

Investing in citrus knowledge and skills in South Africa

The imperative for bolstering the agricultural sector in South Africa, particularly through enhancing high-level skills and industry-specific knowledge, is increasingly recognized. Intellectual capital is deemed essential for sustainable growth, especially within the citrus sector, which is a major economic contributor and the second-largest exporter globally. The Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) aims to significantly increase exports, thereby creating jobs and boosting revenue. This ambition hinges on a multifaceted approach, with a crucial emphasis on expanding expertise through education and innovation.

The Citrus Academy, established by the CGA, plays a pivotal role in addressing the skill gap through its comprehensive education programs, including bursaries for postgraduate studies in areas critical to the industry. These initiatives are vital in fostering a knowledgeable workforce capable of addressing any challenges. Collaboration with Citrus Research International (CRI) further enhances the practical application of research, benefiting the industry at large.

Moreover, the Citrus Academy Bursary Fund is instrumental in promoting industry transformation and supporting black-owned enterprises, aligning with broader sectoral goals. The fund's impact is evident in the career trajectories of its beneficiaries, who contribute significantly to the citrus industry and related sectors. However, the sustainability of these efforts faces challenges from economic pressures and insufficient funding support, underscoring the need for continued investment in intellectual capital to realize the citrus sector's growth potential.

Source: iol.co.za (<https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/economy/its-a-critical-time-to-keep-investing-in-citrus-knowledge-and-skills-8bb67579-8b92-4a53-bc83-2605d4d65228>)

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