

Botswana joins the CGA

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Source: IOL/Simphiwe Mbokazi.

Consolidation around production and private-sector representation in the sub-Saharan citrus sector has grown stronger with the news that Botswana has joined the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA), joining the more than 1 400 members from South Africa, Eswatini and Zimbabwe.

With the addition of Botswana, the CGA now represents just over 1 564 citrus growers in Southern Africa, the association's CEO, Justin Chadwick, has said.

"The CGA hopes to help maximise the long-term profitability and sustainability of Botswana growers by providing them with increased access to global markets, assisting them to optimise the cost-effective production of high-quality fruit from their region and making industry resources available to them, including the latest research from globally recognised Citrus Research International.

"There are currently 164 citrus growers in Botswana, with 94% of these being small-scale farmers that produce citrus in under five hectares, and the remaining 6% falling into the category of medium- to large-scale farmers.

"The sector currently supports just over 1 000 jobs, with 75% of employees being female. We are thrilled to welcome Botswana citrus growers to our association.

“Supporting small-scale growers is one of the main focus areas of the CGA and its Grower Development Company. We look forward to sharing our knowledge and expertise with Botswana growers.”

Johan van Vuuren, Operations Manager at Selebi Phikwe Citrus, one of the biggest citrus farms in Botswana, said “joining the CGA is a great achievement when it comes to unlocking opportunities for citrus growers in our country”.

“Our farmers and labour force face several challenges when it comes to accessing critical industry resources to improve and grow the sector. By becoming members of the CGA, Botswana citrus growers will now be able to unlock increased access to these critical resources and support structures to ensure the continued growth of the industry, farms and businesses. We look forward to using the CGA as a platform to share and absorb knowledge from others who have more experience in this line of work.”

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