

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

“Pressure is nothing more than the shadow of great opportunity.”
(Michael Johnson)

LATE MANDARIN ESTIMATES

The CGA has released its late Mandarin export estimate for the 2026 season, confirming stability in production in the category. The numbers show a slight decrease compared to last year's figures and represents a stabilisation after consecutive years of strong growth. The Leanri variety continues to show modest growth, increasing to an estimated 2.6 million 15kg cartons, a 13% increase from last year. Orri volumes are slightly lower, at an estimated 2.4 million 15kg cartons – down 11%. The “other late Mandarins” category shows growth of 11%, rising to an estimated 4 million 15kg cartons. The Nadorcott/Tango category shows a small decline of 1.6% to 30.5 million 15kg cartons.

With the late mandarin figures now included, the CGA can provide a complete export estimate for the season. Southern Africa expects to export approximately 209 million 15kg cartons of citrus, an affirmation of our growth trajectory, and once again a timely reminder of the need to continue to expand access across all strategic markets, including India, the European Union, and the United States. Improved market access across the board is needed to translate volumes into jobs and rural development.

CHINA: TARIFF-FREE ENTRY

China's new tariff regime for 53 African nations is very welcome news for the citrus industry at the start of the 2026 season. This comes amid the disquiet in the Middle East where 19% of citrus exports are destined to go. This development could provide important relief at a time when many are under pressure, considering the rising input and shipping costs. The immediate benefit of a 0% tariff on exports to China is considerable and makes our citrus more competitive in this market. China remains a market of significant growth potential for our growers.

THE SUMMERSTAR RUBY GRAPEFRUIT CAMPAIGN

This season also sees continued momentum behind the SummerStar Ruby campaign. Following success in 2025, a group of our growers have once again come together to drive a coordinated effort to reposition SA grapefruit in key European markets. For too long, grapefruit has been seen as a niche or outdated product, often associated with bitterness. Through a striking campaign, SummerStar Ruby is reshaping that perception - presenting grapefruit as a sweet, tangy and versatile fruit that fits naturally into modern, health-conscious lifestyles. The early results are encouraging. Strong engagement in Germany last year, combined with growing retailer support, has provided a solid foundation for expansion of the campaign into France and the Netherlands this season. This year's campaign goes further, including marketing initiatives such as QR code stickers on fruit, new social media activity, and a recipe competition. Changing consumer perception is not an overnight task, but the campaign shows that with focus, collaboration and consistency, we can unlock new value for our grapefruit and strengthen its place in the global citrus basket.

OBSOLETE PESTICIDES DESTRUCTION

The Crop Life SA Product Responsibility Organization (PRO) has embarked on cleaning up the Mpumalanga, Limpopo, and North West Provinces from obsolete plant protection product stock. The service will be available, free of charge, until August 2026. Growers who want to know how to partake in this initiative are encouraged to contact Gerhard Verdoorn (gerhard@croplife.co.za) and Mark Campbell (northernobspesticides@croplife.co.za).

PACKED AND SHIPPED VOLUMES

End of week 18 million 15 kg cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed	Vision 260
SOURCE: PPECB/AGRIHUB	2024	2025	2026	2025	2026	2026	2026	2025	2026
Grapefruit	5.3 m	5.1 m	4.8 m	3.2 m	3.2 m	17.8 m	17.8 m	15.3 m	15.5 m
Lemons	9.1 m	9.1 m	13.7 m	8.2 m	9.5 m	45.9 m	45.9 m	41.6 m	43.4 m
Mandarins	4.4 m	3 m	4.8 m	2.2 m	2.3 m	52.7 m	52.7 m	53.5 m	50 m
Navels	0.6 m	0.1 m	0.3 m	-	-	30 m	30 m	31.6 m	32.3 m
Valencia	-	-	-	-	-	63 m	63 m	62 m	67.8 m
Total	19.4 m	17.3 m	23.6 m	13.6 m	15 m	209.4 m	209.4 m	204 m	209 m

INTERESTING FACTS

The grapefruit got its name in the early 1800s because the fruit grows in grape-like clusters on trees. The name “grapefruit” first appeared in print in 1814 in a Jamaican work by botanist John Lunan.

CGA GROUP INFO CITRUS MARKETING FORUM (CMF)

Date: 29 May 2026

Time: 10:00am

Venue: Virtual

Link: Contact portia@cga.co.za