

South African citrus industry wants to expand markets

Apart from the 2-million tonnes of citrus expected to be exported in 2020 by the South African citrus industry, a further 500,000 tonnes is forecast for the next three to five years. This will generate further export revenue and create more jobs in the industry.

An additional R6.8 billion (€340 mln) in foreign exchange earnings and 2,250 sustainable jobs is predicted in growth projections for soft citrus, lemons and Valencias over the next three years. However, if the industry fails to expand its access into overseas markets over the next few years, it runs the risk of an oversupply of the region's exports. This would result in lower prices.

That is why citrus industry experts have been working on gaining entry into the Philippines for the past 11 years; an effort that is now bearing fruit. There is now a green light to export to the country, after the recent signing of a workplan between the department of agriculture, land reform & rural development and the Philippines Bureau of Plant and Industry (BPI). This new market presents an export potential of 20,000 tonnes of citrus and export earnings of about R205m annually.

As reported on businesslive.co.za, it would be a great positive to also gain re-entry to the key market of Vietnam. In 2012, the local industry exported 2,000 tonnes of citrus to the country. However, SA lost access the next year due to an administrative mistake, which caused our citrus not being included in the country's approved permit list.

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