

A tense calm in the Sundays River Valley but citrus workers not yet returning



On the eve of a long weekend, an uneasy calm has returned to the towns of Kirkwood and Addo.

Work has not yet resumed at the packhouses and in the citrus orchards of the Sundays River Valley and the citrus industry is waiting for feedback from yesterday's community meeting.

News outlet New Frame reports: "Commercial farmers in the area, the Sundays River local municipality's ANC mayor, Simphiwe Rune, and the provincial leadership of the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) agreed in a meeting on 26 April to suspend the shutdown for 14 days" to "give farmers time to respond to workers' demands".

The article, called '[Sundays River Valley strike put on ice for 14 days](#)', continues that the Sundays River Valley Citrus Producers' Forum has said it would not agree to the wage demand but that it would investigate "allegations of unlawful or unfair conduct" by farmers, levelled by SANCO.

A citrus exporter from the area says they're hoping packing will resume next week, after the long weekend.

Farm workers not involved in the illegal strike have been prevented through intimidation from going to work.

As events escalated, police re-enforcements were brought into the valley and the South African Police Service, in conjunction with the area's strong private security contingent, did manage to prevent further incidents of arson and violence, FreshPlaza was told (though some opine that the South African Police Service took too long to react).

The scale of damage wrought in a week of violent protests, leading to at least one killed, is greater than during [the 2018 strike](#) in the Sundays River Valley, affecting not only white but black growers as well.

Publication date: Fri 29 Apr 2022

Author: [Carolize Jansen](#)

© [FreshPlaza.com](#)