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South Africa seeks agriculture boost in post-Brexit trade deal

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South Africa sees opportunities to sell more of its agricultural produce to the UK under a post-Brexit trade agreement, according to Trade and Industry Minister **Rob Davies**.

“The UK doesn’t have the sensitivities of some of the countries from southern Europe that see us as competitors,” Davies said, referring to wine and fruit. “In the longer and medium terms, it may well be that we can improve our access into the UK market for those products.”

Davies made the comments on January 24, while he was in the UK for talks to ensure that trade was not interrupted when the country left the European Union (EU). The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), signed last year between the EU and the five-nation Southern African Customs Union, would form a template for new UK-South Africa trading rules, Davies said.

Exports of South African citrus to the EU have been periodically blocked in recent years owing to objections from farm groups in Spain, which competes with South Africa as a producer of the fruits. The groups said they were concerned about the possibility of black-spot disease from South Africa infecting their trees.

South Africa and Spain are major suppliers of oranges and other citrus fruit globally and the African country is the world's seventh-biggest wine producer.

Much

of the EPA would remain in place but the countries would have to renegotiate quotas for some products before the Brexit process was complete, Davies said. "There's nothing that's going to require a huge amount of negotiating effort on both sides."

The Southern African Customs Union consists of South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho and Swaziland. 🇿🇦



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