



January 17, 2019

Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street NW Washington, DC 20508

Docket No. USTR-2019-0020

Dear Office of the United States Trade Representatives,

This letter is to demonstrate our concern with the International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA) challenging South Africa's eligibility to continue to receive General System of Preferences [GSP] benefits.

Free trade agreements are critical for the Sub-Saharan African nations, particularly South Africa, which benefit is imperative for continued viability. We are in support of Summer Citrus from South Africa. They represent all growers, exporters and logistical service providers involved in the process of exporting citrus to the US. Since market access was granted to the United States, South African citrus exports have grown by more than 90 times since 1999, now to a very sustainable 55,000 tons. South Africa has generated great benefit to the fruit industry, its local farm workers and a wide range of associated industries in South Africa. Upon arrival in the United States, that same fruit supports thousands of direct and indirect jobs on their way to the store shelf. Without the free trade benefit when the citrus arrives into the United States, the cost would create an additional challenge to get their beautiful fruit on our table.

We strongly disagree with the International Intellectual Property Alliance. The IPPA pursuing their grievance by challenging South Africa's eligibility for GSP is irresponsible and misguided.

Sincerely appreciate the opportunity for comment.

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