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SA citrus growers export record volumes of navel oranges

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South African citrus exporters packed the highest volume of navel oranges ever for export during the 2022 season.

Citrus Growers Association CEO Justin Chadwick highlighted the latest export figures for the navel orange variety in his weekly newsletter.

“The Navel Focus Group (NFG) overestimated the navel packed figure by 3%. Nevertheless, the volume of navels packed was the highest ever, some 600 000 cartons more than 2021 and 2.7 million cartons more than the past five-year average,” Chadwick said.

“Packing of navels got off to a slow start – but later navels exceeded the past two years’ weekly packing,” he said.

Senwes and Western Cape are the biggest navel-producing regions, both packing about seven million cartons, followed by Sundays River at 6.7m. The fruits are all packed in 15kg carton equivalents for export.

“The new EU regulations meant a significant drop in navels sent to the EU – from 30% (2021) to 24% (2022). South East Asia (mainly China) saw a significant increase, from

15% to 20%,” he said.

Chadwick noted that exports to North America had increased from 13% to 16%, while against all odds, Russia increased from 4% to 6%. Exports to Asia dropped slightly from 3% to 2%, while there was no change in the export volumes to the Middle East and the United Kingdom, compared to 2021.

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