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SA could soon regain citrus export access to Vietnam

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Vietnam is an attractive market for counter-seasonal fruit. Source: Flickr

The Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) is hopeful that South Africa will regain citrus export access to Vietnam before the 2018 season.

All that is required for this to happen is the finalisation of protocol and a site visit as a Fruit South Africa delegation has already visited Vietnam to meet with importers, the Vietnamese Plant Protection Department as well as the South African Embassy in the country, according to CGA CEO Justin Chadwick.

“At the moment there is a limited choice in terms of citrus supplying countries from the southern hemisphere and [Vietnamese] importers complain of high prices and fruit of the wrong specifications,” he said.

South Africa lost export access to the country due to an administrative problem. Chadwick pointed out that in an application for continued access during Vietnam's revision of plant health regulations, SA had stipulated “citrus” instead of specifying citrus types – such as oranges, grapefruit and lemons – resulting in these products not being included in the approved permit list.

Chadwick also noted that following this, the delays in gaining access had been extremely frustrating to SA exporters and Vietnamese importers alike.

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