

## South Africa releases stonefruit estimate

Hortgro has released its latest stone fruit estimates, a downward adjustment for plums, nectarines and peaches while apricots performed better than was expected a few months ago. Their new estimates reflect lower volumes (smaller fruit) and lower packouts as a result of wind, sleet and hail marks in many cultivars. In general most cultivars' harvest is about a week later than other years but the brix levels of plums are higher this year.

### Plums

Exports on early plum cultivars are 9% down, expected to drop to 13% on the mid and late cultivars, bringing the estimate for the entire season to -12% (estimated at -4% at the start of the season). Wind and hail have played a role in lower packouts, as has sunburn and a decrease in cosmetic appearance of some red and black plums, like Fortune (22% down YTD by week 3, which brings it back to the volumes of two years ago) and Lady Red (32% down YTD week 3). Ruby Sun has bucked the trend with an increase of 45% compared to last year, primarily because of new orchards coming into production, Hortgro says.

The Laetitia harvest will peak this week. A lighter harvest is expected, more than half a million equivalent 5.25kg export cartons fewer than during the 2015/16 season and the lowest export crop in five years. The cultivar is down on fruit size, peaking at between AA and B. Hortgro notes that pack houses are not under pressure due to an extended Laetitia harvesting period.

For African Delight a reduction of 9% is predicted, standing at more than 1.3 million cartons for the season, but traders report good size, perhaps as a result of the fact that this cultivar was prioritized in terms of water allocation in expectation of good export opportunities.

"African Pride/Sunkiss export volumes are considerably lower compared to the previous season (-26%)," says Hortgro, noting that it nevertheless had very good sugar levels and eating quality.

It continues: "Sun Supreme and Flavor King are drawing to an end during weeks 5 and 6. Export volumes are expected to be down by -14% (Sun Supreme) and -9% (Flavor King) respectively. "

Songold plums (-11%) have benefited from hot growing conditions in the Cape.

Cultivar	2015/2016	2016/2017	2 yr avg	2017/2018 Estimate	2017/2018 vs 2016/2017	
<b>Actuals</b>						
AFRICAN ROSE	391 370	469 472	430 421	472 007	1%	
PIONEER	286 733	249 395	268 064	153 936	-38%	
SUPLUMTWENTYFIVE/BLACK GIANT®	52 796	72 733	62 764	56 101	-23%	
SAPPHIRE	575 688	637 241	606 465	499 738	-22%	
SOUVENIR	172 878	167 504	170 191	126 806	-24%	
RUBYSUN	59 616	119 592	89 604	172 922	45%	
PURPLE MAJESTY	338 908	367 159	353 033	361 874	-1%	
BLACK PEARL	155 212	196 192	175 702	165 670	-16%	
OTHER	85 051	175 440	130 246	209 641	19%	209 641
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2 118 252</b>	<b>2 454 728</b>	<b>2 286 490</b>	<b>2 218 695</b>	<b>-10%</b>	
<b>Mid and Late Season</b>						<b>Inspected YTD prelim week 3</b>
AFRICAN PRIDE/SUNKISS	537 398	478 451	507 925	351 884	-26%	307 805
BLACK DIAMOND/SUPLUMELEVEN	133 890	159 224	146 557	133 319	-16%	118 699
FORTUNE	790 956	982 489	886 723	790 672	-20%	720 166
LADY RED	293 399	287 303	290 351	239 436	-17%	180 831
SUN SUPREME	199 890	281 917	230 904	225 954	-14%	83 468
FLAVOR KING	294 656	285 222	289 939	260 414	-9%	12 156
LAETITIA	1 712 828	1 536 786	1 624 808	1 177 473	-23%	31 790
LARRY ANNE	212 887	313 210	263 039	243 619	-22%	
SUN BREEZE	87 285	115 618	101 441	99 618	-14%	
SONGOLD	1 284 050	1 177 695	1 230 872	1 051 806	-11%	
AFRICAN DELIGHT	1 044 197	1 468 171	1 256 184	1 337 466	-9%	689
RUBY STAR	268 650	532 940	400 795	571 051	7%	750
ANGELENO/SUPLUMSIX	925 174	1 038 852	982 013	918 366	-12%	
SOUTHERN BELLE	669 401	559 852	614 626	505 654	-10%	
SEPTEMBER YUMMY	27 355	67 572	47 464	56 832	-18%	
FLAVOR FALL	238 487	293 275	265 871	292 702	0%	
OTHER	235 475	335 606	285 640	300 632	-10%	99 973
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8 955 917</b>	<b>9 894 386</b>	<b>9 425 152</b>	<b>8 556 678</b>	<b>-14%</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>11 074 170</b>	<b>12 349 114</b>	<b>11 711 642</b>	<b>10 775 373</b>	<b>-13%</b>	

## Nectarines and peaches

The nectarine picture shows positive growth of 2% compared to last season, on the back of a 23% growth in Super Star® and almost a doubling of N47-31 (Luciana), among early cultivars, and a 39% increase in Snow Pearl. August Red is expected to be 6% down when it starts this week.

Good news is that a normal Summer Fire harvest is expected with good fruit size and August Bright even up by 15% as a result of new plantings.

“The Red Jewel, Ruby Diamond and Summer Bright harvest drawing to an end during week 4. Export volumes are expected to decrease by -20% (Red Jewel), -18% (Ruby Diamond) and -18% (Summer Bright) respectively,” reports Hortgro.

The peach season is in its final stretch, 4% lower.

## Apricots

The apricot season has closed, only 7% down on the previous season. In October last year Hortgro had predicted that apricot export volumes would be 17% down. Apricots were in an alternate bearing year, but all was not doom and gloom: there was a 144% jump in Soldonne volumes, albeit from a very low base. The dominant varieties of Charisma were 1% up and Imperial/Palsteyn 18% down.

Lien article : <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/188772/South-Africa-releases-stonefruit-estimate>