

South African citrus decreases 2023-24 estimate

The Citrus Growers Association of South Africa ([CGA](#)) is revising its estimate for the 2023-24 season, with plantings “below the forecast growth curve” initially projected.



"This season, Southern African citrus growers packed 165.1 million boxes for delivery to global markets," CGA says in a release.

While this is an increase of approximately 800,000 boxes over last year's figures, it is still 500,000 boxes less than forecast at the start of the season. Additionally, it is substantially below the anticipated growth curve based on plantings that could potentially see the industry reach 200 million cases over the next four years, and possibly 260 million cases by 2032.

"This highlights that growers continue to face a number of challenges in getting their fruit to key markets," the association added.

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Mandarins appeared to be the star of the show. The CGA says mandarin exports continue to rise substantially, increasing by 6.1 million boxes, with 37.9 million boxes packed.

The figure is 3.8 million more than the preseason forecast and is the result of strong increases in mandarin plantings in recent years.

The CGA adds that the growth in mandarin exports was also boosted by strong demand in the EU and the UK.

As for grapefruit, production ended the season with 1.9 million boxes less year-on-year.

"However, this is 400,000 boxes more than estimated at the start of the season. The 2023 total, 14.8 million, is considerably lower than the 20.3 million packed two years ago in 2021, continuing the downward trajectory," the entity adds.

Meanwhile, lemons registered a rise of 900,000 more boxes, bringing the total to 35.6 million. However, this was 1.3 million boxes less than the preseason estimate.

Oranges have shown a decline overall. This year, 24.7 million Navel boxes were packed, 3.1 million less than last year and slightly below the estimate. Valencia also recorded a decrease of 1.7 million boxes, with a total of 52.1 million boxes packed.