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Successful citrus season wrapped up

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South Africa's successful citrus season has been wrapped up, recording a 19% year-on-year increase in volumes handled at the end of September, according to Transnet Port Terminals (TPT).

The Durban Multi-Purpose Terminal was by far the most improved terminal, handling 131.6% more volume than last year, TPT said.

The Ngqura Container Terminal (NCT) also increased volumes by 35% this year, while Cape Town Container Terminal (CTCT) and Durban Container Terminal (DCT) Pier 2 increased volumes by 27.4% and 28.8%, respectively.

Michelle van Buren Schele, general manager for commercial and planning at TPT, said: "This year has been a remarkable achievement – and this is attributed to a bumper crop season, much improved terminal operational performance, and strong communication, teamwork and collaboration with customers and stakeholders. We would really like to thank all those that have made this possible."

TPT's R3.4 billion investment in equipment last financial year has seen almost all container terminals employ new and critical cargo handling equipment throughout the season. These include new straddle carriers, haulers, trailers and rubber-tyred gantry cranes, reach stackers and empty container handlers.

This financial year, TPT is rolling out a R4bn investment programme in operating equipment across five of its terminals.

According to the Citrus Growers Association, this year recorded larger fruit quantities and better quality due to both new orchards and the growing of fruits under nets.

South Africa exports to more than 100 markets worldwide with the European Union and the Middle East being the biggest consumers of this year's exports. The country remains the second-largest producer of citrus fruits in the world after Spain.

