

South Africa has seen a slow-starting season for table grapes with export volumes through week 46 significantly lower than previous seasons.

A recent newsletter published by the South African Table Grape Industry ([SATI](#)) shows that only 109,458 cartons (4.5kg equivalent) had been shipped by the end of the week.

Last season the country had shipped 351,570 cartons by the same week, while 456,801 cartons were shipped in 2018-19 and 656,192 cartons in 2017-18.

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Looking at the different production regions, SATI data show that the Northern Provinces last year already had 978,808 cartons of table grapes inspected and in the Orange River region had 268,679 cartons, versus this year only 334,344 cartons and 0 cartons, respectively.

The [first estimate of the 2020-21 season](#) predicted intake volumes to be between 65.0 million and 69.8 million cartons. Signaling an expected return to normal industry volumes.

Last season the country packed 66.15m boxes for export, while 61.13m were packed in 2018-19 and 62.06m in 2017-18.

SATI had previously predicted that some regions were expected to start packing about 1 or 2 weeks later than normal mainly due to cooler spring weather.

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Regarding the Northern Provinces, “the earliest region started packing in week 45 and the

grapes on the vines developed very well. Early Sweet (Grapes) is harvested first followed by Prime and Starlight varieties," SATI said.

Though Orange River started packing in week 46 "amidst good harvesting conditions", there was no data available to show intake numbers. According to SATI, some of the first volumes will include varieties such as Flame seedless, Early Sweet and Prime.

The Olifants, Berg and Hex River regions have not started packing yet.