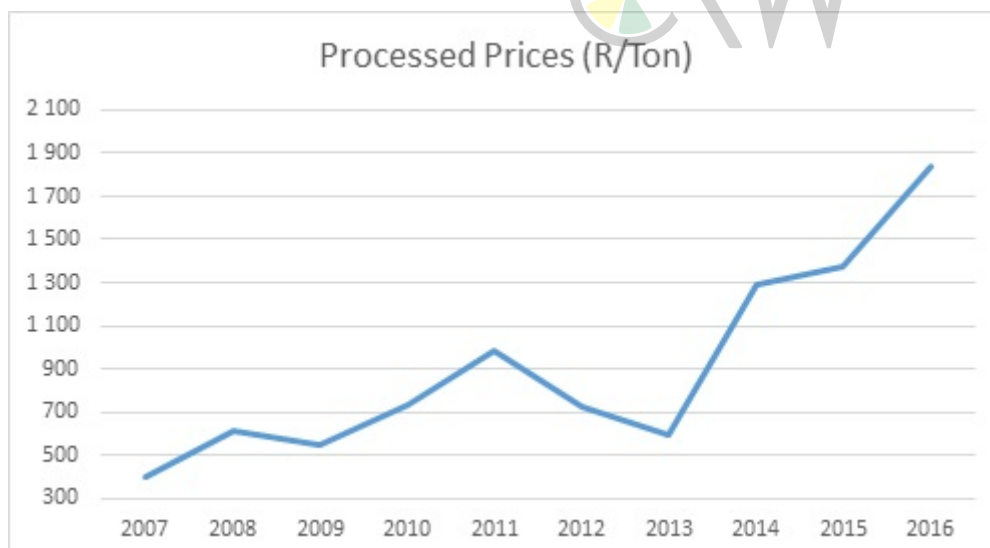


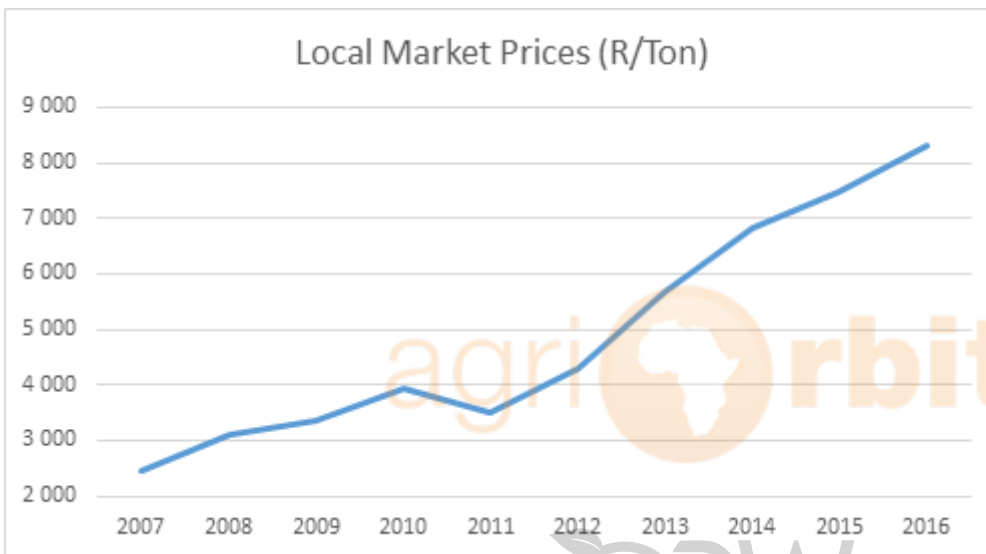
## Chadwick on the SA lemon industry

December 13, 2017



Lemon growers who persevered through the period 2000 to 2010 welcomed the change of fortune for the sector after 2012/2013. Due to a number of reasons, prices climbed to historic highs. On the supply side the biggest southern hemisphere exporter suffered a number of years of climatic difficulties, as did many other lemon producing countries. On the demand side the health attributes of lemons attracted many to the sector, especially in Asia





Diversion of lemons to the export market had an effect on local markets and processed returns as lemons became a scarce commodity. Growers became attracted to the sector, resulting in new plantings across the country. These plantings are aimed at producing export grade fruit, and already prices are under pressure. Although official 2017 prices have as yet not been published, reports indicate a sharp decrease in price in most markets.

The lemon plantings over the past five years are now starting to reach maturity and production is on the increase. After 2 years of 15 million carton export volumes, 2017 saw a record 19 million cartons being exported. Whereas the 2012 tree census showed 5 514 hectares under lemons, the 2017 census shows a doubling to 11 685 hectares. Export volumes are expected to remain on the increase, and prices to come under pressure.



Every destination for South African lemons experienced an increase in volume in 2017, except the UK, which dropped from 1.5 to 1.4 million cartons. The Middle East remains the forerunner, increasing from 6.5 to 7.5 million cartons. Europe is second, increasing from 3.2 to 3.8 million cartons. Both South East Asia (2 to 3 million) and Russia (1 to 2 million) increased by a million cartons. North America increased marginally from 0.6 to 0.8 million cartons. – *Justin Chadwick, CGA*

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