

South African citrus exports to India rise nearly 85% in 2025

South African citrus exports to India increased by nearly 85% in 2025 as the industry continues to expand its presence in the market.

Southern African Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) chief executive Boitshoko Ntshabele said a business delegation visited New Delhi as part of FruitSA's annual market access mission.

"The delegation held constructive discussions with representatives from India's Ministries of Agriculture and Commerce. Discussions were encouraging and focused on making progress and finding opportunities to work on matters of joint interest for South Africa and India."

India's BRICS chairmanship and the upcoming Africa-India Forum Summit are expected to support trade flows. India remains one of the Asian markets showing growth in South African citrus export volumes, supported by market development activities.

Ntshabele said India's population of more than 1.47 billion and a growing middle class aligned with the industry's campaign: "Beautiful Country, Beautiful Fruit, Exceptional Taste."

He also noted that Sweet C received Fresh Produce India's market campaign award for mandarins.

"Brand-specific initiatives like this play an important role in building awareness of South African citrus and expanding consumer appetite across the category."

Importers in India remain focused on mandarins, with oranges also showing steady growth. This comes as conflict in the Middle East, which typically accounts for around 19 per cent of South Africa's citrus exports, continues to affect trade flows.

The South African citrus industry is projecting exports of up to 215 million cartons this season, compared with 203.9 million cartons last year, supported by growing conditions and new orchards entering production.

Ntshabele said fruit quality remained stable despite harvest delays linked to intermittent rainfall in some northern regions.

By the end of week 16, packed volumes reached 14.8 million 15kg cartons for the 2026 season, compared with 12 million cartons in 2025.

Source: Freight News (<https://www.freightnews.co.za/article/citrus-exports-to-india-surge>)

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Publication date: Wed 29 Apr 2026

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