

South African-based ClemenGold says it is clamping down on trademark infringements, with the mandarin brand having become a target for rogue fresh produce agents in Asia.

“The success of the internationally registered ClemenGold trademarks has brought it into the crosshairs of rogue fresh produce agents in Asia who employ counterfeit branding methods, including imitation fruit stickers, to mislead shop owners and consumers,” says Adèle Ackermann, marketing manager of ClemenGold International.

“The ClemenGold brand is one of our most valuable assets, and we continually invest in growing awareness and brand loyalty. In order to protect the brand integrity, but also to protect our clients who have entered into supply agreements with us, we wish to remind traders that ClemenGold International is the exclusive owner for the ClemenGold trademarks in a number of countries including China and that the unauthorised use of the ClemenGold® brand, the word ClemenGold, the logo, fruit sticker of packaging, is illegal.”

The company highlighted that in the current fresh produce marketplace where success does not simply rest on a good balance between supply and demand and healthy prices, the presence of a strong and well-established brand has become the game-changer.

“What makes a good trademark is not how unique the word or the logo is, but it being seen in the marketplace for a long time, and with the ClemenGold® trademark we have managed to place our unique logo in the right place, at the right time for a long period,” says Maanda N. Phosiwa, Intellectual Property Manager for ClemenGold International.

“The marks have become quality citrus persona and identity in the marketplace. However, with such success, ClemenGold International is aware of imitations popping up in the market. When we sight any imitation in the market, we have successfully investigated the sightings. Most of the imitators are not aware that we have registered rights and successfully cease to use the imitation as soon as we get in touch with them.

“We have successfully managed to convince numerous imitators in China to cease the use of imitations, undertaking not to accept any imitation and respect our right in the market. We will continue our efforts to enforce our rights and not allow any imitations or passing off, as both have the potential to erode our brand identity.”

In addition to the widely recognised packaging and fruit sticker, the company also employs the use of a uniquely teardrop-shaped *Gesvatec sticker on each box that leaves South Africa for any country in the world.

This marker certifies that the box contains a registered variety, has been packed and inspected according to strict specifications and that the receiver of the box has permission to trade. The different elements, including a QR code and serial number, enable traceability of the fruit.