

"There's a South African mandarin glut"

This year's mandarin import season has been a tricky one for Al Hassan Group, a fresh produce importer based in India's capital of New Delhi. Zain-ul Abdin, Managing Director, says heavy volumes from South Africa have overwhelmed the Indian market. "There's a South African mandarin glut in our market," he mentions while noting that oversupply has squeezed profits this season.



© Al Hassan Group

Al Hassan began its import program with Chinese mandarins sourced between early February and July. They switched to South African mandarins, starting with Nova and Nadorcott varieties in the late season of July, expecting to run through October. "South African quality is premium and better than last year, but prices have dropped due to oversupply. Chinese mandarins ranged from \$8 to 10 per box of eight kgs, with the last container at \$12, while South African fruit started at \$14 to 14.50 per box of ten kgs, now being around \$13, compared to \$11 to 12 last year," Abdin explains.

At present, mandarins are widely available in India to fill the gap left by the unavailability of local oranges. Abdin says their easy-to-peel and vibrant taste characteristics appeal to Indian consumers. While Al Hassan supplies 30% of its volumes to quick-commerce or fast grocery delivery apps, the rest is sold to local traders serving Tier 1 cities. In terms of preference, north Indian consumers favor tangy South African mandarins, while southern regions prefer sweeter Chinese varieties.



© Al Hassan Group

"The Chinese mandarin season ran smoothly," Abdin observes as he experienced no trade hiccups. Abdin also maintains that he is open to sourcing other origins, like Australian or Chilean mandarins, if their quality and pricing suit the Indian market. "South Africa's oversupply remains the biggest hurdle for now," he adds, with Al Hassan targeting 70–80 containers, but timing these imports carefully to avoid a market collapse.

Moving forward, Abdin mentioned that his team will be navigating a tricky season with sharp focus. With good demand for premium fruit in cities, they plan on staying nimble to outmaneuver oversupply and competition. "Ahead of the domestic orange season in October, we plan to capitalize on South African mandarins' premium appeal, while pacing imports to steady the market. Timing is everything in this trade," he concludes.

For more information

Zain-ul Abdin

Al Hassan Group

Tel: +91 99 10 275 435

Email: zain@alhassangroup.in

www.alhassangroup.in (<http://www.alhassangroup.in>)

Publication date: Tue 15 Jul 2025

© FreshPlaza.com / Alysha Fernandes

-
-

