

South Africa lifts 2025 citrus and fruit export volumes

South Africa's agricultural exports reached US\$11.7 billion in the first three quarters of 2025, according to the Agricultural Business Chamber of South Africa. This represents a 10 per cent increase from the same period in 2024. Third-quarter exports totalled US\$4.7 billion, up 13 per cent year-on-year, supported by higher export volumes and firm commodity prices.

Fruit and vegetable exports continued to dominate the country's horticultural mix, including citrus, nuts, apples, pears, fruit juices, berries, grapes, pineapples, and avocados. Agbiz chief economist Wandile Sihlobo said port performance has shown improvement. "Although there remains a need for further improvement in port efficiency, we have witnessed a notable improvement compared to recent months," he said.

Africa remained South Africa's largest regional market, taking 34 per cent of agricultural exports in the third quarter. Key horticultural products included apples, pears, fruit juices, wine, nuts, and live animals. Asia and the Middle East accounted for 25 per cent of exports, with citrus, nuts, apples, pears, berries, grapes, stone fruit, and avocados among the leading products. The European Union absorbed 23 per cent, mainly importing citrus, grapes, nuts, fruit juices, tropical fruit, apples, pears, and berries.

Exports to the Americas accounted for 6 per cent. Shipments to the United States declined 11 per cent year-on-year in the third quarter to US\$144 million after the lapse of a temporary tariff pause. Sihlobo said earlier that front-loading of exports contributed to the slowdown.

FNB's head of agriculture information and marketing, Dawie Maree, said citrus availability, port operations, and demand supported export performance. "We had a good citrus crop and they've achieved record exports," he said. "There was some front-loading of exports to the U.S. while the Liberation Day Tariffs were on hold, and that also contributed to the increase in the exports."

TLU SA general manager Bennie van Zyl noted that the United States is a relatively small destination for South African citrus. "If you get some context, we export approximately over 200 million cases of citrus per year, of which about last

year, last season, was about 6 million to the United States," he said. "Our approach from TLU South Africa is that we should keep every market intact because there are lines through which the farmers export."

Source: Business Report (<https://businessreport.co.za/economy/2025-11-21-south-africas-agricultural-exports-surge-10-despite-trade-uncertainty-says-agbiz/>)

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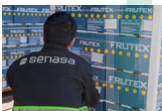
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