

South Africa's fruit exports rise on strong 2025 harvests

South Africa's agriculture sector continues to show signs of recovery in 2025, with the table grape industry among the latest to report improved performance. The total table grape harvest inspected for the 2024–25 season reached 78.9 million cartons, representing a 4% increase year on year, according to the South African Table Grape Industry.

This growth is largely attributed to favourable weather conditions and improved farming practices that have enhanced yields. Despite this, the area under table grape cultivation remains at 19,488 hectares, down from 21,798 hectares in the 2018–19 season. The decline in plantings reflects ongoing cost pressures in certain regions. © Agbiz

The table grape industry, being heavily export-oriented, also recorded a positive trend in international trade. South Africa exported 77.8 million cartons of table grapes, an increase of 5% compared to the previous year. The European Union continues to be



the dominant export market, receiving about two-thirds of the shipments, followed by the United Kingdom at 18%, North America at 10%, and smaller volumes going to the Middle East, the Black Sea, Asia, and Africa. The heavy reliance on these key markets highlights the need to maintain strong trade relationships while exploring new opportunities to diversify exports.

Beyond table grapes, South Africa is expecting strong harvests in other major fruit categories, including citrus and deciduous fruits. These developments support broader observations that production conditions across many fruit-growing regions have generally been favourable. Improvements in logistics have further supported export activity, although challenges remain at the ports. Continued collaboration among industry stakeholders is seen as essential to maintaining and enhancing the efficiency of fruit exports.

At the same time, while the fresh produce sector shows promising signs of growth, not all parts of the agricultural economy are recovering at the same pace.

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