

Hannes de Waal, MD of SRCC

South Africa: Exporting organic lemons not worth the risk

A couple of weeks ago the South African Citrus Growers decided not to export organic lemons to Europe from the CBS areas in the country. Organic lemons from non CBS growing regions will still be exported.

Hannes de Waal, MD of SRCC, who pack and export the fruit of SOGA, the Sundays River Organic Association, said that while it was a major blow to the exporters it was the right thing to do.

"We cannot use chemicals when growing organic fruit and while we do have 'clean' orchards it not worth the risk," explained Hannes.

"The export of organic lemons to Europe was a very good business especially in countries such as Germany, Austria and The Netherlands but we will survive it and we trust that this unselfish gesture by the organic producers will benefit the industry as a whole. We still have the Canadian market where we have exported to for years and we are doing a lot of development work in the Middle and Far Eastern markets. SOGA also has a processing factory and can export organic juices and other products.

He goes on to say that while organic fruit is beginning to take off in the Middle and Far East it will be a long, slow progress and won't take off any time soon.

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