

AGOA extension welcomed but tariffs remain on South African fruit

By [Fred Meintjes](#) | 5 February 2026

President Trump extends AGOA for one year, but South Africans say it will not change trade options for the country's fruit

While South African fruit sources have welcomed the extension of the American Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) for another year, they do not expect that it will change the present situation much after the imposition of 30 per cent tariffs last year.



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US President Donald Trump signed into law a one-year extension of AGOA, temporarily restoring preferential access for eligible African exports to the American market and averting what many

governments feared would become a prolonged disruption to trade flows and jobs across the continent.

South African table grape body Sati reacted by saying the latest developments are good news and a step in the right direction.

“However, the 30 per cent tariff as announcement by President Trump in 2025 remains in place and AGOA won’t overrule this,” Sati explained.

“South African grapes exported to the USA will now be subject to 30 per cent tariff plus 0 per cent duty fee, thereby paying a total of 30 per cent, as opposed to 30 per cent plus MFN rate which would apply in the absence of an AGOA agreement.”

Sati said that for now, its plan for the North American campaign remains in place and will include in-store promos in the US and Canada.

“We still view the USA as a strategically important market and remain committed as a counter-seasonal supplier to North America,” it noted.

The South African fresh produce industry has been one of the main beneficiaries of AGOA in the past.

The Act was first legislated in 2000 and over the past 26 years the citrus industry in South Africa’s Western and Northern Cape provinces has built a lucrative export business in the US.

In recent times, grape and stonefruit growers have also increasingly entered the market under AGOA trade conditions.

Last year the US introduced 30 per cent trade tariffs on South African products, including fresh produce exports.

This was later changed to alter tariffs on some South African citrus, mainly oranges, but excluding Mandarins and other citrus varieties.

Despite the tariffs, the country’s grape and stonefruit exporters have been working with their US receivers to try and keep trade going.

Sources have said that the recent announcement will allow more lobbying opportunities to argue for long-term inclusion of South African fresh fruit in the new AGOA, which is expected to be implemented in future.

The US announcement is designed to offer a temporary solution and avoid trade disruptions between the US and Africa.

It will allow US trade representatives time to align AGOA with the 'America First' policy, which indicates future adjustments.

Reports from Washington suggested that, since the initial legislation in 2000, AGOA has supported various African industries, yet its future renewals now face strict US political scrutiny.

