



Dear FPEF Members,

We want to assure you once again that we remain actively engaged in forums, committees, and working groups to represent our members' interests. We closely monitor and address the potential and real impacts of geopolitical developments, regulatory changes, logistical challenges, and other key issues affecting our industry.

A recent regulatory development of concern is the proposed **Merchant Shipping Bill B12-2023**. If passed, this legislation could mandate that international cargo be transported between local ports using a government-operated shipping line. Our **Fruit Desk at Agbiz** is taking the lead in compiling a concise summary outlining the concerns of the fruit industry and, where possible, proposing viable alternatives. Given that this Bill will have far-reaching implications across multiple sectors, we are also collaborating with other organizations and industry associations to ensure a well-rounded response.

Market access is a core function of the FPEF, and this week, we are in India as part of a **Fruit SA** market access delegation. We are also actively participating in the **Fresh Produce India** trade show in Mumbai.



Last week, at the invitation of the organizers, we attended **Fruit Attraction São Paulo**, an event jointly organized by **Ifema Madrid** and **Fiera Milano Brazil**, now in its second year. According to the organizers, the fair brought together companies from over 20



countries and representatives from eight Brazilian states, further strengthening São Paulo's position as a key hub for the fresh fruit sector in Latin America. The organisers are also exploring the potential for hosting a **Fruit Attraction Cape Town**, and we look forward to gathering your input on this initiative.



Market Access
Provide Information

Government Engagement
Transformation

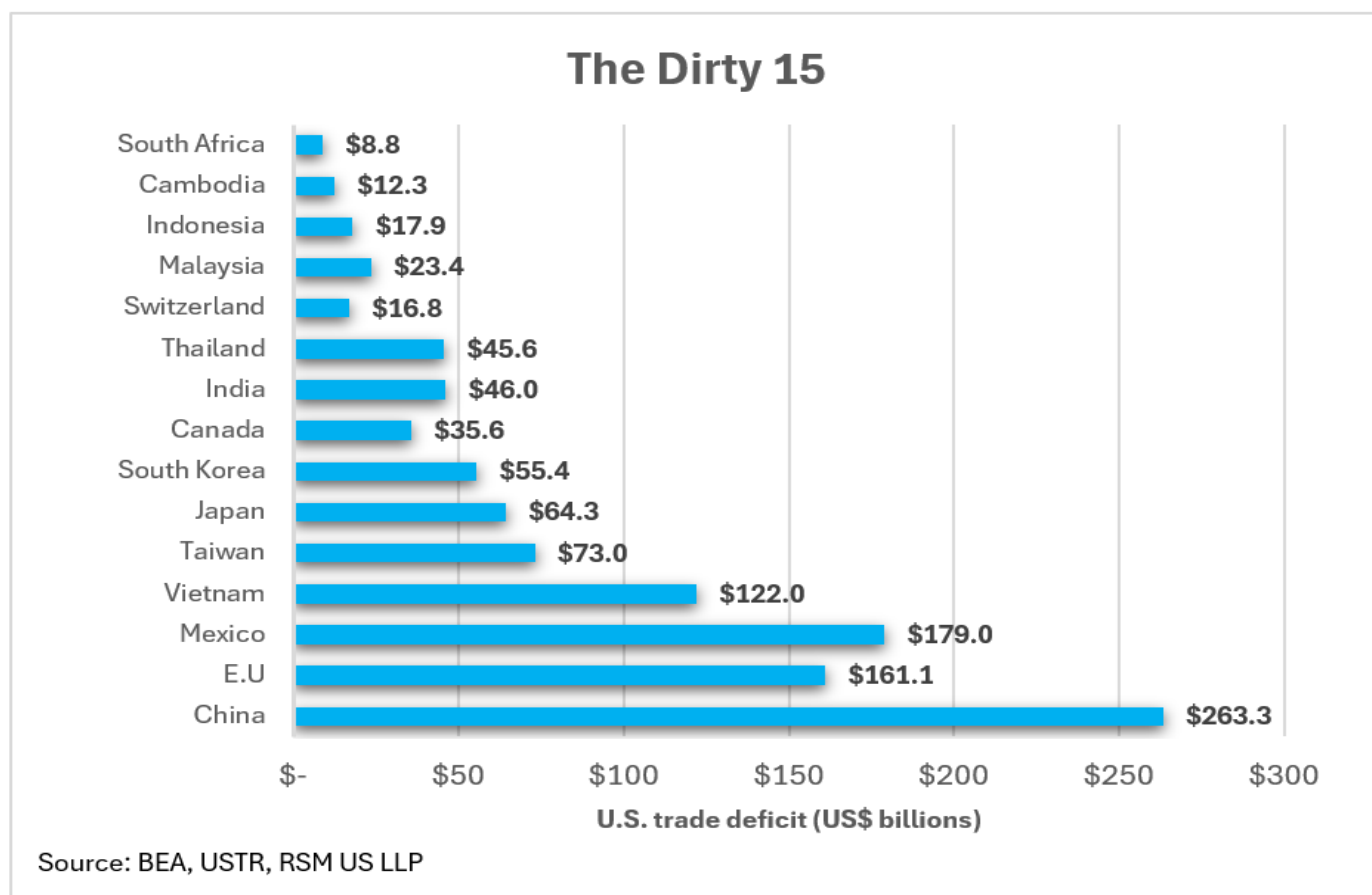
Export process assistance
Research, Development and Innovation

Geo-political: USA

Our Fruit Desk compiled some relevant information on the Trump Administration's actions which are relevant to us. The Trump Administration plans to announce on **2 April 2025** the imposition of a series of 'reciprocal' tariffs on selected countries, based on its February 13 'America First Trade Policy'.

- ❖ **Relevance to South Africa:** Although the list has not been officially confirmed by the USTR, it can be noted that the USTR put out a call for information after the America First Trade Policy was announced, calling for interested US parties to provide information relating to: ***"any unfair trade practice by a foreign country or economy or with respect to a non-reciprocal trade arrangement. Unfair trade practices may encompass an expansive range of practices, such as policies, measures, or barriers that undermine or harm U.S. production, or exports, or a failure by a country to take action to address a non-market policy or practice in a way which harms the United States."***
- ❖ The call went on to say that the USTR is particularly interested in submissions related to G20 countries, as well as Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, the European Union, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, **South Africa**, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Türkiye, United Kingdom, and Vietnam. The following table illustrates the grouping and deficits.

Countries that have the largest persistent goods trade imbalances with the United States are to be targeted first. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has referred to these as the "Dirty 15" – a reference to the 15% of nations that contribute most significantly to the U.S. goods trade deficit and impose the largest tariffs. These collectively are apparently responsible for 88% of total global goods trade with the US. President Trump however noted on 31 March that additional countries might be included at a later stage.



Fruit Industry Transformation Showcase Venda

On **19 March 2025** the **FPEF** participated in a transformation showcase hosted by **Fruit South Africa (Fruit SA)** in collaboration with the **South African Subtropical Growers Association (Subtrop)** at **Tshivhase Agridam Farm** outside **Thohoyandou, Limpopo**.



The goal of the showcase was to present progress on industry transformation efforts to attending guests from government and the industry. In his opening remarks Subtrop CEO **Derek Donkin** highlighted the integration of black growers into the industry as a meaningful driver of economic growth. Fruit SA CEO **Fhumulani Ratshitanga** issued a stark reminder: ***“For the fruit industry, transformation is not about box-ticking. We are dealing with real people and real lives. As***

economic role-players, we have a mandate to fulfil.”

Subtrop Transformation Coordinator **Stephen Mantsho** shone the spotlight on Subtrop’s transformation initiatives and its growing collaboration with local government. He also drew attention to the importance of skills development, citing the effectiveness of the association’s study groups – among other initiatives – with emerging black growers. **The well-attended transformation showcase bore testament to the commitment of Fruit SA and all its members, and the attending delegates, to accelerating transformation efforts for sustainable inclusive growth.**



New equipment arrives at the Port of Cape Town

Ordered on **December 6, 2024**, the highly anticipated first batch of **nine Rubber Tyred Gantries (RTGs)** arrived at the **Port of Cape Town** yesterday aboard the **MV Rudolph**.

Liebherr, the original equipment manufacturer, will oversee the assembly of the units before staff training begins. The RTGs are scheduled to be deployed by the end of **July**.

This new generation of RTGs is designed to operate in wind speeds of up to **90 km/h**, significantly reducing downtime during the windy season.



The MV Rudolph



Wage negotiation season



Yesterday, the **United National Transport Union (UNTU)**, the majority union, declared a dispute with **Transnet**, the state-owned port and rail operator. This comes after Transnet reached a **three-year wage agreement** with the **South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU)**, granting a cumulative **17.5% increase** over the period.



According to **Eyewitness News**, UNTU spokesperson **Atenkosi Plaatjie** accused Transnet of using underhanded tactics by attempting to unilaterally implement an agreement signed with a minority union. *“This blatant disregard for due process will leave UNTU with no choice but to exercise its constitutional right to take to the streets, as we did in 2022.”*

Comparing this round of negotiations with 2022

Opening offer from Transnet

Year	2022	2025
Year 1	1%	6%
Year 2	2.5%	6%
Year 3	3%	5.5%

Transnet's 2025 opening offer vs UNTU demand

Year	Offer	Demand
Year 1	6%	10%
Year 2	6%	10%
Year 3	5.5%	10%

Citrus one pagers

Industry and DALRRD have been collaborating over the past three weeks to **update the working procedure documents for all protocol markets**. The CRI is in the final stages of completing these documents, **which are expected to be circulated by the end of this week or early next week**, subject to DALRRD approval. While no major changes are anticipated, any updates will be communicated to the industry upon circulation.

Japan and South Korean Citrus exports

The Japan citrus export programme is now underway, with the first consignments successfully loaded and inspected. Initial shipments have been sent via containerized vessels, while **the season's first specialized reefer vessel is expected to load between April 7-8**.

Meanwhile, South Korean phytosanitary authorities have granted approval for DALRRD to conduct inspections without the presence of an official South Korean inspector at the origin. This decision is expected to significantly reduce programme costs.

Be informed that **Korea has confirmed that export of citrus fruits from South Africa into the Republic of Korea can commence**. Therefore, the final list will be published onto the DALRRD website and the E-cert system. **The direct link will be communicated after the list has been circulated.**

Until next time,
Anton Kruger