

South Africa optimistic for post-Brexit trade

Some EU import tariffs likely to have been influenced by European production, says South African trade body as it eyes Brexit opportunities

South Africa's fruit industry is hopeful of better trading terms with the UK post-Brexit on products that are not produced by Britain.

Speaking at Asia Fruit Logistica last week, CEO of Fruit South Africa, Konanani Liphadzi, said the country's trading minister had been assured by Britain that trading standards will continue as before, once the UK leaves the EU, but that the South African exporters are hopeful of better tariff rates on some products.

"Some of the existing terms came more from the Europe side where they were producing the same products," she said. "Post 2019 maybe we could see better tariffs."

Liphadzi was speaking at last week's trade fair in Hong Kong, where Fruit South Africa was part of a joint national pavilion, along with other trade bodies and export companies. Her views echo those of Justin Chadwick, CEO of South Africa Citrus Growers Association, who recently assessed the new potential for citrus imports into the UK after Brexit in a **column for FPJ**.

The UK remains a priority market for South African exporters, Liphadzi continued, although the country remains committed to its strategy of diversification in its global markets.

"Our biggest challenge is competition in terms of tariffs. Lots of our competitors have low tariffs or FTAs in place so we can't compete as effectively.

"In terms of volume, South Africa is number three in exports to Asia, but in value terms we are number six. If we could get a FTA that would really help."

