

South Africa targets India for citrus exports, seeks tariff reductions and market access

As South Africa's agricultural priorities for 2025 are set, expanding market access for fresh produce is vital. The citrus industry is on a growth path, with new plantings expected to increase fruit production in the coming years. This growth presents opportunities for job creation and revenue expansion through exports. However, expanding market access is essential.

This year's citrus exports were only 0.3% less than in 2023, despite weather challenges and high local juicing prices. The industry aims to increase citrus production by an additional 100 million 15kg cartons and create 100,000 jobs by 2032

India, with a population of 1.4 billion and a preference for fresh fruit, is a promising market. Since 2020, citrus exports to India have nearly tripled to 30,000 tons. However, a 30% import tariff remains a hurdle. This issue was discussed at the India-South Africa Business Conclaves in New Delhi and Mumbai, highlighting the trade relationship between the two countries.

India produces 16 million tons of citrus annually but is counter-seasonal to South Africa. South African growers can supply Indian consumers during the off-season, maintaining interest in citrus and benefiting local growers. The Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) is working to address the tariff issue, which disadvantages South African exporters compared to competitors with preferential trade agreements.

As members of Brics, India and South Africa have untapped trade potential. Addressing tariffs and market access should be a focus of future Brics discussions. Pilot shipments demonstrating in-transit cold treatment could further unlock opportunities with India.

Source: foodformzansifd (<https://www.foodformzansi.co.za/india-a-golden-opportunity-for-sas-citrus-industry/>)

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