

# SA tops Spain in 2025 citrus exports

South Africa was the world's largest citrus exporter by volume in 2025, exporting 2. million tonnes and narrowly exceeding Spain during the past season.



Source: ©joseh51 via [123RF](#)

Recently finalised 2025 export statistics reflect continued growth in South Africa's citrus export sector.

## Exports shaped by seasonal supply cycles

The figures relate specifically to exports and not overall citrus production.

Countries including China, Brazil and Spain remain among the world's largest citrus producers with significant volumes supplying domestic markets.

Spain's recent export volumes have also been affected by climatic and production conditions, global citrus supply continues to shift between Northern and Southern Hemisphere production cycles.

South Africa and Spain supply citrus during different seasonal windows, supporting year-round availability in international markets.

## Growers continue to face pressure

South Africa's citrus export position is linked to its export-focused production model and compliance with international plant health and sustainability standards.

The Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) said export volumes alone do not reflect current operating conditions facing growers.

"Volume is just one single measure with which to assess an industry. South African growers continue to face challenges. Currently, the impact of the situation in the Middle East on fuel costs and shipping routes is a concern, which is placing significant pressure on grower margins.

"Growers also face unpredictable prices and market dynamics, rising input costs, as well as market access issues such as high tariffs and unscientific plant health measures," explained Dr Boitsho Ntshabele, CEO of the CGA.

## Focus remains on market access

The industry says continued export growth increases the need for improved access to markets including the European Union, the United States, India and China.

The CGA's Vision 260 strategy targets exports of 260 million cartons by 2032.

According to the CGA, the citrus industry supports at least 140,000 jobs at the farm and packhouse level across regions, including Limpopo, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape.

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