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NEWS

26 March 2015

R21m cash injection for Eastern Cape citrus producers

Citrus producers in the Eastern Cape's capital of Bhisho are to receive a R21-million cash injection from the government for infrastructure support.

According to an I-Net Bridge report, Rural Development and Agrarian Reform MEC, Mlibo Qoboshiyane, assigned the majority of the R21 million to the ageing Ripplemead citrus pack house in Peddie. Smallholder citrus growers from the Amathole region will receive R4 million.

This infrastructure support is expected to revitalise the ageing Ripplemead citrus pack house in Peddie to the tune of R9.2 million and another R8 million has been allocated to assist farmers with production and orchard upgrades.

Qoboshiyane was quoted in the Eastern Cape daily online newspaper, HeraldLive, as saying: "This support will enable Ripplemead to trade directly with the European Union."

Citrus Growers' Association transformation manager Lukhanyo Nkombisa said: "We welcome the vote of confidence in the farmers and commit to the department that the items will be used effectively. The Eastern Cape is the second biggest producer of citrus in the country. Citrus contributed massively to employment and the GDP of the province."

FTW www.ftwonline.co.za

