

South African fruit exporters face devastating 30 per cent US tariffs from 1 August

By [Fred Meintjes](#) | 8 July 2025

New tariffs will take effect on 1 August unless South Africa can negotiate a last-minute deal



South African fresh produce exporters to the US will be hit with 30 per cent tariffs from the 1 August.

The country is one of seven nations to be affected by the steep blanket tariffs imposed by the US.

In recent days, South African exporters have become pessimistic about the possibility of tariffs being kept at the current rate of 10 per cent.

The best they can now hope for is to ship as much fruit as they can before the beginning of August as, in the past, all fruit on the water before new tariffs came into force were allowed access at the

EUROFRUIT

It is expected that South African exporters and their US trading partners will store as much fruit as possible in coldstores in the US to be able to continue their supply programmes.

What happens to the South African export industry to the US from August onwards is now an open question.

Indeed, few exporters believe that they can continue supplying the US at a 30 per cent tariff rate.

South Africa's president Cyril Ramaphosa, who visited Donald Trump at the White House in May, said he has written to the US president asking for a review of his decision and time to agree a trade deal.

Ramaphosa was in Brazil recently attending the BRICS summit. It is understood that the unity at the summit has frustrated Trump – who announced that he will impose further tariffs on countries associated with BRICS.

South Africa's foreign policy has also angered the US Administration, particularly its stance on Gaza and Israel's actions in the Middle East, as well as South Africa's policy on Iran.

For South Africa's Summer Citrus programme in the US, the new tariffs come as a devastating blow.

The country has shipped more than 100,000 tonnes of citrus, mostly from the rural Cape regions, under this programme. It is expected to have a major impact on employment in the region.

South African stonefruit and table grape growers who are due to start their new season from October onwards, and who have seen a growth in exports to the US in the past few years, will have to go back to the drawing board.