

Storms cause delays at South African ports

A series of storms and heavy rains have caused struggles at ports in Cape Town and the Eastern Cape of South Africa.



Citrus growers have been particularly affected, causing harvesting, which was resumed on July 15, to be paused temporarily.

Mitchell Brooke, Logistics Development Manager at the Citrus Growers' Association (CGA), told [FreshFruitPortal.com](https://www.freshfruitportal.com) that bad weather has unfortunately coincided with the peak of citrus season.

"Most oranges are making their way to the ports now, so we are working with Transnet to manage any bottlenecks as best we can," Brooke said.



Ten days of strong storms left significant damages to supply routes in the Cape regions, forcing port activities to halt.

Even though Brooke shows optimism about the season, stating that "we estimate that we can catch up completely in, at most, two weeks - both at the ports and on the production side," local leaders have warned that unless urgent steps are taken, food shortages will be experienced in the Citrusdal region and large community of farms in the area.

The town of Citrusdal in the Olifants River Valley, and along with it a substantial part of the citrus export crop, has for the third time in the last 18 months been cut off from the outside world.

Despite the delays in harvesting and shipping, the industry was confident that it would be able to maintain supplies, Gerrit van der Merwe, chairperson of CGA, said.

"One vessel due to sail to the USA has been cancelled but if all goes well normal shipments will resume next week," van der Merwe said.

Additionally, Brooke believes that as weather predictions look now, things will clear up fast in the next few days.

