

US consumers develop a taste for SA citrus

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It's been a good season for citrus exporters to the USA, with encouraging figures released by the Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) at the recent Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) Annual Coordinating meeting.

Clementine exports were a major contributor showing an annual increase of 85% - in 2018: 533 437 cartons were exported; in 2019: 671 379; and this year 1 239 128. The Boland region doubled clementine exports to the USA, according to CGA CEO Justin Chadwick.

Similarly, there was a major uptick in orange exports to the country: 2018: 2 545 574 cartons; 2019: 1 833 491; 2020: 3 041 780 – a 66% increase from last year.

Looking at overall exports, these were up from 3 872 054 (2018) to 3 336 321 (2019) to 5 512 864 cartons in 2020 – a 65.2% increase.

Conversely, there was a different trend in exports to Asian countries, with volumes to South Korea down from 565 835 cartons to 456 835; to Japan from 2 142 532 cartons to 1 798 504; and to China from 11 023 569 to 10 142 033.

According to Chadwick, good relationships between DALRRD and colleagues in the USA, South Korea and Japan meant that special arrangements were made for pre-clearance programmes.

A positive development for exporters to the EU was the decrease in citrus black spot (CBS) and false codling moth (FCM) interceptions.

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