South Africa’s citrus exports rise 21%

Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) has begun handling South Africa's citrus exports, recording a 21% increase in year-on-year container volumes handled in April 2025.

Each year, vessels carrying up to 7,800 containers dock at Durban Container Terminals, Port Elizabeth Container Terminal, and Ngqura Container Terminal between April and October, exporting South African oranges, mandarins, lemons, clementines, grapefruits, and limes to over 100 markets.

To ensure smooth operations for the 2025 citrus season, TPT has hired 256 additional staff on fixed-term contracts, conducted maintenance on all reefer plug points, and acquired 100 new pieces of equipment. TPT General Manager for Commercial and Planning, Michelle van Buuren Schele, stated, "Our operations have stabilized and are now focused on growing the business, meeting customer expectations, and making South Africa win."

The Citrus Growers Association has projected a 3.6% increase in citrus volumes for the 2025 season, despite the risk of possible tariff hikes for the United States market, effective July 2025. In engagements with the industry, TPT has assured its commitment to a successful season.

In Durban, the container terminals will allow customers to deliver reefers 24 hours before stack opening. The Ngqura Container Terminal will operate on a first-come, first-served basis. The risk of adverse weather conditions will be closely monitored, with TPT coordinating with the South African Weather Service to implement necessary mitigations.

South Africa's citrus fruits are grown in the provinces of Limpopo, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape, and North West, with exports primarily routed through the Durban and Port Elizabeth Container Terminals.

For more information:
Mbali Mathenjwa
Transnet

Tel: +27 (0) 83 279 2651
Email: Mbali.Mathenjwa@transnet.net
www.transnet.net (https://www.transnet.net/)
Frontpage photo: © Transnet

Publication date: Tue 20 May 2025

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