CGA denies 'new threat' to South Africa from citrus greening

By  Mike Knowles | 8 October 2024

Citrus Growers Association chief executive Justin Chadwick issues statement in response to *Bloomberg* report

Justin Chadwick, CGA

The South African Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) has issued a statement denying the industry is under threat from citrus greening disease.

The statement was a response to a report published late last week by *Bloomberg*, in which the media outlet suggested South African citrus exporters faced a "new disease threat" amid ongoing tensions with the EU, and specifically rival citrus supplier Spain, over its handling of fungal infections.

CGA's chief executive Justin Chadwick described the claims as "inaccurate and misleading". He commented: "Any suggestion that export citrus can spread this disease is incorrect."

Citrus greening has been present in South Africa since 1932, CGA pointed out, and remained under control through stringent measures that prevent the movement of propagation material from affected to unaffected areas.

And as Chadwick noted, it cannot be spread by fruit or seeds, which is why there are no restrictions on South Africa's citrus exports.

A different and more dangerous disease called Huanglongbing, and known alternatively as Asian Citrus Greening or Yellow Dragon, has severely hampered citrus production in other parts of the world but is not present in South Africa.

"The future of the South African citrus industry is bright," Chadwick added.

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