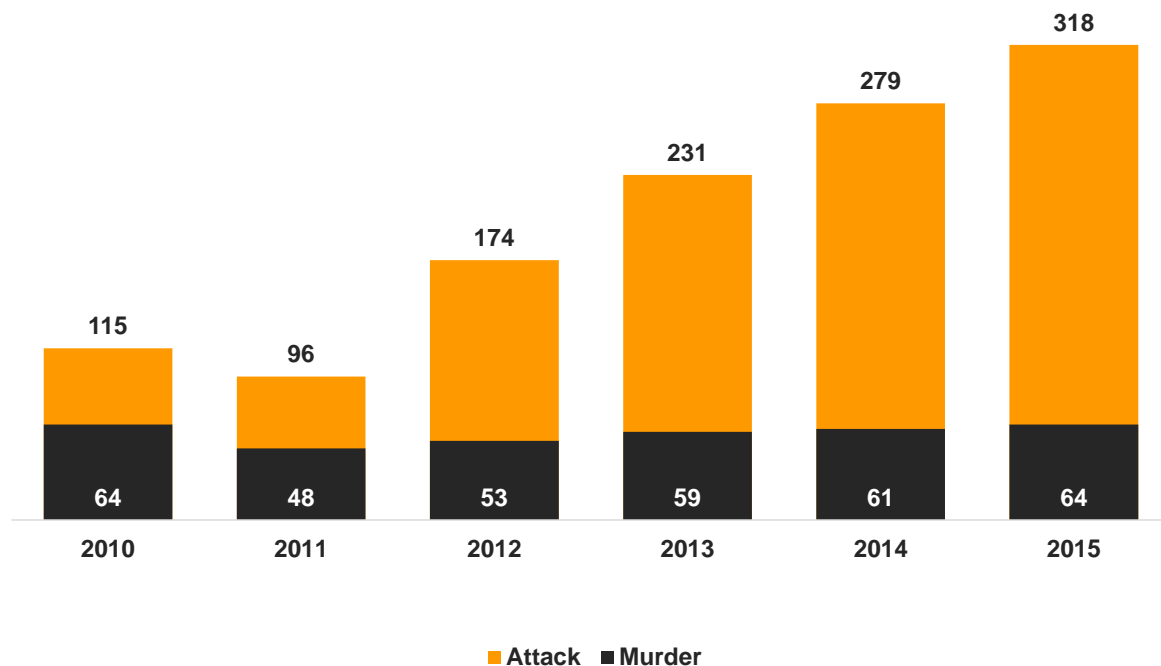
The National Rural Safety Priority Committee defines a farm attack as follows:

Acts of violence against farms and smallholdings are those acts aimed at any person or persons living on, working at or visiting farms or smallholdings with the intent to either murder, rape, rob or otherwise inflict bodily harm or to intimidate.

Processing of data

The past year's figures were processed and verified to provide the most accurate reflection of the nature and extent of farm attacks in South Africa. A total of 318 farm attacks occurred in 2015, in which 94 farmers and workers lost their lives. Although 64 murders were also committed in 2010, there has been a gradual increase in farm murders since 2011, in which 48 murders were committed.

2010-2015: Attacks and murders

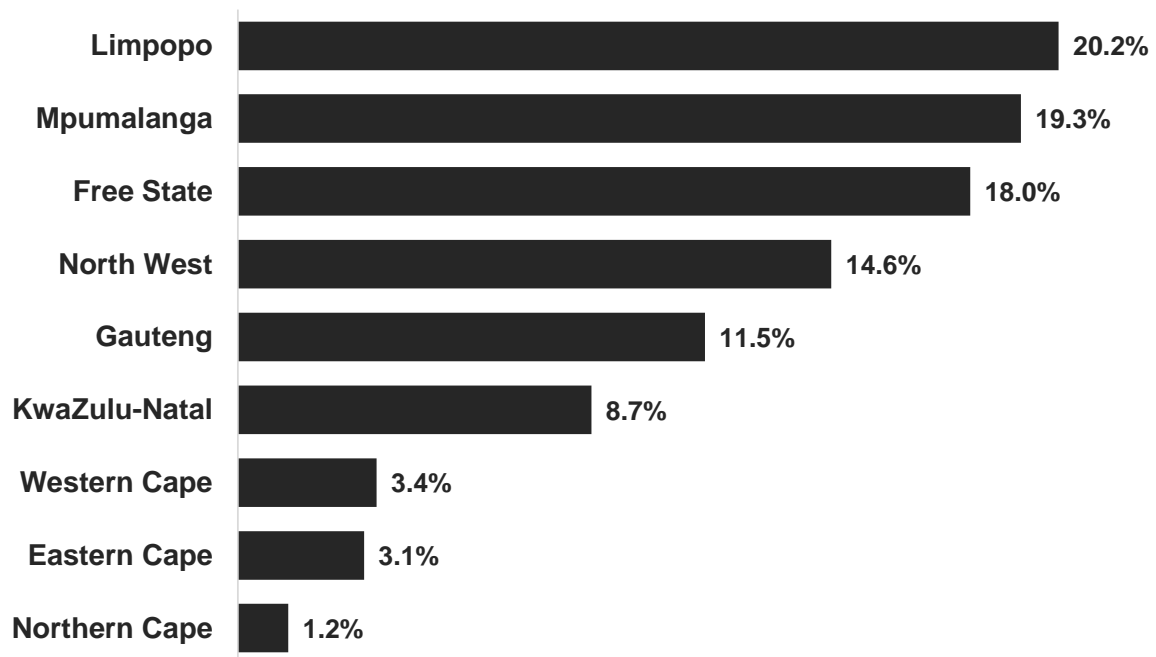


In the 318 farm attacks in 2015, 570 farmers, their families, workers and guests fell victim. In 40 cases 65 farm workers were direct victims. Although various families with small children and babies were attacked, it seems that older people are targeted more often. The oldest victim is Mrs Maggs Visser, who were attacked together with her housekeeper and security guard on her farm in the Tongaat area in KwaZulu-Natal. The two attackers got access to the house when the housekeeper and the security arrived. Mrs Visser was hit with a revolver and the attackers demanded money and jewellery. After looting the house, the attackers escaped on foot with a bag and keys.

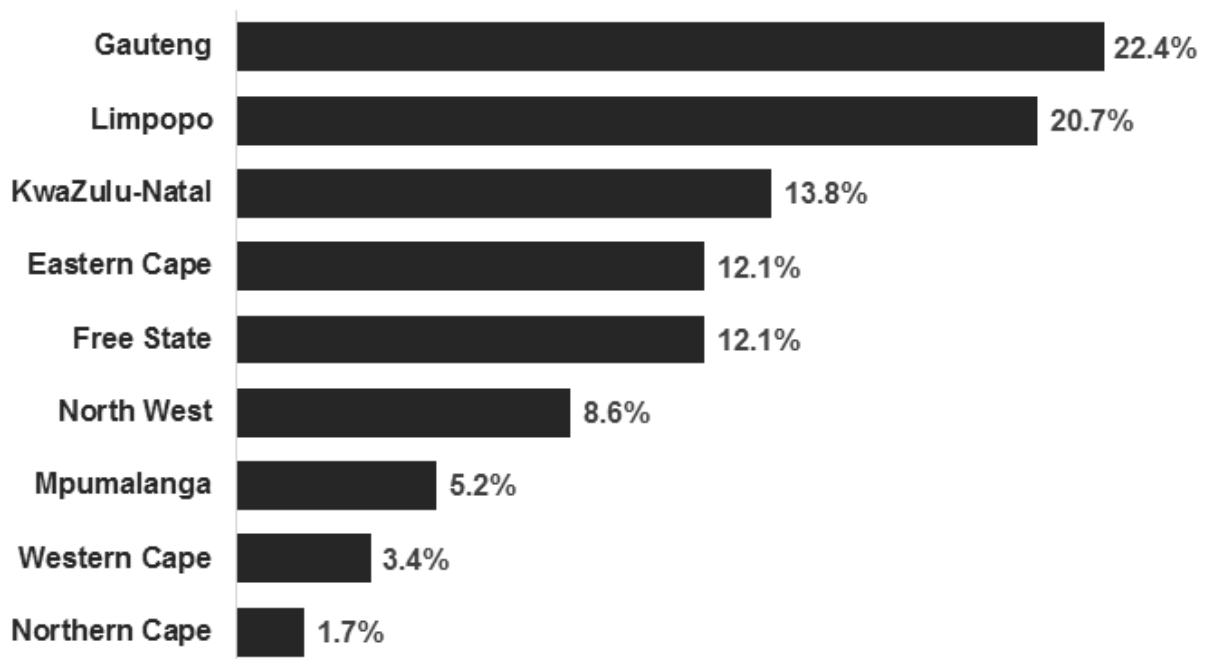
81% of these attacks occurred on farms, and only 19% on small-holdings and plots. The higher percentage of farm attacks can be ascribed to the remote geographic nature of farms, as it takes longer for help to arrive, compared to urban areas. It can also be ascribed to the fact that it is very easy to hide unnoticed and study the comings and goings of farmers and workers. This allows the attackers to benefit from the fact that they can flee in any direction to hamper pursuit. Farmlands, wooded areas and tall grass offer excellent cover and make it easy for attackers to escape. In many cases, vehicles are also stolen not only to transport stolen goods, but also to flee the scene as quickly as possible to a vehicle close by to transfer the goods to. The vehicle is then left unattended at the side of the road.

The provinces with the highest incidence of farm attacks in 2015 include Limpopo at 20,2%, Mpumalanga at 19,3% and the Free State at 18%. Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal had fewer attacks compared to previous years. The most murders committed during farm attacks took place in Gauteng, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal provinces.

Attacks per province

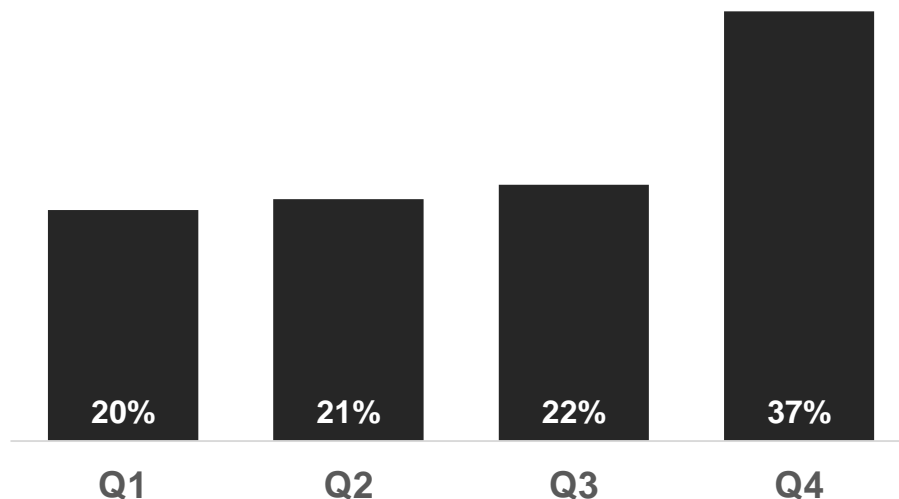


Murders per province



The months in which the most attacks occurred include December, November and October. There is a general increase closer to the festive season, also prevalent in previous years.

Attacks per quarter



There are on average four attackers per attack. In cases where the victim is raped, a single attacker is involved. There was a case in 2015 in Evander, Mpumalanga where 20 attackers attacked one victim.

There was also an unusual case where twelve heavily-armed attackers in a minibus and car arrived at the farm of Japie Du Toit (61) and Hans-Jurgens Du Toit (28) in Stofberg, Limpopo. After the shoot-out, the attackers fled in their vehicles, after which the farmers of the area in cooperation with the SAPS succeeded in ambushing the minibus, where after the attackers fled on foot.

Crimes committed during farm attacks may include the following: murder, attempted murder, rape, assault with the intent of grievous harm, armed robbery, vehicle theft and robbery. Intentional damage to property, arson and intimidations also occur.

AfriForum will continue in 2016 with its campaign against farm attacks. We encourage the public to report all attacks to AfriForum or TAU SA by sending an email to stopdiemoorde@afriforum.co.za. The increase in attacks and murder is unacceptable, and we work on various terrains towards promote rural safety, as well as to put pressure on the South African Government to ensure an actual decrease in attacks.