



Rising global protectionism threatens South African agriculture

Experts claim that South Africa's agricultural exports lack sufficient diversification. Outside of the African continent, they are heavily concentrated in a few Asian countries and the EU. More recently, the pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine war destabilized the global supply chains, with many countries relocating these domestically. The pandemic and geopolitical frictions have also raised a sense of protectionism, especially in the EU.

The immediate challenge for South Africa is that there are already shipments of citrus products on the way to the EU, which might be deemed non-compliant with arbitrary plant protection regulations on arrival in the coming weeks.

In a scenario where the shipments are turned back or offloaded at discounted rates, Southern African growers will sustain immense financial pressure. These countries are already struggling with rising inputs such as fertilizer, agrochemicals and fuel. In 2021, citrus was the top exportable agricultural product in South Africa, valued at US\$1,8 billion or 15% of the overall exports of US\$12,4 billion. The EU was one of the leading markets, alongside the UK. Hence, we should be concerned as a country that the recent changes in regulations will likely have a detrimental impact on the industry.

Source: [farmingportal.co.za](https://www.farmingportal.co.za/index.php/all-agri-news/news-of-the-day/8159-rising-protectionism-across-the-world-presents-threats-to-south-africa-s-agriculture) (<https://www.farmingportal.co.za/index.php/all-agri-news/news-of-the-day/8159-rising-protectionism-across-the-world-presents-threats-to-south-africa-s-agriculture>).

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