

South African mandarin production soars in landmark season

By [Fred Meintjes](#) | 16 December 2025

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Image: Adobe Stock

South Africa's 2025 mandarin season was marked by a substantial and steady increase in production, with volumes consistently surpassing early expectations.

The South African Citrus Growers Association (CGA) said projections had to be repeatedly revised during the season, with 53.5mn cartons being finally packed during the season.

This represented a 19 per cent increase on the initial estimate of 44.9mn cartons.

"This growth was due to several key factors," the CGA stated. "Major production regions reported high volumes from new Nadorcott/Tango orchards, which came into production this season.

"Nadorcott/Tango accounts for 39 per cent of total mandarin hectares aged between 1–10 years. This highlights its growing dominance within the category."

New plantings of Orri in the Western Cape also contributed to increased volumes, the association confirmed in its season review, while northern regions saw a production increase in the younger orchards.

"Regions such as Senwes and Boland reported 'extremely good yields' and 'excellent' pack outs, which pushed volumes well beyond early-season expectations," it continued.

"Although some areas experienced challenges with smaller fruit, many growing regions recorded favourable size distributions, enhancing their export potential."

Growers in the Western Cape described 2025 as a "recovery phase", following weather-related volume suppression in the previous year.

Similarly, Senwes reported a strong fruit set after two consecutive low-volume seasons.

The CGA said the final market performance reflected the scale of the crop.

"Europe received 16mn cartons, remaining the dominant destination," the association confirmed. "Exports to the Middle East reached 6.6mn cartons."

"Shipments to Russia increased sharply, rising from 3.9mn to 5.9mn cartons, while exports to Asia grew significantly by 4.5mn cartons."

The 2025 mandarin season will be remembered as a landmark year – one in which record production volumes tested the industry's agility, resilience, and foresight, the CGA added.

There is clearly now much confidence in the South African mandarin industry, with new orchards being planted and the country's top brands reaching new levels of acceptance in the world's markets.

This is despite the future being clouded by the interference of US tariffs, with mandarins not being part of the South African citrus products that have been granted relief by the Trump administration.