South African citrus industry announces early end to European export season as goodwill gesture

By Fred Meintjes | 12 September 2025

Final Valencia orange inspections set for 20 September as South Africa reports exceptional demand and projects export volumes 12 per cent higher than pre-season estimates

The Citrus Growers' Association of South Africa (CGA) and the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (FPEF) have jointly announced an end to the country's 2025 citrus export season to Europe.

It is a move that the two organisations described as a goodwill gesture to European producers.

The final day of inspection for Valencia oranges exported to Europe, from those South African regions where Citrus Black Spot (CBS) is present, will be on Saturday 20 September.

It appears that South Africa has had a strong citrus season, with the final export volume projected to be more than 12 per cent higher than the pre-season estimate.

It also comes in the wake of the recent introduction of 30 per cent tariffs on South African citrus exports to the US and an early end to shipments to that region.

This underlines a season in which markets around the world showed ”an exceptional appetite for South Africa’s citrus”, according to the CGA.

The Western and Northern Cape provinces are registered as CBS-free regions and the closure of the season in Europe is therefore not affecting exports of the limited remaining volumes of mandarins from South Africa.

CGA and FPEF said the closure date give growers currently still packing one week to finalise their processes.

“As the South African citrus season in Europe comes to its natural end around the middle of October, this gives the floating consignments of approved oranges time to reach destinations in Europe.

They also noted that the decision allows the Northern Hemisphere to take advantage of current market conditions.

“It is in a spirit of continued and growing co-operation with European citrus producers, especially in Spain, that the South African industry now hands over the handling of citrus demand to the Northern Hemisphere,” the statement read.

“Consumers worldwide, including Europe, have shown an exceptional appetite for South African citrus,” they outlined. “Local citrus growers have packed substantially more fruit for exports to Europe than ever before.”

Growers in the northern and eastern parts of South Africa have confirmed that their 2025 season will soon come to an end.

The CGA has confirmed that more than 192mn cartons of all citrus categories are expected to be exported this year.

This is more than 20mn cartons more than the original estimate of 171.1mn cartons.

The latest projection shows a substantial rise in lemon volumes, from 32.9mn cartons to 41.1mn cartons.

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N[illegible] increased from 26mn cartons to 31mn cartons.

The final projection for Mandarins is 49.4mn cartons compared to the first estimate of 44.9mn, while Valencia exports also rose from 52mn to 55.5mn cartons.

Only grapefruit is slightly down compared to the original estimate.