The United Kingdom accounts for 31% of Southern African citrus exports and the rest of the European Union for an additional 33 %. Other export destinations are the Middle East (12 %), Japan (6 %) and the USA (4 %).

Although nearly 25 % of total production is processed on average, it contributes only 4 % to the total value of production, while the 25 % of total production that is locally consumed as fresh fruit, accounts for the remaining 15 % of the total value of production.

Important stakeholders

The Citrus Growers' Association of South Africa (CGA), which is mandated to maximise the long-term profitability of its members, funds a number of programmes by means of a statutory levy of 1,4c/kg on exports. These programmes include research on disease management, integrated pest management and fruit-quality enhancement. Other programmes include citrus improvement, market access, transfer of technology and industry transformation.

Research is conducted by Citrus Research International (CRI), the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), various universities and private institutions. Expert programme committees chaired by citrus growers determine which research proposals should be supported and CRI coordinates the funding distribution.

Citrus SA was established by citrus producers with the intention of enhancing the position of citrus farmers. Producers and accredited exporter agents collect, process and disseminate relevant information to solve marketing problems.

The ARC's Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Crops in Nelspruit breeds new varieties, and houses the citrus quarantine station. Propagation material is multiplied at the CRI's Citrus Foundation Block (CFB) in Uitenhage. The CFB then sells budwood for propagation to the commercial citrus nurseries.

The Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) provides internationally preferred food, safety, quality and assurance services to promote and instil confidence in the agricultural products of South Africa.

Acknowledgement of main sources of information

- Directorate Agricultural Statistics of the Department of Agriculture (DoA)
- Citrus Growers' Association (CGA)
- Capespan (Pty) Ltd
- Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB)
- Citrus Research Institute (CRI)

Contact details of some stakeholders

Representative body	Organisation	Web page	E-mail	Telephone number
Producers (statutory levy financed)	SA Citrus Growers' Association.	www.cga.co.za	justchad@iafrica.com	+27 31 765 2514
Producers voluntary levy financed)	Citrus SA	www.citrussa.co.za	gerrit@iafrica.com	+27 21 975 7220
Research	CRI	www.cri.co.za	jeandeg@cri.co.za	+27 13 759 8000
Statutory body (export)	PPECB	www.ppecb.com	ho@ppecb.com	+27 21 930 1134

September 2003
Published by Department of Agriculture
Obtainable from Resource Centre, Directorate Agricultural Information Services, Private Bag X144, Pretoria 0001, South Africa

CITRUS *profile*

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
DEPARTMENT: AGRICULTURE

Directorate Economic Analysis

Background

Orange and lemon orchards formed part of the South African landscape for more than three centuries. Jan van Riebeeck planted the first citrus trees in 1654 near Table Mountain. Since then the citrus industry has grown and now earns nearly R2 billion per year. This is approximately 4,5 % of the total Agricultural Gross Value of Production and although the Southern African citrus industry produces only 1,5 % of world production, it is the third largest exporter of citrus after Spain and the USA.

There are approximately 1 300 export farmers and 2 200 small farmers (100 trees or more) who supply the local market. It is estimated that these farmers employ approximately 100 000 workers who support roughly 600 000 dependants. Apart from primary citrus production being labour intensive, it is further estimated that export citrus creates four job opportunities in the entire industry chain for every hectare planted.

Production

Citrus can be produced on a wide range of soil types, provided the soil is well-drained to the first metre in depth. The critical constraint for citrus production is soil moisture. Available irrigation water is therefore essential before production can be considered.

Citrus trees thrive in a wide range of climatic conditions, provided the winters are almost frost-free. The climate of South Africa varies from the summer rainfall subtropics in the north to a Mediterranean-type climate with winter rainfall in the Western Cape. This enables the production of a wide range of citrus types throughout the country, and also ensures the provision of fresh fruit over a long season.

Valencia and navel oranges are by far the most popular types planted in South Africa, followed by grapefruit, mandarins (soft citrus) and lemons. The most important production areas are in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo Provinces.

Also of interest, is the geographical distribution within the different citrus types. In the case of Valencia oranges, cultivation is mostly centred in the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces, while the cultivation of navel oranges, lemons and mandarins appears to be favoured in the cooler areas of the Eastern and Western Cape. Grapefruit varieties, on the other hand, are mostly planted in the hot, humid areas of Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal.

On average (1996/97 to 2001/02), 1,6 million tons of citrus fruit valued at approximately R1,7 billion were produced annually,of which oranges are by far the most important.

TABLE 1. Average citrus production and value of production per main citrus type (1996/97 to 2001/02)

Item	Production		Value	
	('000 t)	(%)	(R'000)	(%)
Oranges	1 038	65,3	1 036 012	60,8
Grapefruit	240	15,1	208 248	12,2
Lemons	108	6,8	128 900	7,6
Mandarins (soft citrus)	203	13,2	330 387	19,4
Total	1 590	100,0	1 703 548	100,0

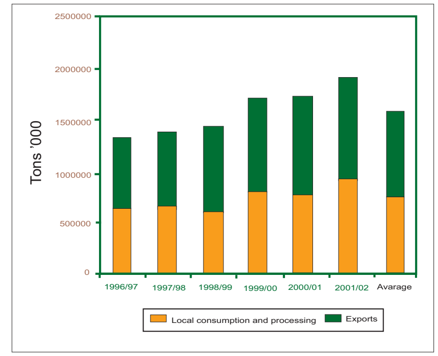
Citrus production is primarily focused on export and is therefore highly exposed to competition. Maintaining a good (cost competitiveness) position, high fruit quality (which includes compliance with phytosanitary standards) and keeping abreast with changes in world market trends are of the utmost importance.

Despite increased competition in the global market, citrus production has increased, on average, at a rate of 7 % per annum since the 1996/97 production year (Fig. 1). This is achieved through the adoption of varieties that are in demand, the use of plant protection products and techniques that are expected by discerning markets, and minimising costs.

Consumption, marketing and trade

Trends in citrus production have shown a steady increase since the 1996/97 production year (Fig. 1). The variation in the figure can be ascribed to the weather in citrus-producing areas, which influences fruit supply to the markets. In years of surplus, more fruit is sold on the local market where the prices are lower. The citrus industry in South Africa is primarily export directed, with very little imports.

On average, 54 % of the total citrus production is exported, 25 % is processed and 21 % is locally consumed as fresh fruit. Exports accounts for 81 % of the total value of production. Oranges make up 70 % of export volume. Grapefruit (16 %), lemons (8 %) and mandarins (6 %) are the other important citrus types exported.



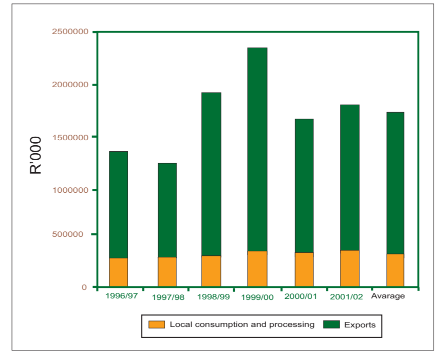


FIG. 1: Destination and utilisation of South African citrus (1996/97 to 2001/02)