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Valencia inspections for EU exports to close

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South Africa's citrus industry will end packhouse-level inspections of Valencia oranges destined for the EU on September 27. Source: Magnific

The South African citrus industry will end inspections of Valencia oranges destined for Europe from most production regions later this month.

The Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) and Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (FPEF) said September 27 will be the final day of inspection at packhouse level.

The deadline applies to Valencia oranges produced outside the Western Cape and Northern Cape. It gives growers and exporters time to complete outstanding orders and export programmes.

The measure does not prevent consignments inspected and cleared before the deadline from being shipped afterwards. It also does not apply to fruit from the Western Cape and Northern Cape.

South Africa has used similar voluntary end-of-season deadlines in previous years to manage phytosanitary risks associated with the European Union (EU) market. Most South African citrus-producing regions

are affected by citrus black spot while the Western Cape and Northern Cape are recognised as free from the fungal disease.

However, the CGA and FPEF did not indicate that citrus black spot interceptions prompted this year's decision.

South Africa's Valencia export estimate was recently lowered to about 58 million 15kg cartons from an initial forecast of approximately 63 million cartons.

The country's overall citrus export forecast has also been revised down to 205.3 million cartons from the pre-season estimate of 209.4 million.

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