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Tzaneen and Kouga dams remain low as citrus growers pray for rain

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Justin Chadwick, chief executive of the Citrus Growers Association.

Although the status of dams used for irrigation is looking generally good, with strong signs of year-on-year (y-o-y) recovery as in the case of Limpopo's Flag Boshielo Dam, where y-o-y levels increased from 57.80% to 92% for the current period, at least two of South Africa's dams are in an extremely worrying position.

Justin Chadwick, chief executive of the Citrus Growers Association, says, "There are two regions where dam levels are at a critically low level.

"The Kouga dam, which provides water for the Patensie region, is at just 8.4%."

The alarmingly low rainfall that this Eastern Cape region has received is underscored by the level of this dam last year – 40.30%.

Chadwick added that the Tzaneen dam, which provides water to the large citrus-growing region around Letsitele, is at 11.4%.

Early spring rain has brought some light relief for the Tzaneen dam, raising its y-o-y level to 9.5%.

“Growers are hopeful that predictions of good summer rainfall come true.”

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