

South Africa: Citrus also suffering from heatwave

The Northern growing regions of South Africa were hit by hail at the end of last year. According to Hannes Helberg from Impala Citrus, "The hail storms were localised to certain production areas, with the Hoedspruit area being hit hardest. This will have a definite impact on citrus volumes from the area."

"Weather conditions have been challenging throughout the growing season to date, with below average rainfall accompanied by above average temperatures," explains Helberg. "The high temperatures had a definite effect on fruit set of certain varieties, with the impact on volume still to be determined. Early indications however are that citrus volumes from the North could be less than in 2015."

"Thankfully some much needed rains were welcomed in January over most parts of the Northern Region resulting in more moderate temperatures and better growing conditions. Hopefully rainfall will be more normal in the latter part of the season stabilizing water levels in the region," said Hannes.

The harvest of lemons already started in the northern border areas of the region. The export market for lemons looks promising due to expected lower production in Northern Hemisphere. South African lemon production is expected to increase in coming seasons.

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