BOTSWANA
EXAMINATIONS
COUNCIL

PSLE

PRINCIPAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

AGRICULTURE

2025

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents an analytic overview on how 2025 Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) candidates performed in Agriculture. It generally depicts overall performance of candidates in each item and highlight areas that require improvement.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The outcome shows a similar if not equivalent performance as compared to the previous year. ALL candidates who sat for 2025 PSLE Agriculture attempted all items in the question paper. The paper appeared friendly hence easily accessed by most of the candidates. Centre are advised to emphasise the use of appropriate SI units for parameters. Some candidates still write their responses in Setswana, for example, in Section B question 11 (a) examples of indigenous fruits. Candidates must be familiarised English names and encouraged to use them when answering questions.

Section A was more of knowledge items which test recalling of facts. Most candidates performed well in these questions save for question 6 and 8(b). Section B comprised more of comprehension questions that needed long responses in some instances, and were stimulus or scenario based. These questions were poorly done by most candidates. Generally, there is positive development in Agriculture with reference to candidates' overall performance. However, Centres are advised to familiarise themselves with the rational, general objectives, specific objectives as well as unpacking the scope of the syllabus. This will facilitate effective coverage of the syllabus.

COMMENTS ON INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

SECTION A

QUESTION 1.

This item required candidates to give two types of fertilisers. The item was well answered by most candidates giving the two types of fertilisers as organic fertilisers and inorganic fertilisers.

QUESTION 2

The question presented candidates with a stimulus material in form of a diagram showing a garden tool.

(a) In this item candidates were required to name the tool. The item was well done as majority of the candidates managed to state the name of the tool as either trowel or hand trowel.

(b) This item required the candidates to state the use of the garden tool shown in the diagram. Most candidates did well on this question, stating the use of the tool as for transplanting seedlings. This demonstrates a solid understanding of the use of the tool in crop production.

QUESTION 3

This item required candidates to name two feeds that can be given to animals a was well answered by majority of the candidates. Most candidates were able give the expected responses by naming grass, silage, hay, bran, dicalcium phosphate, lucerne, and lablab as the feeds that can be given to animals.

QUESTION 4

(a) The item required candidates to give one example of a domesticated animal in Botswana. The item was well answered as most candidates were able to give a variety of examples of domesticated animals such as cattle, goats, sheep, pig, chickens, and many others.

(b) This item required candidates to name one common disease of livestock caused by a virus. The item was well done by most of the candidates giving the expected responses such as Newcastle disease, rabies or foot and mouth disease.

QUESTION 5

This item required candidates to state two requirements for seed germination. The item was well answered with most of the candidates managing to state correct responses like water/moisture, air/oxygen, suitable temperature, or viable seed.

QUESTION 6

Item 6 presented a scenario whereby a student profiled a soil sample for identification purpose, as having a fine texture and being sticky to touch when mixed with water.

(a) Item 6(a) required candidates to name the type of soil being identified by the student. This item was well answered with most of the candidates stating the correct response as clay.

(b) Part of the scenario presented as stimulus material in item 6 cued candidates to the feel method of soil texture determination. In item 6(b) the candidates were required to name one other method that can be used to test for soil texture. This item was poorly attempted with most of the candidates giving alternative wording for the feel method. The expected response was either the sieve method or the sedimentation method.

QUESTION 7

The item required candidates to state two reasons for giving animals water. The item was well performed with most of the candidates stating the expected responses such as for transportation of food, regulation of body temperature, formation of cells, chemical reactions, or excretion.

QUESTION 8

Item 8 presented candidates with a scenario whereby some signs of ill health were observed in a farmer's animals.

(a) In item 8(a) the candidates were required to list any sign of ill-health on animals that the farmer may observe. This item was well answered by most of the candidates, listing the expected responses such as loss of appetite, restlessness, loss of weight, dullness, restlessness, rough skin, hard/watery faeces, decoloured urine, or abnormal posture.

(b) This item required the candidates to suggest a general method that can be used to prevent the spread of diseases in animals. The item was poorly done by most of the candidates. The expected responses included quarantine, movement restriction, perimeter fencing and isolation.

QUESTION 9

Question 9 presented candidates with a stimulus material of a diagram showing a farmer carrying out an activity when processing a product of a field crop.

(a) Item 9(a) required the candidates to name the activity carried out by the farmer. This item was well answered with most of the candidates writing the expected response which is winnowing.

(b) This item required candidates to state the weather condition necessary for the activity shown in the diagram to be successful. The item was well-done item by most of the candidates managing to state the expected response which is windy.

QUESTION 10

This item required candidates to give two reasons for housing farm animals. The item was well answered by most of the candidates as to give the correct reasons for hosing farm animals as protection from predators, protection from thieves or harsh weather conditions or preventing them from going astray.

SECTION B

QUESTION 11

(a) This item presented candidates with an incomplete chart on types of fruits. The candidates were required to complete the chart by filling in the missing type and examples of fruits. The item was well answered by most of the candidates filling the correct type of fruits as exotic, the examples of indigenous fruits as snout apple, wild medal, monkey orange, wild melon, brandy brush, red milkwood, wild cucumber, sour plum, wild berry, or wild gooseberry and the exotic fruits as peach, apple, orange, pineapple, grape, or guava. However, it is worrying that some candidates still write Setswana names for indigenous fruits despite the annual caution.

(b) This item required candidates to explain the importance of fruits to human health. Most of the candidates accessed two marks for this item as they were able to state the correct nutritional value of fruits to humans like providing the body with minerals to improve immune system.

QUESTION 12

(a) This item presented candidates with an incomplete financial record for a layer enterprise. The candidates were required to complete the record by calculating the values of expenses and revenue entries, and the total expenditure. The item was poorly performed. Most of the candidates presented figures without monetary units. They have to know the importance of using units in some instances for demonstration of understating and clarity.

(b) This was a build-up item requiring candidates to determine whether the layer enterprise made a profit or a loss. The item was poorly answered with most candidates presenting incorrect formulae for calculating profit or loss. However, most of the candidates managed to interpret the financial record correctly by indicating that the layer enterprise made a loss.

QUESTION 13

Question 13 presented candidates with a stimulus of a scenario whereby a farmer's vegetable crops wilt at 12 noon but appear healthy and fresh in the mornings and evenings.

(a) In this item the candidates were required to name a management practice that can reduce wilting of vegetables. This item was well answered by most of candidates giving the correct management practice as shading.

(b) This item required the candidates to state two benefits of shading as cued by the stimulus material. The item was well answered with most of the candidates providing the expected responses such as reducing the sun's heat reaching the crops and reducing water loss in the soil /vegetable crops.

(c) This item required candidates to state two methods of preserving vegetables. The item was well answered by most of the candidate as they were able to state the expected responses such as freezing, refrigeration, drying/dehydration, canning and pickling.

QUESTION 14

This item used a picture of a goat as a stimulus material.

(a) This item required the candidates to name any breed of the animal shown in the picture. Most of the candidates answered this question exceptionally well as they were able to use the stimulus provided and gave the correct responses like Boer goat, Tswana goat, Kalahari red, Saanen goat, British Alpine, or Angora.

(b) The item required the candidates to state one use of a named goat breed. The item was well answered with most candidate able to state use of any breed mentioned under 14(a) which included meat from Boer goat/Kalahari red / British Alpine, milk from Saanen, or mohair from Angora goat.

(c) This item required the candidates to state three advantages of keeping the farm animal shown in the picture. Most of the candidates accessed maximum marks for this item as they managed to give three advantages of keeping goats as source of food/meat/milk, manure, income and by products.

QUESTION 15

The item used information consisting of randomised steps followed when preparing a plot for growing crops.

(a) This part of the question required candidates to arrange the steps in correct order. The item was well answered by most candidates as they were able to arrange the steps as follows: - dig the soil, level the soil, make ridges.

(b) The question required candidates to calculate the depth of planting a seed which has a diameter of 3mm. The item was poorly answered by most of the candidates. Most of the candidates gave simplistic or irrelevant responses indicating that they were clueless about the concept. It must be noted that calculation of the depth of planting is grounded on the rule of thumb that planting depth should be 2 - 3 times the seed diameter. Hence the expected response was:

2 (diameter)– 3(diameter)

= (2 x3mm) - 3 x 3mm)

= 6mm – 9mm

QUESTION 16

Question 16 used a stimulus material of a scenario whereby a student and placed a layer of organic material on top of the plot immediately after planting vegetable seeds.

(a) In 16 (a) the candidates were required to name the management practice carried out by the student. The item was well answered by most candidates as they managed to name the correct management practice as mulching.

(b) This part question required the candidates to state three reasons for carrying out the management practice cued by the stimulus material. Most candidates answered this item correctly by stating the correct reasons for carrying mulching, that included suppressing weeds, reducing evaporation, regulating soil temperature, reducing soil erosion, improving soil fertility upon decay, and preventing soil capping.

(c) This item required candidates to state one reason for removing the organic material soon after seedling emergence. The item was well performed with most of the candidates able to state the expected reasons such as to enable seedlings receive sunlight, prevent poor growth or prevent termite attack.

QUESTION 17

The question presented a picture showing a management practice carried out in animal production as a stimulus material.

(a) Item 17 (a) required candidates to name two other management activities carried on animals. This item was well attempted with most o the candidates able to state the expected responses such as Dehorning, Feeding, Castration, any named pest or parasite control measure, branding and others.

(b) Most candidates answered the question correctly as they were able to state three reasons for carrying any management activity named under 17a. But rather Candidates had a challenge in following the instruction imbedded in the question by failing to single out the management activity for the reasons given.

QUESTION 18

This item presented candidates with a stimulus material consisting of three tools labelled R, S and T.

(a) The candidates were required to identify a tool used to create a fine tilth in the plot. The item was poorly answered by most candidates as they failed to identify the correct tool used for creating fine tilth on a plot as Tool S, but rather gave the name of the tool rake. This implies that the examiner would have to determine for the candidate which among the three tools R, S or T is the rake.

(b) A well performed item by most candidates. They were able to state one use of the Tool T/Watering can as for supply of water or watering plants.

(c) A poorly done question by most of the candidates. They confused proper ways of storing tools R and S with caring of tools. They failed to state the correct ways of storing such tools as, hanging them on tool rack, hanging on hooks, storing in a tool shed, use of storage benches and tool pegboard.