

Cargo planes hitch hits fruit exporters as EU orders rise

Shortage of fruits and vegetables has hit the European market, compelling countries to reopen orders cancelled following the emergence of Covid-19.

Local exporters are now getting orders for vegetables and fruits such as avocado from countries like UK, France, Belgium and Germany according to Fresh Produce Consortium of Kenya (FPC).

However, challenge remains low space for ferrying the consignments given most airlines have grounded operations because of the pandemic.

“We are getting massive orders for vegetables and fruits but we are facing a serious shortage of space on freight carriers,” said the chief executive officer of FPC Ojapat Okesegere.

He said cargo flights ferrying produce to Europe are few. Most of the countries in Europe are on a lockdown where movement has been restricted except for essential purposes such as buying food.

Apart from domestic supplies, European countries rely on America and Africa to boost stocks. The US is in a state of a lockdown extended to April 30 by President Donald Trump, following a sharp increase in the number of people affected by coronavirus. A four-kilo packet of avocado is selling at Sh1,495 in Europe with prices expected to shoot following new orders from countries like Spain, France and the Netherlands.

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