

Fruit SA newsletter: July–August '26

CEO's note



The rising wave of global uncertainty is clearly not going anywhere any time soon.

To continue to effectively navigate global uncertainty and for sustained viability, it is wise for us as players in the South African fruit industry to continue to focus on the things that we *can* still control as an industry. What comes to mind are critical pre-harvest choices like cultivar selection, and farming practices that perpetuate the narrative for which the South African fruit industry has become world-renowned: producing premium-quality fruit and demonstrating growing compliance with market requirements.

And as the month of Women's Day draws to a close, I'd like to recognise and commend the women in the industry for all that they do. Regardless of the level of their role, the industry benefits notably from their output.

Market access

Survival of the future-fit

That which was just recently deemed the future, is now here. And what's currently in the future, will soon become commonplace.

Hence, remaining future-fit has become mandatory for any South African economic sector. For players in the R86 billion export-oriented fruit industry, this means remaining agile, with its finger on the global pulse of change.

In a telling audio-visual snapshot of her role, Fruit SA Market Access Liaison Manager Sahabne Ullah shares insights that explore the global terrain within which the South African fruit industry currently operates.

She also highlights as her key focus areas, facilitating the opening of new markets, addressing trade barriers, and strengthening key trade relations. Importantly, a robust

logistics ecosystem and other supporting infrastructure are critical for realisation of the industry's GRO strategy, which is to gain, retain and optimise markets.

Looking to the future, Sahabne believes these major global shifts to have the most anticipated impact on global fresh produce trade: climate change, increased trade and phytosanitary requirements, and shifting consumer demand patterns.

Click the picture to view Sahabne's video.



Corrigendum

Reports by member associations and the National Agricultural Marketing Council reveal production declines in 2014 and 2016, mainly due to climatic challenges and water scarcity. These resulted in an overall decline in exports.

Hence, **Figure 1** depicts revised figures – since the May–June 2026 newsletter edition – regarding South African fruit exports per market segment (tonnes), 2013–2024.

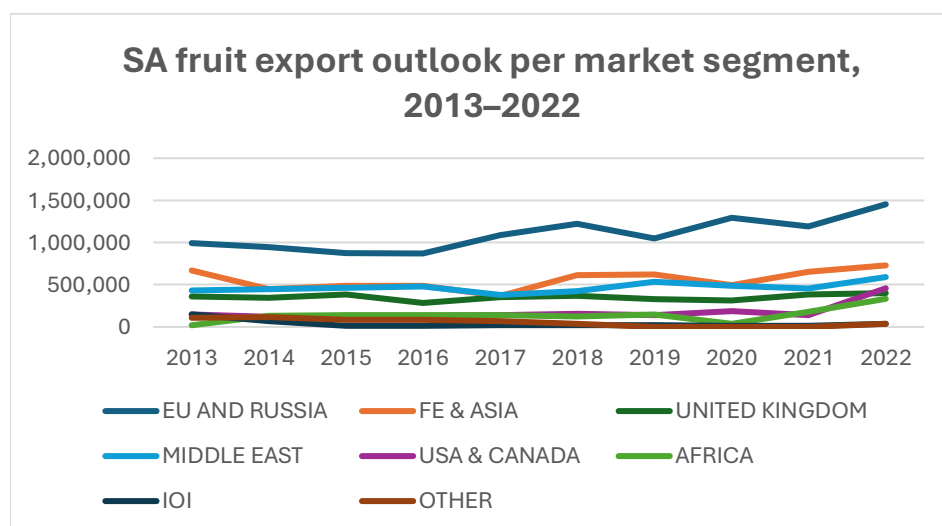


Figure 1: Revised graph for segmented SA exports, 2013–2022

Sustainability

In August 2026, SIZA (Sustainability Initiative of South Africa) celebrates its “10th year as an independent organisation dedicated to supporting ethical, social and environmental sustainability in South African agriculture”.

SIZA was established by Fruit South Africa in 2008. And it remained a programme until its establishment as an independent entity in 2016. Industry players have since watched the organisation grow in leaps and bounds, to the self-sustainable entity that it is today.

Sustainability remains on the strategic radar of the South African fruit industry, and the critical role SIZA plays in this regard cannot be over-emphasized.

In recognition of the SIZA milestone and reflecting on its journey, Fruit SA shared this input, which was published in the SIZA celebration publication: *10 Years of Building Trust and Responsible Compliance*.

“Access to international markets is critical to the sustainability and growth of the South African fruit industry. One of the key enablers of this access is effective compliance with the market and regulatory requirements of export destinations.

Since its establishment in 2008 and its evolution into an independent entity in 2016, SIZA has played an important role in reducing the compliance burden on the industry.

It has helped growers and packhouses avoid the need to meet multiple ethical and environmental standards and to undergo numerous audits required by different retailers. In addition to being relevant in the local context, SIZA’s recognition by more than 360 buyers globally strengthens the South African fruit brand and builds trust among international buyers. The principle of continuous improvement, which is central to SIZA’s approach, as well as continuous training and support also help businesses enhance their labour and environmental practices. The industry has further benefited from the visibility provided by the MySIZA platform.

Through SIZA, the industry has been able to respond to a changing ethical and environmental landscape while maintaining access to key markets. This continued access is vital to the industry’s contribution to South Africa’s socio-economic development. We also acknowledge the foresight of the industry in establishing SIZA.”

Fruit South Africa remains proud to be associated with this important programme and extends its congratulations to SIZA on its 10-year milestone.

Information management and communication

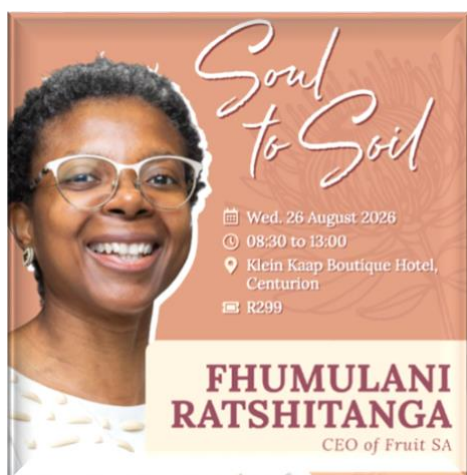
Key Fruit Statistics, 2024/25

The recently published Key Fruit Statistics for the 2024/25 season provides insights into production, area planted, exports and market trends across the fruit sectors represented by Fruit SA. Here is [further reading](#).



A selective snapshot of event attendance since the last edition

For Fruit SA, in-person interactions are vital, to strengthen partnerships and to showcase key features of the dynamic South African fruit industry.



At the Food for Mzansi/AGDA “Soul to Soil” event, Fhumulani participated in a panel titled “Shaping the future of SA agriculture”. She was joined by the rest of the Fruit SA team.



SIZA Conference:
Fhumulani participated in a panel on the role of grievance programmes in value-chain effectiveness



Recognition at the Women's Voices in Agriculture Awards



The latest iteration of an AgriJob CareerConnect session, at the University of Pretoria. Fruit SA maximises these opportunities to showcase the myriad of career opportunities in the fruit industry.



Fruit SA at the inaugural Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa Citrus Day in Citrusdal, and the Citrus Tasting



Fruit SA attended the 250th anniversary of the USA signing of the Declaration of Independence celebration at the US embassy in Pretoria. South African dignitaries joined US Ambassador to SA L. Brent Bozell III for the proceedings of the day.