

First new season South African clementines arrive in US

By [Fred Meintjes](#) | 17 May 2024

South African summer citrus marketing season in the US kicks off with first containers landing in port of Philadelphia

The first clementines of the South African 2024 citrus season will be with US retailers from next week as the export season gets underway.

Boet Mouton, chairman of the South African Summer Citrus Association, said total exports will amount to between 100 000 and 110 000 pallets, which will be shipped between now and the end of September. "We are now packing clementines and Navels and our first conventional vessel will sail before the end of the month, with arrival in the US in mid-June," he told *Fruitnet*.

"We expect a good steady season delivering the products for which we have become known. We already know that our clementine and Navel crops will be slightly less than already anticipated, but it will not affect our market supply."

Earlier it was reported that significant increases are expected in the Nadorcott/Tango mandarin categories, with volumes up 16 per cent across the two categories to 24.1m cartons. Leanri, a mid-to late-season soft citrus variety, will contribute around 2.5m cartons and Orri another 2m cartons. Other mandarin types will contribute a further 2.7m cartons.

Mouton said the industry is hoping for a smooth production season – after last year's unstable weather that disrupted export logistics.

South African citrus exports normally start with clementines and Navels, with the mid-season dominated by mandarins, and Valencias ending the season in October. The industry uses both container and conventional reefer shipments to ensure fresh arrivals every week.

The summer citrus campaign was launched in the mid-2000s and, according to Mouton, South Africa has now firmly established itself under this origin brand as a leading supplier to the US during the summer.