

Spain calls South Africa WTO dispute “threats and blackmail”

South Africa presented its second official consultation with the European Union in the World Trade Organization (WTO) regarding the bloc’s phytosanitary trade regulations for citrus earlier this week.



Present rules aim to stop false codling moth and Citrus Black Spotting (CBS) from spreading in Europe.

Now, Spain’s Citrus Management Committee ([CGC](#)) is responding to the inquiry, calling it “threats and blackmail”. The CGC brings together and represents private citrus exporters in Spain.

The committee argues that the fruit is indeed a “scientifically proven means of contagion” and not a cosmetic problem as the South African citrus sector has assured.

“The necrotic lesions generated by the disease prevent citrus fruit from being marketed fresh due to severe loss of yield and quality, and is therefore considered the most serious fungal pathogen,” the group said in a release.

Related articles: [South Africa launches second WTO dispute against EU citrus regulations](#)

According to CGC, South Africa has continued to lead rejected shipments on the European border.

“This is blackmail, a threatening and dissuasive action to stop the Commission from requiring the effective fungicides they should already be using,” CGC President Inmaculada Sanfeliu said in the release.

The South African citrus sector’s official April 15 announcement said the industry “cannot afford the almost 2 billion rands needed to comply with the EU’s trade restrictive regulations.”

The WTO has yet to publicly announce the dispute and set a date for open consultations.