

SA apple and pear industry to bounce back in 2024

South African producers of pome fruits are anticipating a resurgence in exports. This optimism follows a reduction in the pome fruit export crop in 2023 due to hail damage in key fruit-producing regions. The 2024 harvest season is currently underway, commencing a week to 10 days earlier than the previous season. Early indications suggest promising apple export volumes, while pear exports are projected to be slightly below average. These outcomes are attributed to favorable weather conditions, particularly a beneficial cold and wet winter, which has positively influenced fruit production.



Source: PublicDomainPictures via [Pixabay](#)

Apple export volumes are anticipated to increase by 7%, mainly due to young orchards coming into production coupled with more favourable weather conditions. Bi-red apples such as Gala (+5%), Cripps Red (+11%) and Bigbucks (+33%) are expected to drive the bulk of the volume increase.

There is also a positive outlook on Pink Lady volumes which is anticipated to increase by 8%, following the trend of the last few seasons.

The pear export estimate on the other hand indicates a more moderate outlook with a volume increase of 1% on last season's volumes. Abate Fetel volumes are expected to decrease by -3% due to the earlier harvest and some frost damage.

Packham's Triumph volumes are anticipated to remain the same as last season whereas the summer blushed pears such as Cheeky, Celina and Rosemarie are expected to slightly increase.

Pome Fruit Export Estimates (12.5kg equivalent cartons)

POME	2021	2022	2023	3 yr Average	2024 Estimate	Estimate vs 2023	
Apples	44,739,753	45,258,135	43,580,735	44,526,208	46,420,996	2,840,261	7%
Pears	18,997,626	22,065,969	18,498,472	19,854,022	18,739,049	240,577	1%
Total	63,737,378	67,324,104	62,079,208	64,380,230	65,160,045	3,080,838	5%

From a logistic standpoint, ports remain the most direct challenge to the sustainability of pome fruit producers.

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