

Complete Southern African citrus forecast confirmed

By [Fred Meintjes](#) | 29 April 2025

The CGA has published its first complete forecast of the 2025 season after the mandarin estimate was confirmed

The Southern African citrus industry is expected to export a 171.1mn cartons of citrus in the 2025 season.



This represents growth of 3.6 per cent on last year's final export figures, according to the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA).

"We are cautiously optimistic about the season," said Dr Boitshoko Ntshabele, chief executive of the CGA. "The solid growth trajectory the industry has been on, has held, so far.

"But serious threats remain," he warned. "A significant one for this season is the tariff turmoil that could disrupt the US market for a portion of our growers."

EUROFRUIT is imperative that a trade deal or exemption for seasonal fresh produce was agreed on by the governments of South Africa and the US before a pause in the 30 per cent tariff expired in July.

Although the US represents only 4-6 per cent of South Africa's citrus exports, the US market is the lifeblood of Western Cape rural towns such as Citrusdal.

Crop estimate

The forecast for the mandarin crop showed growth, according to the CGA.

Nadorcott/Tango will come in at 25.7mn cartons, up significantly from the 23.3mn cartons harvested last year, mainly due to young trees coming into production

Leanri volumes are expected to hit 2.1mn cartons, slightly down from 2.2mn in 2024, while the Orri crop should remain stable at 2.1mn cartons.

Other late mandarins should come in at 3.2mn cartons, up from 2.7mn cartons in 2024.

The CGA also confirmed the estimates for the other categories, previously issued in March.

These indicated a drop of 5 per cent in lemons, to 32.9mn cartons; Navel oranges at 26.1mn cartons, a 5 per cent increase from 2024; Valencia oranges at 52mn cartons, up 6 per cent; grapefruit at 13.5mn cartons, also a 6 per cent increase year-on-year; Satsumas at 1.8mn cartons; Novas at 4.5mn cartons, a 2 per cent increase; and Clementines coming in at 5.4mn cartons, growth of 10 per cent.

"It seems to be a favourable start to the 2025 season so far," noted Ntshabele.

"The early season is mostly dominated by exports of lemons and grapefruit," he explained.

"Lemons are in demand and the lemon price also looks good. Also, we've exported 55 per cent more grapefruit than last year at this point of the season."

Paul Hardman, chief operating officer of the CGA, said if South Africa addressed the main challenges growers faced – logistical inefficiencies at ports, the US tariff uncertainty, existing tariffs in other markets and difficult access to markets like the EU due to unnecessary phytosanitary measures – only then would the citrus success story continue.