# South African citrus exports face stricter UK import rules

South African citrus exports to the United Kingdom could face stricter phytosanitary requirements from mid-2027 under proposals to align Great Britain's sanitary and phytosanitary rules with those of the European Union.

In their latest Consumer Assurance Update, the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) and Citrus Research International (CRI) state that citrus exported to Great Britain would need to meet the same phytosanitary requirements as fruit destined for the EU if the proposals are implemented.

Under the proposed changes, orchards supplying the UK market would have to register under the EU phytosanitary system. Exports would also require orchard, packhouse and PPECB inspections, together with phytosanitary certification covering citrus black spot, false codling moth, fruit flies and citrus scab.

The proposals would also reduce exporters' ability to redirect fruit to the UK market, as consignments not prepared under the EU phytosanitary system would no longer automatically qualify for export to Great Britain. Negotiations between the UK and EU are ongoing.

The CGA and CRI also expect Great Britain to realign maximum residue limits (MRLs) for crop protection products with EU limits. They further note that proposed changes under the EU Food and Feed Omnibus package could lower MRLs for certain active substances no longer approved in the EU to the limit of quantification.

The organisations state that the South African citrus industry is advocating for residue limits based on independent consumer risk assessments rather than the approval status of active substances.
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