

EN
E-003104/2026
Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(12.10.2026)

Based on Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/632¹, when the pest is detected in fruits at the EU border, the production site from where the fruits originate is banned from exporting to the EU for the current and following season.

The Commission is aware of increased cases of black spot in citrus consignments from South Africa, monitors non-compliant imports, and requested South Africa to take urgent corrective actions. The Commission will convene with Member States the way forward, including additional import requirements or the temporary suspension of trade if so considered necessary.

Except for countries with a high level of compliance, 100% of imported citrus fruits are subject to identity and physical checks. There is a 50% increase in the number of audits carried out in non-EU countries and a 33% increase in audits at EU Border Control Posts².

The same EU maximum residue levels (MRLs) apply to citrus fruits from the EU and to imported ones. Compliance with EU MRLs is verified through official controls, and imports found non-compliant are rejected.

The Commission will also pursue, in line with international rules, a stronger alignment of production standards to imported products. In particular, it is working to prevent the most hazardous pesticides banned in the EU from entering the EU on imported products.

Trade agreements create opportunities by opening markets for EU products, cutting export barriers, and strengthening ties with third countries. While challenges may arise, they include safeguard mechanisms to address potential market disruption. In any event, trade agreements do not exempt imported products to comply with EU requirements.

¹ Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/632 of 13 April 2022 setting out temporary measures in respect of specified fruits originating in Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, Uruguay and Zimbabwe to prevent the introduction into, and the spread within, the Union territory of the pest *Phyllosticta citricarpa* (McAlpine) Van der Aa (OJ L 117, 19.4.2022, pp. 11–25; ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2022/632/oj).

² As announced on 9 December 2025: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/es/ip_25_2979.