

SA citrus industry closes EU orange exports

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The Citrus Growers Association of South Africa (CGA) and the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (FPEF) have announced that the 2023 orange export season to Europe will come to a close this week.

CGA special envoy for market access and EU matters, Deon Joubert, said on Monday that September 15 would be the final day of inspection for oranges exported to Europe from South Africa, excluding exports from the Western and Northern Cape provinces.

“As the South African citrus season in Europe comes to its natural end around October 15, this gives the floating consignments of approved oranges time to reach destinations in Europe,” Joubert said.

The CGA and FPEF's announcement also allows the Northern Hemisphere to take advantage of current excellent market conditions.

“It is in a spirit of budding cooperation with European citrus producers, notably in Spain, that the South African industry now hands over the handling of citrus demand to the Northern Hemisphere,” Joubert said.

“Consumers worldwide, including Europe, have shown an exceptional appetite for South African citrus. The local industry has not been able to fill the demand by European orange consumers this year,” he said.

Joubert added that local growers had faced multiple challenges during the season, including intense load-shedding, unusual weather and logistical strain on local ports and rail systems.

“The CGA and FPEF remain committed to working with government and other value chain partners to ensure local growers can withstand the current economic headwinds,” Joubert said.

The industry supports the livelihoods of about 140 000 people in the country.

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