

“Rudeness is the weak man’s imitation of strength” Eric Hoffer

KEY INSIGHTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE CITRUS SUMMIT

The CCA held the 5th Citrus Summit from the 11th to the 13th of March 2025 in Gqeberha. The theme of the Summit was: *Tough times don’t last, tough people do*. Here are some thought-provoking take-away points, gathered from the presentations and discussions:

- Geopolitics continue to be characterised by rapid change, complexity and uncertainty. These are driven by developments in the USA under Trump 2.0. The Trump administration continues on a protectionist path imposing tariffs on trade partners. The EU's politics are also shifting to the right, while at the same time the EU is forced to become more unified in facing shared threats. All these factors have implications for market access, and in the case of South Africa, continued access to the USA market through AGOA is threatened. South Africa has to diversify market access for its citrus and seek opportunities offered by BRICS+ countries, whilst also improving access through better tariff regimes. EU market access remains challenging due to the maintenance of unnecessary measures against CBS and FCM.
- We need to match a time of flux with different thinking about new markets and new opportunities.
- India, as a market opportunity, should clearly feature in the citrus industry's future planning.
- Sustainability: the EU green deal has been revamped, with more consideration taken of EU farmers. A requirement for the mirroring of EU legislation to third countries is pursued. Policies on sustainability raise compliance requirements and costs. The important question: are we going to mitigate or pay the deferred adaptation cost?
- Trade promotion offers significant opportunities for market development to reignite attention on ‘neglected products’. Growers are invited on a journey, and to trust a process that could see the decrease in grapefruit consumption turn around.
- Production and Trade dynamics: oranges, mandarins and lemons have seen increasing production in the last five years, while grapefruit is declining.
- Logistics: Transnet reforms continue and Public Sector Participation remains a policy focus. SA has opportunities to attract additional shipping partners to service fruit industry exports, underpinned by a spirit of cooperation and collaboration. Continuing on the current logistics trajectory will be detrimental to the long term growth of the citrus industry.

LOOKING BACK OVER A QUARTER OF A CENTURY

There is one thing that separates the southern African citrus industry from the rest – the quality of the people who have dedicated their lives to this industry. Since 2015 the CGA has recognised those who have played a leading role by recognising them as Citrus Legends. Citrus Legend status is bestowed on those who fit one or more of the following criteria – they have played a meaningful role in the creation and development of the CGA as a truly representative organisation; they have played a meaningful role in the grower sector, putting group interests ahead of their own, or they have played a meaningful role in the citrus industry as a whole. Employees of the CGA Group are not eligible for nomination. Over the years, the following people have received such recognition: Hoppie Nel, Peter Nicholson, Jock Dankwerts, Hennie Le Roux, Freek Dreyer, Edward Vorster, Milaan Thalwitzer, David Lotter, Gerrit van der Merwe (Snr), John Purchase, Arend Venter, and Kallie Schoeman. At the 2025 Citrus Summit this past week, three new Legends were recognised: Louis von Broembsen, Mikhail Fateev, and Fanie Meyer. The next few newsletters will unpack the factors that has made these three figures worthy Legends.