

South Africa's citrus exports up 18% mid-season

South Africa's citrus export season is halfway through, with Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) noting an 18% increase in volumes by the end of June compared to the previous year. "The superior quality of the fruit coming from South Africa has translated into higher volumes, with the European Union coming in as the biggest consumer, followed by the Middle East," stated TPT general manager for Commercial and Planning, Michelle van Buuren Schele.

This year, citrus fruit production has increased, with more being transported to ports via rail. Since April, Durban Container Terminals has received 980 refrigerated containers by rail. "While we are only in the first half of the season, this is roughly 16% higher than the entire 2024 season of 846 railed containers," she added.

The Citrus Growers' Association maintains that its forecast volume of 106,500 refrigerated containers for export remains on track across national ports. TPT reports progress on boosting productivity without vessel backlogs and terminal delays. Recently commissioned equipment, including a ship-to-shore crane at Port Elizabeth, enhances operations in Durban and Port Elizabeth. Other equipment includes rubber-tyred gantry cranes, straddle carriers, reach stackers, and haulers.

In the 2024/2025 fiscal year, TPT invested R3.4 billion (US\$186 million) in new equipment and infrastructure, a 145% increase from the previous year. "We are focused on growing our business and meeting customer expectations," said Van Buuren Schele, highlighting integrated planning and collaboration.

South Africa ranks as the second-largest global citrus producer after Spain, exporting to over 100 markets via TPT-managed container terminals in Durban, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town.

Source: Freight News (<https://www.freightnews.co.za/article/halfway-through-export-season-projected-citrus-volume-on-track>)

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