

# CGA addresses climate, sustainability, and logistical challenges in South Africa's citrus industry

Justin Chadwick, CEO of the Citrus Growers' Association (CGA), in a discussion with Farmer's Weekly, highlighted the season's lower export figures, attributing them to unpredictable climate-related disruptions. Chadwick emphasized the CGA's commitment to equipping growers with adaptive tools, mentioning the promotion of sustainable farming practices. He noted that nearly half of South Africa's citrus farms have adopted solar power to reduce grid reliance, alongside other practices like mulching to enhance soil health and minimize pesticide use. However, the financial implications of such sustainability measures, like the R2 million (\$ 110,825.00) investment for solar power to cover 30% of a farm's energy needs, cannot be overlooked.

Market demands and the lack of uniform sustainability standards have introduced additional challenges, leading to efforts to harmonize sustainability metrics with banks and agricultural partners. Moreover, logistical issues at South African ports, particularly delays in the Transnet-ICTSI deal at Durban Pier 2, have further complicated export processes, underscoring the need for more efficient public-private partnerships in container terminals.

The domestic shift towards increased local processing of citrus for juice presents new market opportunities but also warns against overreliance on fluctuating juice prices. Chadwick stressed the importance of maintaining fresh citrus exports, especially to high-value markets like China and India, to absorb increased production from recent plantings. Sustainability remains a central focus, with the CGA supporting various initiatives, including drip irrigation and the SIZA Environmental Standard, to balance resource efficiency with profitability.

Despite the challenges faced in 2023, the CGA remains optimistic, viewing the season as a learning opportunity to strengthen strategic partnerships and foster innovation in the industry.

Source: Farmer's Weekly (<https://www.farmersweekly.co.za/agri-news/south-africa/citrus-industry-faces-hurdles-as-export-volumes-fall/>)

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The logo for Fresh Plaza features the word "Fresh" in a teal, sans-serif font above the word "Plaza" in the same font. A thin yellow horizontal line separates the two words. To the left of the text is a stylized graphic consisting of a teal semi-circle on the left and a yellow semi-circle on the right, resembling a sun or a fruit slice.The logo for CRW features a stylized fruit slice icon on the left, composed of several colored segments (red, yellow, green, and orange) arranged in a circular pattern. To the right of the icon are the letters "CRW" in a grey, sans-serif font.