

“Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves” Carl Jung

SOUTH AFRICA’S CASES AGAINST EU CITRUS MEASURES MOVE FORWARD AT WTO

With the support of the CGA, South Africa has this week requested the establishment of two panels at a meeting of the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to examine what, in South Africa’s view, are unscientific and discriminatory measures placed on citrus imported from South Africa by the European Union (EU).

These steps were taken to address the EU’s regulations on two separate plant health issues: Citrus Black Spot (CBS) and False Codling Moth (FCM). The regulations are being challenged by the South African government to protect the livelihoods of tens of thousands of people in the local citrus industry.

Currently, South African citrus growers are spending billions of rands per year to comply with CBS and FCM measures that the industry considers unscientific and unnecessarily restrictive as South Africa already has an effective world-class risk management system that ensures safe citrus exports. Emerging citrus growers are especially hit hard by the EU measures.

The request to establish the two panels is a significant development. This is the first time that South Africa progresses a dispute at the WTO beyond the panel state of the established DSB process.

On 15 April 2024, South Africa requested consultations with the EU on the CBS matter, which initiated a process that has ended without any results. On FCM, South Africa initiated consultations in July of 2022, with no satisfactory conclusion as well. Panels will now be formed on both matters. While the EU did not at this time accept South Africa’s request for the two panels, the set DSB procedure is that the requested adjudication panels will be established at its next meeting in July. A DSB panel report can be expected in about nine months.

The Government's representatives reiterated the legal basis of their complaints at the WTO headquarters in Geneva. These included the following arguments:

- The measures are not based on scientific principles and are maintained without sufficient scientific evidence.
- The measures are applied in a manner that is not in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, of which the EU is a signatory.
- The EU fails to apply the measures in a uniform, impartial, and reasonable manner.
- The measures are more trade-restrictive than required to achieve protection, and there are reasonably available alternatives which are technically and economically feasible, that would achieve protection in a significantly less trade-restrictive manner.

This is taken from a media release by Department Trade, Industry and Competition; Department Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development; and the CGA. For the full media release, contact tanya@cga.co.za

PACKED AND SHIPPED

The Orange Focus Group met this past week and made marginal decreases to the latest prediction, meaning that the total volume now falls slightly below the 170 million carton mark.

End of Week 25 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed	Vision 260
SOURCE: PPECB/AGRIHUB	2022	2023	2024	2023	2024	2024	2024	2023	2024
Grapefruit	13.9 m	10.8 m	11.2 m	9.5 m	9.8 m	16.8 m	14.5 m	14.7 m	16.2 m
Mandarins	13.8 m	16.4 m	15.9 m	12.5 m	12.4 m	43 m	42.7 m	38 m	39.6 m
Lemons	21.9 m	24.7 m	22 m	20.8 m	18.2 m	37.9 m	35.8 m	35.6 m	39 m
Navels	13.7 m	12.2 m	11.1 m	7.6 m	7.5 m	25.7 m	21.8 m	24.8 m	22.3 m
Valencia	3.4 m	3.9 m	3.3 m	1.7 m	1.6 m	58.3 m	55 m	52 m	55.4 m
Total	66.7 m	68 m	63.5 m	52.1 m	49.5 m	181.7m	169.8 m	165.1 m	172.5 m