

South Africa tries to make sense of US tariffs

By [Fred Meintjes](#) | 3 April 2025

There is confusion in South Africa as the fresh produce industry takes in Donald Trump's tariff announcement



South Africa's fresh produce industry is trying to work out the impact of the 30 per cent tariff increase on all South African imports into the US, announced by president Donald Trump yesterday (2 April).

The question is whether the new tariff overrides the benefits the country enjoys under the AGOA Act, or whether the products included under AGOA will have some respite.

The citrus industry, the main fresh produce sector exporting to the US, said this morning it was seeking clarity on what the tariff would mean for the industry.

South Africa exports around 100,000 tonnes of citrus to the US and, in recent times, stonefruit and table grape exporters have also increased shipments.

The South African Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) has previously maintained that exclusion under AGOA would be devastating for job creation in the country's rural regions.

The introduction of a 30 per cent tariff removing AGOA is seen as a major setback that would make exports to the US uneconomical.

South African fruit sources are expected to react later when they have full information of the implications of the Trump announcement.

The fresh produce sector is not the only one in South Africa to be affected, with the country's wine business also on alert.

Motor vehicle exports, assembled and produced in South Africa specifically for the US market, are also facing concerns.

These factories are mostly located in the poor regions of the country where they play an important part in the local economy.

Should international vehicle makers decide that it is not economically viable to assemble and export vehicles from the country, it would be a major problem for the economy.

The tariff issue also comes at a time when South Africa's Government of National Unity (GNU) is under severe threat.

The latest setback is a split in the GNU over the approval of the national budget – supported by the ANC and a minor party.