

South African citrus farmers thrown a lifeline with R307 million cash injection

South African citrus farmers have been thrown a lifeline following the allocation of a R307 million (15.7 mln) fund through the Economic Transformation programme. The programme will be rolled out over three years with a specific focus on Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape, North West and KwaZulu-Natal.

Farmers need to ensure that they possess a minimum of 60% black ownership (of both assets and operations) as defined by the B-BBEE Act of 2013, while priority will be given to enterprises with 100% black ownership.

The fund is open to citrus farmers across the country and will be allocated as a 50% loan and 50% grant, with the Land Bank expected to administer the projects' loan portion. The Jobs Fund contributed R188m, with the Land Bank agreeing to contribute an additional R116m in loan funding.

The Citrus Growers Association (CGA) pledged R24m, while the Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries and Agriseta pledged R34m and R12m respectively.

CGA general manager Lukhanyo Nkombisa said the maximum amount to be allocated to successful farming applicants was R10m. "This is not a relief fund aimed at Covid-19 but this fund will come in handy for our farmers, because since the outbreak of the virus they have been faced with additional costs."

Nkombisa said the application process was still in the early stages. "We are expecting a lot of applications. I can confirm that on our database all our farmers have got access to the internet which is why we opted for the online application method."

[R1 = €0.051]

Source: [iol.co.za \(https://www.iol.co.za/the-star/news/citrus-farmers-thrown-a-lifeline-with-r307m-cash-injection-47808147\)](https://www.iol.co.za/the-star/news/citrus-farmers-thrown-a-lifeline-with-r307m-cash-injection-47808147)

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