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CGA, ECDC to spend R1.2m on capacitating ten Eastern Cape citrus farmers for exports

29TH APRIL 2024 BY: MARLENY ARNOLDI - DEPUTY EDITOR ONLINE



The
Grower
Development
Company of
the Citrus
Growers'
Association of
Southern
Africa (CGA)

has partnered with the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) to bolster commercialisation prospects for black farmers producing citrus in the province.

The 18-month agreement signed between the parties will support the commercialisation activities of ten black farmers, out of 37 known producers, in the Eastern Cape, as well as break down the barriers to entry to the export market.

These farmers are mainly based in Patensie, Sundays River Valley, the Sarah Baartman district municipality and the Eastern

Cape Midlands.

The programme will support black farmers with compliance to Global Good Agricultural Practices, a certification that is required for entering the export market.

An additional requisite is compliance with ethical trade requirements, therefore, the CGA and the ECDC will help farmers meet the Sustainable Initiative of South Africa's ethical trade standards.

Moreover, the balance of the R1.2-million agreement between the CGA and the Eastern Cape government will investigate the feasibility of a post-harvest packhouse and juicing plant to enable greater participation in the citrus value chain.

The feasibility study will confirm the need for these facilities, as well as the most strategic location, size or capacity and volumes needed.

The juicing facility may be located in the Kat River Valley of the Eastern Cape Midlands, since the absence of a juicing plant in the area means lost opportunities for additional income streams.

The CGA says the Eastern Cape is the country's second-largest citrus-producing province after Limpopo. It contributes 25% of the province's gross domestic product, with 24 508 ha under production.

The main export markets for South African citrus are Europe, the UK, Russia, Asia and the Middle East.

Notably, the Eastern Cape is the fifth-largest exporter of lemons in the world, but it also produces soft citrus such as mandarins,

oranges and grapefruit.

The CGA ultimately aims to have the agreement become a five-year partnership with strict areas of focus. 

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