

23 June 2023

South African Golden Sultana considerations – Frucom SO2 meeting with EU Commissioner

The South African (SA) raisin industry is very dependent on the use of Sulphur (SO₂) to produce Golden raisins. As the profile of our industry consists of producers who have specific infrastructure for their specific raisin types made, the impact of not using SO₂ will influence our industry greatly. Golden sulphured raisins consist of approximately 30% of the total raisin production in SA, of which exports to the EU ranges from 4 400 – 6 000 metric tons annually, which is a relatively small amount of these volumes.

As the raisin harvest is already 40% down in crop production this year after three consecutive years of crop losses due to flooding and adverse weather conditions, adding other protocols which influence changing the total infrastructure of the production of raisins can have a destructive impact on the industry and livelihoods of the producers and workers.

The raisin industry employs in total 30 111 workers, and 150 555 dependents are affected by the industry.

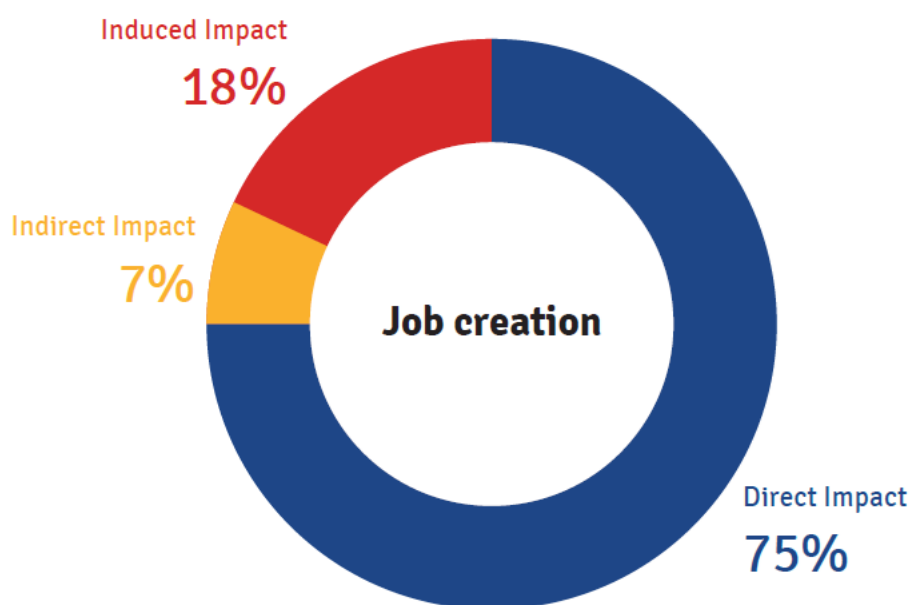


Figure 1 – Employment impact of raisin industry on job creation

A large amount of the employees are unskilled, and the industry has a responsibility towards transformation to upskill and empower these workers. Jobs influenced by the raisin industry are approximately 30 111, and dramatic changes in the infrastructure and capacity needed to dry raisins can have a big negative impact on these livelihoods.



As Golden raisins are a unique product, to achieve this exceptional good quality there is constant investment in Research and Development of good practices and safe handling methods. 60% more labour is needed to produce Golden raisins, compared to all the other raisin categories. Not producing Golden Raisins will lead to substantial job losses and increase the unemployment rate.

Raisins South Africa hereby requests to research how SO₂ levels can be managed in Golden Sulphur raisins to reduce these levels in corporation with the South African packers. Currently, there is no other way of producing this specific quality without using SO₂.


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