

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

*"Trees that are slow to grow
bear the best fruit."
- Moliere*

OPPORTUNITIES WITH CHINA-SOUTH AFRICA FRAMEWORK DEAL

Last week's announcement of a framework trade deal between South Africa and China was a significant development for our growers, our industry, and the many rural communities whose livelihoods depend on export citrus. The prospect of tariff-free entry for South African citrus into China is a remarkable opportunity.

Many of our global competitors have existing free trade agreements and have long enjoyed preferential access to China. But the new framework deal can lead to a level playing field and expanded competition in one of the world's largest and most dynamic markets. The framework aims at an Early Harvest Agreement between South Africa and China by the end of March. This is encouraging. With our citrus season beginning in April, the timing seems perfect. We remain hopeful that producers will see the benefits in the coming season.

South African citrus production is on an upward trajectory. The record-breaking 2025 season only confirms what we see on the ground: our industry is scaling, innovating, and driving economic opportunity. But volume alone is not enough. To unlock the full value of increased production, we need expanded access to all markets - not only China, but also the European Union, the United States and India.

Improved trade conditions translate into job creation, rural development, and economic potential. These are not abstract benefits. They are livelihoods. They are families. They are communities knit together by the profitability of our industry. Congratulations to government for concluding the framework with China and we urge swift implementation.

South African citrus first entered the Chinese market in 2004. Over that time, export protocols have been revised repeatedly, with each revision strengthening trade and improving entry conditions. China's approach - grounded in scientific justification - is one we appreciate. These advancements show what is possible when both nations commit to ongoing scientific dialogue and trade facilitation.

It is fascinating to reflect that China is the home of citrus fruit. The earliest true citrus species supposedly evolved in south-central China around eight million years ago. Later species emerged in the Himalayan foothills - the very region closely linked to our other key market, India. As we pursue improved access to the Chinese and Indian markets, there is something poetic in reconnecting the South African citrus story with its ancient origins.

EXTENDED BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE FOR THE CITRUS SECTOR

Historically, the Business Intelligence dashboards on the CGA website have been restricted to citrus growers with a valid CGA Member Number. In 2026, these dashboards, reflecting daily inspection and export data, will be visible to South African exporters. To gain visibility of these dashboards, exporters are required to send their South African Business Registration number to albert@cga.co.za for validation. Information sessions on how to navigate and interpret these dashboards will be scheduled for March 2026. For any questions, please contact Albert at albert@cga.co.za.

CGA GROWER ROADSHOWS

The roadshows kick off next week with Boitshoko's team heading to Burgersfort, Hoedspruit, Letsitele, and the Limpopo River regions, while Paul's team head out to Groblersdal, Nelspruit, and the Onderberg regions.

During the week of 3-5 March, Boitshoko and his team will visit the Boland and Western Cape, and Northern Cape regions, while Paul and his team will visit Patensie, Sundays River Valley, and Eastern Cape Midlands regions. It will be KZN's turn on 11 March.

To RSVP or for further information, please contact tanya@cga.co.za.

INTERESTING FACTS

Chinese New Year in 2026 falls on 17 February, marking the start of the Year of the Horse. Gifting oranges and mandarins is a long-standing Lunar New Year tradition. Their bright colour symbolises prosperity, and the word jú (橘/桔) sounds similar to jí (吉), meaning "good fortune."

CGA GROUP INFO

CITRUS SUSTAINABILITY FORUM (CSF)

Date: Friday, 27 February

Time: 09h00 to 10h00

Registration:

<https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/39892188745794?p=K09YsBFJFSbZPSZNB9>

Meeting ID: 398 921 887 457 94

Passcode: Bn9P6go7

Contact: Paula Bester

(pb@cga.co.za)

Topic: Agrochemical residue analysis on citrus