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SOUTH AFRICAN APPLE AND PEAR EXPORT ESTIMATE

A normal pome fruit season is anticipated despite drought conditions affecting certain production areas. Although initially fruit size is slightly smaller than expected, the overall eating quality (including sugar content) is very good. In general colour development and cosmetic pack-outs looks promising at this stage. The harvesting season commenced roughly a week later compared with the previous season. The overall expectation for the export crop remains good with apple volumes expected to increase by 3% whilst pear volumes is anticipated to be in line with last year.

Pome fruit export estimate (12.5 kg equivalent cartons)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2 yr Avg	2017 Est	Estimate vs 2016	
Apples	28 672 346	34 740 044	27 127 687	33 063 328	34 063 266	33 563 297	34 940 469	877 203	3%
Pears	14 233 483	15 832 419	16 248 989	15 360 718	17 775 364	16 568 041	17 846 200	70 836	0%
Total	42 905 830	50 572 464	43 376 676	48 424 046	51 838 630	45 900 361	52 786 669	948 039	2%

The increase in apple volumes is mainly driven by new plantings and young orchards coming into production. The major varieties contributing to the growth in apple export volumes are Fuji (+7%), Royal Gala/Gala (+3%) and Golden Delicious (+2%).

Despite the growth in pear plantings over the last couple of years, pear volumes is expected to be in line with last year. A decrease in export volumes of Williams Bon Chretien (-16%) is expected due to smaller fruit size, a good demand from the canning industry and a lack in demand from the Northern Hemisphere importing countries. On the other hand, export volumes of Packham's Triumph (+3%), Forelle (+3%) and Abate Fetel (+5%) is expected to increase compared to the previous season.

A tough season in terms of grower returns and profitability levels is anticipated as a result of the strengthening of the Rand against the major currencies (US Dollar, UK Pound and Euro).



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