South Africa launches citrus irrigation guide to improve water efficiency

Citrus Research International (CRI) has launched a new handbook aimed at helping South African citrus growers make irrigation decisions and improve water-use efficiency as pressure on agricultural water resources increases.

Citrus Irrigation was launched on 24 August 2026 during the 13th CRI Citrus Research Symposium at Champagne Sports Resort in the Drakensberg, KwaZulu-Natal. Written by Dr Phillip Myburgh and Dr Johan van Zyl, the handbook was developed through a CRI-led project, with Netafim as sole sponsor.

The publication combines South African and international research with field experience. Growers contributed practical information and assisted with orchard investigations, including soil profile examinations and root studies. Technical specialists also reviewed chapters during development.

The handbook covers irrigation strategies, the effects of inadequate irrigation and over-irrigation, water quality, and the use of treated wastewater.

"We used international and South African literature, and we went to growers for practical information to make the contents applicable in the field," said Myburgh. "Developing guidance on irrigation strategies was a particularly demanding task because published results are not always consistent."

The publication follows irrigation training sessions conducted by CRI's extension team in collaboration with Netafim, which identified a need for growers to better understand irrigation principles and apply them consistently in orchards.

The project also marks 50 years since Myburgh and Van Zyl began working together in August 1976. The handbook is intended for use by both the citrus sector and academic settings.
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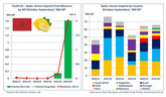
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