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NEWS

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SA grape exporters respond to seedless grape demand

South Africa's table grape farmers are switching to seedless varieties, with exports more than doubling over 5 years as consumer demand for the seeded varieties slumps.

A report on the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (FPEF) cites Abie Loubser, marketing officer at Hex River Valley-based AS Viljoen & Seuns Boerdery, as saying that demand for seedless table grapes from overseas customers had grown over the past decade.

Exports of black seedless grapes increased to 482 million cartons last year compared with 195 million cartons in 2010, according to the South African Table Grape Industry. All varieties of seeded grapes have shown a decline in production since 2010 as demand has fallen, it said.

South Africa is the continent's largest exporter of table grapes and the world's 10th-largest producer of the fruit, according to data on the Index Mundi website.

FTW www.ftwonline.co.za

