South Africa targets wider citrus access in Asia

South African citrus exporters continue to expand their presence in Asian markets, with Vietnam showing accelerated growth after the 2024 bilateral protocol opened the market to South African oranges. In the first season of access, South Africa shipped 53,311 15-kilogram cartons of oranges to Vietnam. In 2025, this increased to 209,569 cartons.

Industry organisations note that this growth reflects wider opportunities across Asia. Beyond Vietnam, markets such as Japan, South Korea, India, and China are viewed as having strong potential for South African citrus. In 2025, Southern Africa shipped more than 203 million cartons of citrus globally, with South Africa accounting for approximately 193 million cartons. The industry continues to rely on foreign revenue to support rural employment in production regions, including Addo, Patensie, Groblersdal, Letsitele, and Citrusdal.

Vietnam's growing middle class has increased demand for fresh produce, with South African oranges fitting into a key supply window from June to October. Exporters report that compliance with plant-health requirements and improvements in logistics have supported access so far. Industry stakeholders indicate that the next steps would include expanding access beyond oranges to other citrus groups, particularly mandarins.

The 2025 mandarin season recorded 53.5 million cartons packed for export, representing a 28 percent year-on-year increase. Stakeholders say this output reinforces the need to secure high-potential markets such as Vietnam for additional citrus categories.

Recent discussions during President Ramaphosa's state visit to Vietnam included participation from the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa and Citrus Research International. South African ministers held meetings with Vietnamese counterparts to advance market access for additional citrus types and address outstanding trade conditions. Vietnam is described as a priority as South Africa works to diversify markets and reduce exposure to protective tariffs in other regions.

Industry representatives say that growth in Asian demand could help absorb increasing volumes and support employment across South Africa's citrus regions. As Vietnamese consumers continue to purchase imported oranges, the sector expects continued engagement on protocols for mandarins and other citrus categories.

Source: AfricanFarming (https://www.africanfarming.com/2025/11/20/success-of-sa-oranges-in-vietnam-can-lead-to-further-growth/)

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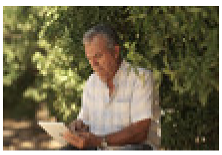

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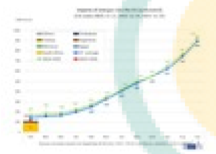

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