

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

"If necessity is the mother of invention, urgency is the uncle of change." (Nell Scovell)

CAN WE SHARPEN OUR TRADE DIPLOMACY MACHINERY?

My recent travel experience abroad has reaffirmed to me that engagement of any kind in a relationship between parties remains key in our quest to find opportunities for common ground, and even more so for our export-driven industries. This is also perhaps a testimony to the old adage: people buy from people they know, like and trust.

South Africa has the benefit of Embassies and High Commission across the world. We should ask: what is the return on investment? Of course, DIRCO has, admirably, begun this conversation itself, and highlighted the need to bolster normal diplomacy with the benefit of achieving economic return for all our diplomatic effort. We concur and call for a need to sharpen our trade diplomacy machinery and enable it to run effortlessly to address the trade issues that could benefit us.

Further, state agencies like Brand SA and Proudly SA, as well as the Department of Tourism at large, must be aligned if we are to succeed. We all need to be reading from the same hymn book. As part of this, we need government-industry alignment of a higher order, based on mutual respect, and understanding the roles that each of us can play. The success of our diplomats and bureaucrats is after all also our success - an economy flourishing and delivering much-needed jobs. At times, our engagements with some of these essential civil servants have felt more cautious than we might have expected, and we would welcome the opportunity to build greater mutual trust.

The fruit industry has in recent times coordinated and bolstered cooperation with government and achieved several wins, with the last being the signing by Minister Aucamp and the Chinese Ambassador of a cherry protocol. More can still be achieved if we target effort at urgent market access impediments, either of a sanitary and phytosanitary nature or those related to tariffs. Without sounding negative, counterparts and competitors are enjoying very favourable trade terms in some markets, to the detriment of the South African economy. If the 2025 "Liberation Day" tariffs have had a silver lining, it is the urgency they injected into trade negotiations. Since then, deals that once took years to conclude have been finalised at a pace that would previously have seemed unthinkable. We have read about them with regularity, but almost always signed elsewhere in the world. What are they getting right that we are not? We have an opportunity here to improve our agility.

BOOK ON THE HISTORY OF THE CGA

The development of the citrus industry after deregulation and the establishment of the CGA is a story worth telling. 2027 will be the 30th year of the CGA. It has been decided to publish a book covering these first 30 years. The writing of the book has been entrusted to Justin Chadwick who was CEO of the CGA from 1999 to 2025. The story is really about the citrus growers of Southern Africa - and Justin wants to collect some empirical data and anecdotal stories that will ensure that the book is a good read. In order to collect this information a questionnaire has been developed. Please could you take the time to complete the questionnaire. You will see that many of the questions are open ended. Please relate any memories or stories that you recall. The book does not only tell the story from 1999 but reflects on the regulated era as well; stories from that period would also be welcomed. Please use the link below to answer the questions; but do not be confined by the questions asked - all stories and reflections will be considered for the book. <https://survey.zohopublic.com/zs/IMBnhR>

PACKED AND SHIPPED VOLUMES

End of week 39 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	14.4 m	15.3 m	15.3 m	15.1 m	14.7 m	17.8 m	15.6 m	15.3 m	15.5 m
Lemons	34.7 m	41.2 m	50.9 m	40.3 m	48.2 m	45.9 m	51 m	41.6 m	43.4 m
Mandarins	41.6 m	53.1 m	50.4 m	50.1 m	48.5 m	52.7 m	50.5 m	53.5 m	50 m
Navels	25.1 m	31.5 m	25.1 m	30.5 m	24.2 m	30 m	25.2 m	31.6 m	32.3 m
Valencia	48.1 m	59.8 m	56.3 m	53.8 m	49.2 m	63 m	58.8 m	62 m	67.8 m
Total	163.9 m	200.9 m	198 m	189.8 m	184.8 m	209.4 m	201.1 m	204 m	209 m

* Grapefruit Packed Distribution: Class 1 & 2 volumes remained relatively stable at 12.5 m cartons (2026) vs 13.4 m (2025) and 13 m (2024), while PP volumes increased to 2.8 m cartons from 1.8 m (2025) and 1.4 m (2024).

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

INTERESTING FACTS

The South African Co-Operative Citrus Exchange – the first coordination body for the citrus industry – was registered 100 years ago on the 26th of August 1926.

For the latest South African citrus packed and shipped volumes, please visit the CGA website:

[Stats 01 – Shipping & Cold](#)
[Stores Stock Statistics](#)
[Dashboard | CGA](#)

CGA CITRUS SUMMIT

Registration for the 2027 CGA Citrus Summit is now open to **everyone!** We encourage you to register early to secure your place at the Summit from 9-11 March 2027!

There are still some sponsorship opportunities available – should you be interested, please contact tanya@cga.co.za.