Citrus Growers' Association OF SOUTHERN AFRICA
Grower levies working for you!

Dr Boitshoko Ntshabele
10 July 2026
Week 28/26

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

"If you want something you've never had, do something you've never done."
(Thomas Jefferson)

ROAD TO RAIL UPDATE

Minister Barbara Creecy recently gave a keynote address at the 26th Africa Rail Conference and highlighted some issues around rail reform. We at the CGA of course keep our eyes on rail reform, as our industry continues to grow. As a country, we need to find ways to mitigate concerns regarding the logistics of transporting fruit, especially from our northern regions to ports down south. A significant amount of citrus must travel around 850km to the Port of Durban by road, so improved rail access is essential.

A 2025 study by the independent Bureau for Food and Agricultural Policy (BFAP) found that the combined direct and indirect cost of inefficient logistics to the citrus industry was a staggering R5.27 billion in the 2024 season. This is a monumental loss to our growers - but, importantly, also represents an overall foreign revenue loss and a setback to creating desperately needed jobs at a time when South Africa can least afford it.

As the CGA we have made - and continue to make - calls for large-scale private sector participation (PSP) at ports across South Africa. In January 2026, ICTSI took over responsibility for pier two in Durban, a significant and even historic step where PSPs are concerned, and we continue monitoring how this progresses.

Rail is crying for similar interventions, and the recent official conclusion of rail access agreements with eleven private operators is an important sign of progress. At the conference, the Minister rightly referred to its significance in our country's freight rail history. This is the type of forward-looking decisions that should be applauded but should also be practiced with more urgency.

The current export season is mired in a number of significant setbacks that I have reported on, weekly, to some perhaps almost ad nauseum! But these setbacks impact profitability for growers.
The Minister expects that the eleven train operators should begin operations as early as April 2027 - the time our season begins. It is our hope that agriculture features strongly in terms of prioritisation of goods to be moved from road to rail. In commenting on these, the Minister noted further that the private players would represent a departure from a sole service provider operator, as they would be competing in the market in terms of service quality and efficiency to the benefit of their customers.
As the current season progresses, and we anticipate reaching the export peak, we remain optimistic that the entire value chain will cooperate to ensure that fruit moves seamlessly from farm to the ports, and that it reaches destinations timeously. Quality of arrivals in destination markets will be a differentiator in a season that is proving to be full of surprises.

When the big shift to move goods from road to rail does happen, we hope that it will also help cut costs for our growers by eating into the R5.27 billion figure quoted above.

ORANGE HEART

Growers with fruit to donate, whether on the farm or at the port, are warmly invited to join the Orange Heart fruit drive. To take part, contact Sive Silo at sive@citrusacademy.org.za or 031-765 2514.

PACKED AND SHIPPED VOLUMES

End of week 27 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	12.3 m	12.7 m	12.5 m	11.2 m	11.8 m	17.8 m	16.4 m	15.3 m	15.5 m
Lemons	26.4 m	30.1 m	40.9 m	26 m	36.9 m	45.9 m	49.4 m	41.6 m	43.4 m
Mandarins	20 m	24.3 m	21.7 m	19.4 m	19.6 m	52.7 m	49.4 m	53.5 m	50 m
Navels	14.2 m	18 m	13.5 m	13.2 m	11.7 m	30 m	26.8 m	31.6 m	32.3 m
Valencia	7.4 m	9.7 m	6.6 m	6 m	3.8 m	63 m	62.6 m	62 m	67.8 m
Total	**80.3 m**	**94.8 m**	**95.2 m**	**75.8 m**	**83.8 m**	**209.4 m**	**204.6 m**	**204 m**	**209 m**

***Grapefruit Packed Distribution**: Class 1 & 2 volumes remained relatively stable at 9.7 m cartons (2026) vs 10.8 m (2025) and 10.6 m (2024), while PP volumes increased to 2.4 m cartons from 1.3 m in previous years.

INTERESTING FACTS

Did you know that South African citrus exports to India have grown with over 500% since 2019? Egypt currently remains the largest citrus supplier to India with an estimated 50% market share, followed by South Africa at 34%.

From the Desk of the CEO
WhatsApp group

CGA Logistics and Shipping
WhatsApp group

CGA Consumer Assurance
WhatsApp group

THE CGA GROUP OF COMPANIES (RIVER BIOSCIENCE, XSIT, CGA CULTIVAR COMPANY, CGA GROWER DEVELOPMENT COMPANY AND CITRUS ACADEMY) AND THE RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY CITRUS RESEARCH INTERNATIONAL, ALL PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SUPPORT TO THE CITRUS GROWERS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA