

Western Cape floods cause two-week harvesting delay for citrus

At a time when the export season is at its peak, weeks of torrential rain in the Western Cape have delayed citrus harvesting in Citrusdal. Still, citrus growers in the area remain hopeful; they are continuing to work hard to get things back to normal.

Heavy and consistent rainfall over large parts of the province has left many people displaced and led to the damage of infrastructure and the closure of access roads. Citrusdal is among some of the areas worst affected by infrastructure damage and road closures

Justin Chadwick, CEO of the Citrus Growers Association, reports that it is very difficult to put a rand value on what has been lost. "In terms of crop, the whole area has lost between 10% and 15% of its crop. Early navels and Clementines are affected especially."

The CGA reported that about 60% of the early cultivars were harvested when the worst rain hit. Harvesting in the area is about two weeks behind in total now – one week's delay from rain, and one week's delay from the floods, Chadwick said.

Source: foodformzansi.co.za