



BEYOND THE PACKHOUSE: Redefining Performance and Profitability



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Control Union



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University of the Western Cape



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Dear Delegates,

It is with great pleasure that we invite you to secure your place at the forthcoming Packhouse Investment & Tariff Summit 2026, a premier gathering of industry leaders, technical experts, policymakers, and investors shaping the future of agricultural exports.

In today's rapidly evolving global trade environment, packhouses have become far more than processing facilities; they are strategic hubs that determine product quality, compliance, market access, and ultimately, profitability. This conference is designed to place you at the centre of these critical conversations.

By attending, you will gain:

Strategic Industry Insight

Engage with leading experts and decision-makers as they unpack the latest developments in export markets, tariff structures, and global trade dynamics affecting South Africa and the broader African region.

Practical, Technical Knowledge

From post-harvest handling and cold chain optimisation to automation and packhouse technologies, the programme delivers actionable insights that can be implemented directly within your operations.

Overview

South Africa's fruit and fresh produce industry remains globally competitive, underpinned by strong export systems, high-quality standards, and reliable supply chains. However, an increasingly complex global trade environment is reshaping how the sector operates.

Evolving tariffs and shifting trade agreements are making market access less predictable, requiring greater precision in classification, documentation, and export planning. At the same time, stricter compliance standards—particularly in key markets such as the EU and UK—are raising expectations around phytosanitary control, traceability, and sustainability. These pressures are driving new investment requirements.

As the critical link "from orchard to market," packhouses sit at the centre of:

- Export readiness and phytosanitary compliance
- Tariff classification and customs efficiency
- Market access and preferential trade agreements
- Infrastructure investment and modernisation
- Sustainability and traceability requirements
- Automation and technology for optimised performance
- Food safety and compliance (GLOBALG.A.P./BRCGS alignment, recalls, batch tracking)

Packhouses must modernise through automation, digital systems, and enhanced cold chain infrastructure to remain efficient and compliant. Increasingly, they are also

expected to demonstrate environmental and social responsibility.

Today, packhouses are no longer just processing facilities—they are strategic hubs critical to export readiness, compliance, and global competitiveness.

This conference aims to provide clarity, strategic insight, and practical guidance

on how the packhouse industry can strengthen competitiveness in both established and emerging markets.



Target Audience

Who Should Attend?

- Packhouse managers and supervisors
- Fresh produce exporters and agri-business owners
- Agricultural engineers and post-harvest specialists
- Food safety and quality assurance professionals
- Agritech companies and solution providers
- Cold chain and logistics service providers
- Government agriculture departments and trade agencies

Investment & Growth Opportunities

Explore how strategic investment in infrastructure, technology, and value chain integration can unlock export growth, enhance competitiveness, and drive job creation.

Access to High-Level Networks

Connect with government representatives, export councils, producers, logistics specialists, and international stakeholders—opening doors to partnerships, collaboration, and new market opportunities.

Future-Focused Solutions

Position yourself and your organisation ahead of the curve by understanding emerging trends in compliance, sustainability, and global market requirements.

Set against the backdrop of the Western Cape one of Africa's leading export regions, this summit offers a unique platform to learn, connect, and grow within a high-impact environment.

Whether you are a producer, exporter, packhouse operator, investor, or policy stakeholder, your participation will not only enhance your own strategic positioning but contribute to strengthening the agricultural value chain across the region.

We strongly encourage you to confirm your attendance early to secure your place among industry leaders shaping the future of agriculture.

Conference Objectives

Africa's Agricultural Export Potential

An in-depth exploration of Africa's capacity to expand its presence in global agricultural markets. Discussions will focus on key growth regions, high-value crops, trade enablers, and the role of infrastructure and policy in unlocking export potential.

Future of South Africa's Citrus Exports

A forward-looking analysis of South Africa's citrus industry, including production trends, emerging markets, regulatory challenges, and strategies to maintain global competitiveness.

Global Citrus Trade Opportunities

Insights into international demand patterns, new and emerging markets, and opportunities for exporters to diversify and strengthen their global footprint in the citrus sector.

Cold Chain Integrity

A critical look at maintaining product quality throughout the supply chain. Topics include temperature control, logistics coordination, risk mitigation, and innovations in cold storage and transportation.

Export Market Access for Fresh Produce

Examination of trade agreements, phytosanitary requirements, tariffs, and non-tariff barriers affecting market entry. Strategies for overcoming challenges and expanding access to key international markets will be discussed.

Automation and Technology

Exploring the role of modern technology in agriculture and logistics, including automation, data analytics, AI, and smart farming practices that enhance efficiency, productivity, and traceability.

Agribusiness Investment & Competitiveness

Discussion on attracting investment into agribusiness, improving value chains, and strengthening competitiveness through innovation, policy support, and sustainable practices.

Global Shipping Trends in Fresh Produce Trade

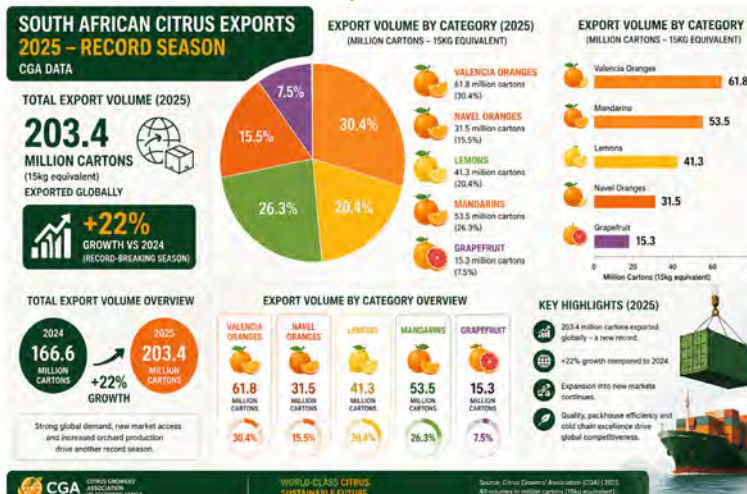
An overview of evolving shipping dynamics, including freight costs, route optimization, port performance, and the impact of global disruptions on fresh produce logistics.

Shipping Capacity & Container Logistics

Focused insights into container availability, shipping capacity constraints, and solutions to improve efficiency and reliability in transporting perishable goods.

Future of Agricultural Exports

A strategic outlook on the future of agricultural exports, considering climate change, global demand shifts, sustainability, and technological advancements shaping the next decade.



AGENDA DAY 1

26 November 2026

08:30-09:00	Registration
09:00-09:15	Welcome & Opening Remarks Pending confirmation due to cabinet reshuffle Department of Agriculture (To be advised)
09:15-10:00	Opening Address Overview of the Cape Town Agricultural Export Market: Opportunities, Constraints, and Future Growth Speaker: Mr Terry Gale
10:00-10:45	Keynote Address Global Trade Outlook for Fresh Produce: Tariffs, Shifting Demand & Supply-Chain Risk (EU/US/Asia/Africa) Speaker: Dr Boitshoko Ntshabele
10:45-11:00	NETWORKING BREAK
11:00-11:45	Market Access & Phytosanitary Requirements - Managing sustainable citrus exports. Speaker: Dr Elma Carstens
11:45-12:30	Logistics & Port Performance: Transnet role in Advancing South Africa's Food Security and Improving Global Trade Competitiveness through Concessions Speaker: Dr Dineo Mazibuko
12:30-13:30	LUNCH
13:30-14:00	Freight & Logistics Coordination: The Role of Freight Forwarding and Logistics Coordination in Enhancing Packhouse Export Efficiency of Agricultural Goods in South Africa Speaker: Mr Develyn Naidoo
14:00-14:30	Tariffs & Trade Uncertainty: Interpreting Current Preference Frameworks, Risk Planning, and Alternative Routes to Market. Contingency Planning for Exporters and Packhouses Speaker: Mr Leon Marais
14:30-15:00	Industrialisation & Agricultural Transformation Speaker: Ambassador Tebogo Seokolo
15:00-15:15	BREAK
15:15-15:45	Panel Discussion: The Economic Power of Agricultural Exports <i>The Real Economic Impact of Agricultural Exports on South Africa's Growth and Jobs</i> <i>Why Packhouses are Central to Competitiveness, Compliance, and Market access</i> <i>The Gap Between Current Packhouse Capacity and Global Market Demands</i> <i>How Tariffs, Costs, and Inefficiencies Affect the Entire Value Chain</i> Panellists: Mr Buhlebemvelo Dube Agricultural Economist: NAMC Ms Zama Sangweni Economist: ABSA Mr Paul Makube Senior Economist: FNB
15:45-16:15	From Presorting to a Labor-Free Pack Line: The Role of Deep Learning in Packhouse Automation Presenter: Pim Hermans
16:15-16:45	Regulatory Frameworks & Compliance Speaker: Dr Francois Knowles
16:45-17:00	TBA Speaker: Mafroda

END OF DAY ONE

AGENDA DAY 2

27 November 2026

08:30-09:00	Sustainable Packhouse Infrastructure Building the Sustainable Packhouse: Energy, Water & Green Infrastructure Speaker: Mr Sisa Xolo
09:00-09:30	The Green Packhouse: Carbon Markets, ESG & Export Compliance Speaker: Ms Sabrina Basson

09:30-10:00	Food Safety & Traceability (GLOBALG.A.P./BRCGS Alignment, Recalls, Batch Tracking) Speaker: Ms Anneli Smit
10:00-10:30	BREAK
10:30-11:15	Keynote Address: Blueberry Industry Outlook and Challenges Speaker: Dr Herman van Dyk
11:15-12:45	Packhouse Automation Grading, Vision Systems, Data Capture) Speaker: Mr Norman Nieder-Heitmann
12:45-14:00	LUNCH
14:00-14:20	Tech Talks: AI & Automation in Action Predictive Analytics in Fresh Produce Value Chain to Enhance Decision-Making, Marketability and Competitiveness. Speaker: Dr Ikechukwu Opara - Affiliation: University of the Western Cape.
14:20-14:40	AI in Postharvest Systems: Artificial intelligence is Transforming Postharvest Systems Through Smarter Sorting, Real-Time Monitoring, and Predictive Decision-Making— Building More Efficient, Resilient, and Profitable Ecosystems. Speaker: Prof Clement Nyirende
14:40-15:00	Smart Packhouse Solutions Leveraging Innovation and Integrated Systems to Enhance Packhouse Performance, Throughput, and Operational Control. Speaker: Mr Hans Zietsman
15:00-15:15	BREAK
15:15-15:35	AI Optimisation Systems Using Real-Time Data, Automated Grading, and Predictive Analytics to Improve Efficiency, Reduce Waste, and Maximise Profitability. Speaker: Mr Rory Cole
15:35-15:50	Data-Driven Supply Chains Connecting Orchard Insights to Packhouse Operations through AI to Enhance Forecasting, Grading, Logistics, and Market Responsiveness. Speaker: Mr. Liaan Janse van Vuuren
15:50-16:15	Data-Driven Packaging: Transforming the Packhouse Value Chain Speaker: Mr. Cornel Oosthuizen
16:15-16:45	Future of Export-Ready Packhouses Speaker: Mr Ziv Ben-Ami
16:45	Closing Remarks & Vote of Thanks

Participating Companies



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