

High expectation for 2018 cherry crop

Over the last three years, Tru-Cape Fruit Marketing, focussed more one cherry production and achieving high-value sales for growers - earning R9m for cherry growers this past season.



jill111 via [FreelImages](#)

Managing director of Tru-Cape, Roelf Pienaar, said that despite the smaller than expected 2016 crop, down by about half year-on-year, Tru-Cape cherries were of a high quality and achieved good values. “The smaller 2016 crop was as a result of a challenging climate but despite this Tru-Cape growers produced beautiful fruit,” he says, adding that, “cherry varieties Sweetheart, Royal Dawn and Rainier seem to produce the best results in the Ceres valley.

The 2017 harvest was even stronger with excellent returns to growers and the company is optimistic about the 2018 crop continuing the upward trend,” he says.

Tru-Cape took the strategic decision to focus on the local rather than export market to give the company the full possible sales window over the festive season and not lose out while the fruit was on the sea. “In some cases, Tru-Cape achieved higher local-market prices for our quality product than other exporters did for their export crop as they were competing with other exported cherries,” Pienaar says.



Cherries show export potential for the Western Cape

14 Feb 2018



Ceres, in the Western Cape, is increasingly getting a bigger piece of the cherry pie as the Ceres climate of hot summer temperatures and cold winter nights, so desirable also for apple and pear production, is perfect for cherries.

With harvest between mid-October and mid-November, the South African cherry season is a short one but, because of its proximity to the high-value Christmas season, this most traditional celebratory fruit delivers strong returns and Tru-Cape expects the 2018 crop to be no different.

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