

Boosting commercial prospects for black citrus producers in Eastern Cape

A fund agreement between the Citrus Growers Association: Grower Development Company (CGA-GDC) and the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) has been established, allocating R1.2m to enhance the commercial activities of black citrus producers in the Eastern Cape. This 18-month initiative aims to facilitate their entry into the export market by initially supporting 10 out of 37 black citrus producers across various regions within the province.

The Eastern Cape's citrus sector, contributing 25% to the province's GDP, stands as South Africa's second-largest, with significant export markets spanning Europe, Africa, the United Kingdom, Russia, North America, Asia, and the Middle East. The agreement focuses on compliance with Global Good Agricultural Practices (Global GAP) and Sustainable Initiative of South Africa's (SIZA) ethical trade requirements, essential for accessing export markets. Akho Skenjana, ECDC senior manager for manufacturing and agroprocessing, highlighted the importance of these certifications in ensuring the safe use of chemicals and promoting good labor practices.

Additionally, the partnership will explore the feasibility of establishing post-harvest facilities, including a packhouse and a juicing plant, aimed at enhancing participation in the value chain and generating additional revenue streams for black farmers in the sector. The proposed juicing facility in the Kat River Valley addresses the current gap in local processing capabilities, potentially unlocking further economic benefits for the region's black citrus producers.

Source: bizcommunity.com (<https://www.bizcommunity.com/article/black-citrus-producers-receive-r12m-boost-for-commercialisation-120906a>)

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