Dr Boitshoko Ntshabele
17 July 2026
Week 29/26

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

"You cannot look in a new direction by looking harder in the same direction."
(Edward de Bono)

GROWING MARKETS TO GROW THE ECONOMY

This week I attended the launch of the Western Cape Export Strategy 2035 by the Western Cape government. The strategy reinforces an important principle: export growth is achieved through coordinated action between government and the private sector. Building on national initiatives such as the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan (AAMP), it recognises market access as a key driver of economic growth, investment and job creation.

This vision closely aligns with our industry's Vision 260. Our focus of the potential to export 260 million cartons of citrus is about creating jobs, earning foreign exchange, and driving rural economic growth. Achieving this requires productive orchards, efficient logistics, reliable infrastructure, sustainable water management, expanded market access and reduced trade barriers. In other words, every sphere of government, together with industry, has a role to play in ensuring South Africa remains a globally competitive export nation.

Against this backdrop, economic diplomacy has become more important than ever. As geopolitical shifts reshape global trade and regional conflicts continue to disrupt logistics, strong international partnerships are essential to secure existing markets and unlock new opportunities.

The CGA's Citrus Tasting Event, held on 1 July 2026, in celebration of International Fruit Day, demonstrated the value of these relationships. Bringing together diplomats from our established European markets and emerging Asian markets, the event showcased the diversity and quality of South African citrus while reinforcing an equally important lesson: market access alone is no longer enough. As production grows, consumer education and market development must grow alongside it to ensure demand keeps pace with supply.

Our investment in market development continues to demonstrate tangible returns. South African citrus exports to India increased by an impressive 85% during the past season, albeit from a low base. With India chairing the BRICS Summit later this year, we are hopeful that BRICS itself will reimagine how trade takes place, both within and beyond the bloc, and that member countries will move beyond political relations to strengthen trade ties for the benefit of their people. At the same time, the global trading environment continues to evolve. As new partnerships emerge and longstanding relationships are renewed, as seen with the UK and the EU, South Africa must be ready to seize opportunities. The US, which receives citrus from the Western and Northern Cape, last week held hearings investigating the introduction of a 12,5% tariff, following the end of the IEEPA tariffs in February 2026. The DTIC made submissions, and with this, we might hopefully avoid a tariff levied on citrus or at least have the rest of our citrus varieties excluded from tariffs, as is the case currently with oranges since November 2025.

While geopolitics, tariffs and shifting trade relationships are beyond our control, our response is not. By strengthening partnerships, expanding market access and investing in market development, we can seize new opportunities while protecting existing ones. Whilst growth is an imperative, Vision 260 should also enable the building of a resilient, globally competitive industry that creates lasting value for growers, our economy and the millions of consumers around the world who love South African citrus.

Interesting fact: According to South African Revenue Service (SARS), citrus export earnings reached approximately US$2.47 billion in 2025, equivalent to R44.8 billion. These earnings directly support rural economies around the country.

PACKED AND SHIPPED VOLUMES

End of week 28 million 15 kg cartons	*Packed*	*Packed*	*Packed*	*Shipped*	*Shipped*	*Original Estimate*	*Latest Prediction*	*Final Packed*	*Vision 260*
SOURCE: PPECB / AGRIHUB	2024	2025	**2026**	2025	**2026**	2026	**2026**	2025	**2026**
Grapefruit	12.7 m	13.2 m	13.1 m	11.8 m	12.1 m	17.8 m	16.4 m	15.3 m	15.5 m
Lemons	28.2 m	32.3 m	43.4 m	27.7 m	39.3 m	45.9 m	49.4 m	41.6 m	43.4 m
Mandarins	22.2 m	27.1 m	25.2 m	21.7 m	22.1 m	52.7 m	50 m	53.5 m	50 m
Navels	15.4 m	19.8 m	14.7 m	15.4 m	13 m	30 m	26.8 m	31.6 m	32.3 m
Valencia	9.9 m	12.7 m	9.1 m	8 m	5.7 m	63 m	62.6 m	62 m	67.8 m
Total	**88.4 m**	**105.1 m**	**105.5 m**	**84.6 m**	**92.2 m**	**209.4 m**	**205.2 m**	**204 m**	**209 m**

***Grapefruit Packed Distribution**: Class 1 & 2 volumes remained relatively stable at 9.7 m cartons (2026) vs 10.8 m (2025) and 10.6 m (2024), while PP volumes increased to 2.4 m cartons from 1.3 m in previous years.

INTERESTING FACTS

According to South African Revenue Services (SARS), citrus export earnings reach approximately US$2.47 billion in 2025, equivalent to R44.8 billion. These earnings directly support rural economies around the country.

CGA GROUP INFO

CITRUS MARKETING FORUM (CMF)

Date: 31 July 2026
Time: 10:00am
Venue: MS Teams
Link: Please contact portia@cga.co.za to receive the link

From the Desk of the CEO
WhatsApp group

CGA Logistics and Shipping
WhatsApp group

CGA Consumer Assurance
WhatsApp group

THE CGA GROUP OF COMPANIES (RIVER BIOSCIENCE, XSIT, CGA CULTIVAR COMPANY, CGA GROWER DEVELOPMENT COMPANY AND CITRUS ACADEMY) AND THE RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY CITRUS RESEARCH INTERNATIONAL, ALL PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SUPPORT TO THE CITRUS GROWERS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA