

SummerStar Ruby answers the food doctor's call

By [Fred Meintjes](#) | 27 July 2026

There new South African SummerStar Ruby grapefruit campaign is underpinned by a strong health message



Image: CGA

A few years ago, Dr David Hughes, also known as “Dr Food”, made a passionate plea to the world’s table grape industry during a conference in Cape Town that it should use the health story of table grapes to boost consumption.

There are many recorded instances of product categories across the world carrying out convincing studies in their own countries about the health-giving qualities of their fruit. However, despite the same varieties being planted around the world, it has always been difficult to apply one study to

other parts of the world due to regional variations in growing conditions such as soil, water, sun and production practices.

Fortunately, Hughes' plea has not fallen on deaf ears. South Africa's grapefruit industry has published its own health message for its Star Ruby grapefruit to boost its SummerStar Ruby campaign, which enters its peak this week.

Paula Bester, food safety specialist, at the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA), says grapefruit has always been known for its immunity boosting power. "They're highly sought after in the colder months when people are eager to load up on Vitamin C and avoid winter colds and flu. But the wellness benefits of grapefruits go way beyond Vitamin C and SummerStar Ruby is becoming a popular addition to health-forward summer menus and diets," she notes.

Apart from bringing a whole new approach to consumption of Star Ruby grapefruit, Bester says the fruit has many obvious health benefits including slow releasing-carbs, minerals, vitamins and fibre. "They also have beneficial phytochemicals which have antioxidant properties and offer protection that decreases the risk of many diseases. In my opinion, this makes them a super food," she adds.

Bester notes that while the summer holidays offer an opportunity to slow down, recharge and get some much-needed rest, many people get sick as soon as they start relaxing. "Grapefruit is rich in Vitamins A and C, which helps your body fight colds, the flu, and other illnesses. They also help reduce inflammation and may speed up recovery if you're sick."



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And, she adds, grapefruit contains [healthy plant compounds called flavonoids](#), which are known for their health benefits. "Many of us are guilty of enjoying food and drink a bit too much over the summer holidays. And while grapefruit should not be viewed as a way of counteracting overindulgence, its antioxidant power will at least offer notable benefits when added into your diet," she says.

Grapefruit has the added benefit of being low in calories but highly nutritious. "They're full of water and fibre and help you [feel full for longer](#). This can reduce snacking and sweet cravings, supporting weight loss when part of a healthy diet," says Bester.

But if there is one thing that those living in Europe and the UK may value above everything else right now, it's that Star Ruby grapefruit can help to counter the effects of the dreaded heatwave that have been dominating these regions this summer. "One of the downsides of long hot summer days is increased exposure to the sun, which can have damaging effects on your skin," says Bester. "While grapefruit can't prevent sunburn, it is known to contribute to healthier skin."