Dr Boitshoko Ntshabele
6 November 2026
Week 45/26

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

"As much as talent counts, effort counts twice."
(Angela Duckworth)

AGRICULTURE NEEDS SUPPORT IF IT IS TO CONTINUE GROWING

In March of this year, the then Minister of Agriculture welcomed the latest Statistics SA gross domestic product (GDP) figures, which positioned the agricultural sector as the primary engine of South Africa's economic resilience. He added that the results solidified agriculture's role as the most significant stabiliser of the South African economy.

It is against this backdrop that I pause to reflect and take stock as we near the end of 2026. Can we still refer to agriculture as a stabiliser, or does the stabiliser now need stabilising? It has been quite a year, and the central event, the war in the Middle East, is almost certain to remain a factor in 2027, casting a shadow over agriculture's prospects. The sector's growth and contribution have been export-led, and if exports diminish or become uncertain, growth is unlikely, and stability will suffer. The summer is expected to be eventful, with erratic weather linked to the El Niño phenomenon. In addition, agriculture continues to suffer from crumbling infrastructure and roads, a volatile currency, high input costs, poorly performing ports, and scarce shipping opportunities. Yet growers and their workers keep going, continuing to produce to feed the nation and fulfil global supply chain requirements, exporting to earn foreign revenue for our economy.

Against this backdrop support must mean more than praising agriculture's resilience. It must mean addressing the infrastructure constraints (roads, ports and shipping) that make it harder for growers to reach their markets. If exports are to be sustained, getting produce to customers must be a priority.

I am not much of a cricket fan, but most recently I heard Proteas Test captain Temba Bavuma's reflections after his team's historic, hard-fought series victory against Australia. He noted that resilience was a word that they speak about as the Proteas team, adding that when things are tough physically, players must dig deep and find a way to contribute. It is this grit that we need to emulate as a sector and as a country when the stabilisers are less stable. Agriculture needs a solid strategy to address the challenges that it faces, but it also needs all hands on deck, so to speak. Like our cricket side recovering from being behind to claim the win, we must deliver a masterclass in survival and growth.

The global demand for South African produce is not in question, but the clouds have gathered. Agriculture can continue doing what our sports teams do: deliver a deeply grounded, unyielding performance that transforms volatile pressure into sustainable growth.

Let's stabilise agriculture and not leave too much too late and to chance!

INTERESTING FACTS

Oranges with red flesh tend to be richer in Lycopene, which is known to be a powerful antioxidant in the human diet.

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

There are still spots available for the 2027 CGA Citrus Summit, but it is filling up fast. We encourage you to register early to secure your place at the Summit from 9-11 March 2027!

We also still have a few sponsorship opportunities available – should you be interested, please contact tanya@cga.co.za.

PACKED AND SHIPPED VOLUMES

End of week 44 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	15.4 m	15.2 m	14.9 m	17.8 m	15.4 m	15.3 m	15.5m
Lemons	34.7 m	41.5 m	51 m	40.9 m	48.5 m	45.9 m	51 m	41.6 m	43.4m
Mandarins	41.7 m	53.5 m	50.7 m	52 m	49.3 m	52.7 m	50.7 m	53.5 m	50m
Navels	25.1 m	31.5 m	25.2 m	30.9 m	24.5 m	30 m	25.2 m	31.6 m	32.3m
Valencia	48.7 m	61.8 m	58.8 m	59.6 m	56.1 m	63 m	58.8 m	62 m	67.8m
Total	**164.6 m**	**203.6 m**	**201.1 m**	**198.6 m**	**193.3 m**	**209.4 m**	**201.1 m**	**204 m**	**209m**

* **Grapefruit Packed Distribution**: Class 1 & 2 volumes remained relatively stable at 12.6 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