

South African lemons celebrate first shipment to India in 2025

A joint statement from the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) and FruitOne announced this week the arrival of the first shipment of South African lemons to India.



The arrival marks the first shipment of lemons exported to India by [FruitOne](#), a local citrus cultivation and export company.

"We are delighted to announce the arrival of the first shipment of South African lemons in India for the season," said Boitshoko Ntshabele, CEO of the CGA. "This shipment signifies the strong trade relationship between South Africa and India. It starts the season and hopefully also starts an era of increased exports and opportunities for our two countries."

Leardt van der Burgh, Head of Commercial at exporter FruitOne, acknowledged the importance of India for the South African industry "because of its sheer population size and its growing middle-class."

"The FruitOne brand is known in India, and we need to supply the whole citrus basket to this market. Adding Lemons to this basket in 2025 is a big step forward," van der Burgh said.

The shipment of 1600 cartons of lemons arrived at Jawaharlal Nehru Port on the vessel Navios Verde and was welcomed by importers IG International.

Sachin Khurana, the CGA's trade representative in India, said the fruit is appreciated in India due to its quality and flavor.

"For five months of the year - when the produce of India's own citrus growers is out of season, South Africa sustains Indian consumers." Khurana indicated.

South Africa also exports oranges, mandarins, and grapefruit to India.

Ntshabele pointed out that citrus exports to India have increased significantly. Since 2020, they have almost tripled to 30,000 tonnes. But he also mentioned an obstacle to further growth.

"A steep citrus import tariff of 30% keeps South African growers and the citrus-loving Indian consumer from benefiting even more," Ntshabele said. He hopes the progress made in trade relations between SA and India will continue.

Expanded market access for South African citrus is part of CGA's goal to export 260 million 15kg cartons of citrus by 2032. This will create an estimated 100,000 more jobs and contribute significantly to export-led economic growth.

A group of CGA representatives will travel to India next week as part of a Fruit SA delegation. They will meet with the Indian government and the South African High Commission and attend Fresh Produce India in Mumbai, a leading trade gathering.

The South African lemon season looks good, with better sizing than in 2024. The South African volume for 2025 seems to match the global demand well - with 32.9 million cartons expected to be exported - and a stable market is anticipated.

Related article: [South African citrus export projections show 'balanced growth and excellent quality'](#)

 Fresh Fruit Portal.com

