Fresh Plaza

Lower European and US citrus production might create opportunities for SA growers

Experts predict that Europe and the US will see lower citrus production this year. This might create a window of opportunity for South African citrus farmers. This year, the world's biggest markets for citrus – Europe and the US – are forecast to see a short supply of citrus. The shortage offers South African citrus farmers a real opportunity to bounce back stronger from 2022. In order for these farmers to benefit, several external challenges must first be dealt with. These include logistical disruptions, the new EU cold-chain regulations and load shedding.

According to global market analyst Juan Carlos, South Africa, Australia, Argentina, Chile, Peru and Brazil, are most likely to benefit. "They will face tough competition in markets in terms of volumes and price… because main markets such as the EU and the US will be short in citrus. They will face tough competition in terms of who will provide the larger volumes at a better price."

According to Carlos, there will also be tough competition from Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, and South Africa in terms of volume and price.

Elton Greeve, global fulfilment manager at Tridge, expected logistic challenges to remain. However, several structures are already in place to counteract these challenges, he pointed out: "The citrus industry will focus on managing logistics, pricing, and quality, especially to Middle Eastern and Asian markets."

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