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Soft citrus export volumes hit record levels

13 Nov 2018 - by Staff reporter



Packed volumes of soft citrus and easy peeler exports hit record levels this season, in line with this year's record export volumes of navels, oranges, grapefruit and lemons.

According to the Citrus Growers' Association (CGA), soft citrus volumes surpassed 2017's 13.4 million 15 kilogram cartons to reach 16.1 million this year.

"There's been an upward trend in soft citrus export volumes since 2011 with volumes more than doubling over the past seven years," said CGA CEO Justin Chadwick.

Final packed volumes were marginally higher than the March estimate of 15.9 million cartons.

The largest production regions were Boland with 3.3 million cartons, followed by 2.5 million cartons from the Western Cape and – despite water troubles – Patensie at 2.4 million cartons.

The UK remained the top destination for South African soft citrus, increasing from 3.7 million cartons in 2017 to 4.1 million in 2018. This is followed by the Netherlands, which also increased from 2.8 million cartons to 3.2 million, and Russia at 1.7 million cartons.

“Late mandarins continue to dominate this category, rising to 7 million cartons in 2018 while novas are now number two at 3.4 million, surpassing clementines’ 2.8 million,” added Chadwick. “Satsumas remain fairly stable at 2.1 million cartons.”



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