

South Africa's Navel orange forecast falls

By [Fred Meintjes](#) | 3 June 2024

Several factors combine to reduce the country's Navel and Valencia orange export crops

The Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) has announced a drop in its Navel orange export crop, with the Valencia forecast also edging downwards.

It said the projected volume of Navel oranges for export had been adjusted downwards to a total of 22m cartons.

"This is a significant 14.5 per cent reduction from the estimate at the start of the season, which was 25.6m cartons," the Association stated.

The new estimate represented an 11 per cent decrease from last year's final export figures, when South Africa packed a total of 24.8m cartons of Navels for shipping to foreign markets, it continued.

"There are several factors which necessitated the adjustment to the current season's estimates," the CGA explained. "Local citrus juicing prices are currently high, and many growers are taking advantage of this."

"Fruit sizes are also somewhat smaller due to the warm and dry weather experienced in large parts of the country. This means there are more individual fruit packed into a 15kg carton relative to last year."

"Severe winds have also caused some fruit to drop from trees in the Western Cape and hail damage has been experienced in certain parts of the Senwes (Groblersdal and Marble Hall) region," it said.

An increase in Egyptian oranges exported to the European Union was also having an effect on South African export plans.

"Even though Egypt is counter-seasonal to South Africa, more Egyptian oranges in the European market does impact early season demand," CGA outlined.

EUROFRUIT approximately 17 per cent of the entire South African citrus export volume.

The projected export figure of Valencia oranges has also been reduced to just over 56m cartons, which is a 4 per cent reduction from the estimate at the beginning of the season.

"It is, however, early in the Valencia season and a further reduction is possible," CGA commented. "Last year South Africa packed 52m cartons of Valencias for shipping to foreign markets."

Valencias make up approximately 31 per cent of total citrus export volumes.

The CGA said it was important to note that the overall increase in orange production in South Africa was set to continue on a gradual growth trajectory for the next ten years. "

"However, a larger 2024 crop does not necessarily mean that an excessive volume of oranges will be shipped to export markets, reducing any risk of over-supply."

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