

South Africa's Valencia citrus industry quashes oversupply fears with PP-grade fruit and juice sales

By Eileen Rodriguez

South Africa's initial citrus projection was short by nearly 10 million cartons of Valencia oranges, yet the industry **turned the tide on oversupply pressure** by ramping up exports of PP-grade fruit and juice.



In his latest update, [Citrus Growers Association](#) CEO Boitshoko Ntshabele noted that as the season progressed, the original estimate of 52 million cartons for 2025 became increasingly inaccurate.

Stakeholders in regions such as the Limpopo River and Letsitele reported larger fruit, better color, higher yields, and fruit maturing earlier than anticipated.

Valencia oranges ripened ahead of schedule, and trees delivered a higher-than-expected bounty, pushing the 2025 total to nearly 62 million cartons.

In response, growers and packers in Letsitele, the country's citrus powerhouse, began **preparing the fruit for export ahead of schedule**.

Valencia fruit and juice PP-grade exports fuel export growth

To address the hurdle, growers and packers redirected a large portion of Valencias to PP-grade fruit and juice for export. The strategy shift proved successful, with **a significant volume of Class 2 and PP-grade fruit and juice** exported across all Valencia-producing areas.



Industrial PP-grade level orange juice, Ntshabele added, **ultimately accounted for 12 percent of all Valencia orange volumes**, and exports of the category did better than local juice throughout the season.

Europe remained the leading destination for the variety, with exports totalling 20 million cartons.

Exports to the country's **other major Valencia import markets also increased**.

Industrywide, shipments to the Middle East rose from 6.9 million last season to 10.4 million cartons, while shipments to Russia increased to 5.7 million cartons. Exports to Asia also grew year over year, reaching 6.1 million cartons, up from 3.8 million.

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