

SA Citrus Association CEO speaks up against EU citrus trade regulation

South Africa's Citrus Growers Association CEO, Justin Chadwick, has spoken up against the new plant health regulations imposed by the European Union on [South African citrus](#).



Last week, South Africa's government requested the establishment of two dispute panels to review measures set by the European Union that affect the trade of South African citrus fruit into the EU. This is the first time the country has requested the establishment of a panel under the WTO's dispute settlement system.

Chadwick deemed the cases a "matter of serious concern for South African agriculture," and added that complying with these measures would place an immense burden on local citrus growers, who would have to spend billions annually just to adhere to the proposed measures.



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The regulations were imposed to protect the EU from the fungus *P. citricarpa*, or citrus black spot (CBS), and *Thaumatotibia leucotreta*, or false codling moth (FCM). South Africa responded by saying the new measures are restrictive and not based on scientific principles.

According to the WTO, "consultations with the EU aimed at resolving the dispute took place but did not resolve in a mutually agreed solution." [The European Union has maintained](#) its position and believes that the pest control measures are entirely justified and that they "would succeed in any court proceedings."

According to Chadwick, South Africa already has a world-class and robust plant health system. Complying with these regulations would create unnecessary animosity between both countries and increase consumer prices.

He added that the process ahead at the World Trade Organization will be closely watched and that the citrus industry is working closely with several departments, such as the Department of Trade, Industry, and Competition and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, during the process.

The panels on CBS and FCM are likely to be established within 45 days, with hearings and reports scheduled to be completed within six months. An appeal is possible, but the DSB should reach a final ruling on both issues within 18 months at the most.

