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R1 billion a year to control citrus black-spot disease

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Citrus black-spot disease

The South African citrus industry is spending R1 billion a year to keep citrus black spot (CBS) disease under control, Bloomberg reports.

“Farmers have spent that amount each year over the past three years to pay for additional spraying, inspections, sanitation, sampling and testing,” said Deon Joubert, the South African Citrus Growers’ Association (CGA) European Union envoy, during an interview with the global financial news provider.

South Africa is trying to get black-spot disease under control in order to comply with European food safety standards. The European Food Safety Authority has said the disease, which is caused by a fungus, can survive transport and storage and that there is a threat of it establishing itself in the EU citrus fruit production areas. Europe purchases roughly 43% of South Africa’s citrus exports but in 2014 entry was refused to some produce due to 28 interceptions of the disease.

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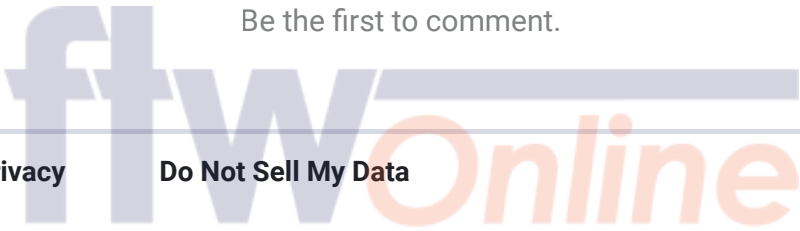
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