

SA citrus exports hit record 203 million cartons in 2025

South Africa's citrus industry has delivered a record-breaking performance in the 2025 export season, delivering 203.4 million 15kg cartons to global markets — the highest volume ever recorded and a major milestone for the country's leading agricultural export sector.



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Minister of Agriculture John Steenhuisen congratulated the industry on what he described as an exceptional achievement.

The 2025 export figure marks a 22% increase compared with 2024 volumes packed for export, significantly surpassing both initial estimates and long-term industry growth projections.

“This achievement by the industry is a testament to the resilience and strategic foresight of our citrus growers, workers, and industry leadership. Hitting over 203 million cartons for the export market is a powerful indicator of the sector's vital role in our economy, its capacity to create jobs, and its contribution to our country's foreign earnings,” Steenhuisen said.

South Africa is the world's second-largest citrus exporter after Spain. Two-thirds of local citrus production is exported as fresh fruit, accounting for 95% of the sector's annual earnings and supporting substantial job creation across the value chain.

Citrus remains South Africa's single largest export industry in the agricultural sector by value.

"It continues to reinforce the role of the fruit industry, which remains the cornerstone of the agricultural sector in the country and a national economy stabiliser in times of a national economic crisis, as witnessed during the Covid-19 epidemic," the Minister said.

He added that the Department of Agriculture will continue working closely and in partnership with industry to navigate the logistical challenges and grow, retain and optimise market access to create more jobs and earn the much-needed foreign exchange. – SAnews.gov.za

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