



## Russia-Ukraine War Threatens Tobacco Production In Zimbabwe

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The rising cost of fuel and fertiliser could negatively impact tobacco production next season which may result in reduced yields.

Supply chain disruptions caused by the Russia-Ukraine war are expected to push up the cost of tobacco production as the prices of inputs soar, farmers have warned.

Speaking in an interview with Business Times, the Zimbabwe Tobacco Association (ZTA) CEO Rodney Ambrose said:

*With the Russia – Ukraine war, costs are estimated to increase even further and prices paid for tobacco this season has to also take this into account.*

Ambrose noted that the recent increase in the price of fuel has resulted in the local cost of flue-cured tobacco production rising by 8.3%.

He warned that the increase in tobacco production costs may see growers turning to food and export crops.

Tobacco is Zimbabwe's fourth-largest foreign currency earner.

The war in Eastern Europe may also result in countries dependent on food crops imports, offering higher incentives and prices on food crops. Said, Ambrose:

*This may see a further drop in flue-cured production in 2023 as ably resourced growers consider reducing their tobacco hectareage in favour of the attractive food crops.*

This could be an option for growers in Zimbabwe, Brazil, USA and Zambia.

Tobacco Industry and Marketing Board (TIMB) CEO Meanwell Gudu concurred that the Russia-Ukraine conflict will adversely affect tobacco production. He said:

Prices for inputs have definitely increased and this is affecting the viability of tobacco production.

The two warring countries are traditionally big suppliers of raw materials for fertilisers.

Ambrose forecasted the average prices to be closer to US\$3/kg up from US\$2.70/kg in 2021.

The 2022 tobacco marketing season starts on 30 March.

Source: <https://zero.pindula.co.zw/russia-ukraine-war-threatens-tobacco-production-in-zimbabwe/>