

Tomato processing in South Africa

The tomato processing industry in South Africa is processing about 150 000 tonnes of raw tomatoes. This is a very small quantity in relation to the processing sector in the World.



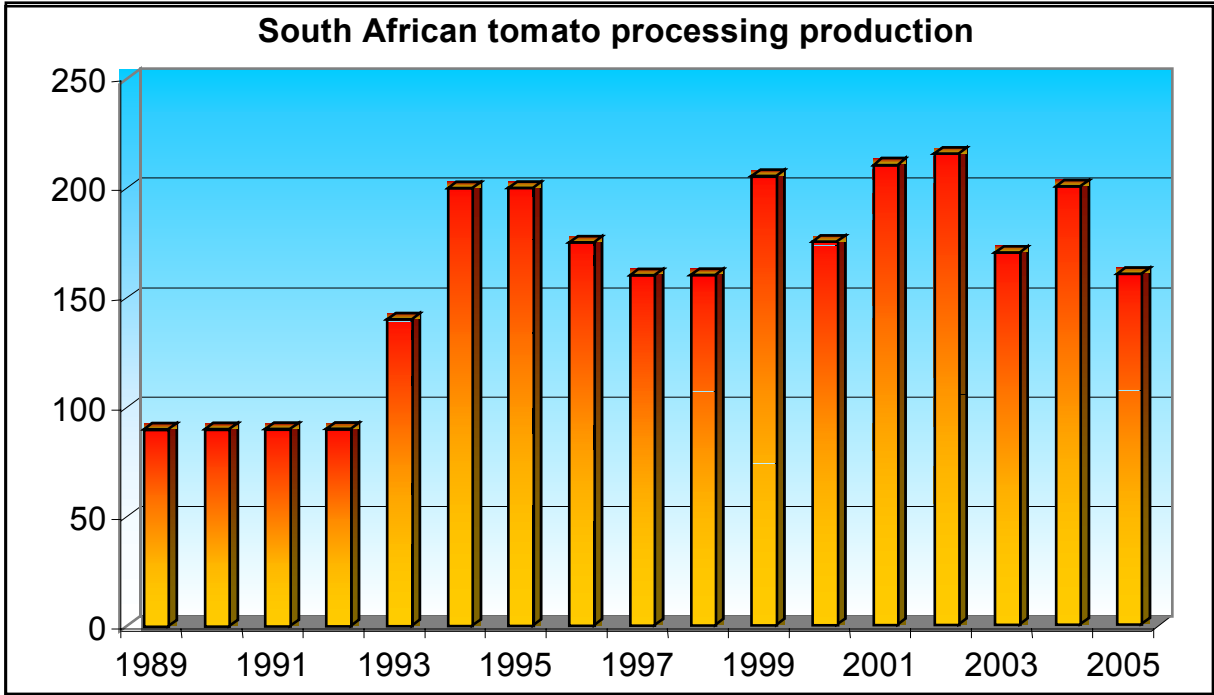
Due to the geographic distance from potential markets, the tomato industry is relatively small and most locally produced product is also locally consumed. One player, namely Tiger Brands, dominates the processing sector with a share of above 75%. The companies involved in the processing sector are listed in the following Table.

Tomato processors in South Africa (2005 crop)

COMPANY	PROVINCE	TOWN	TONNES
Rhodes Fruit Farms	Western Cape	Franschoek	2 000
Miami Cannerys	Limpopo	Polokwane	15 000
Giant Foods	Limpopo	Makhado	10 000
Montina	Limpopo	Mooketsi	5 000
Indemex	Limpopo	Waterpoort	2 500
Tiger Brands	Western Cape	Lutzville	29 500
	Limpopo	Musina	60 000
	Limpopo	Modjadji Kloof	26 000
TOTAL			150 000

Though the total tomato crop for processing are relative small, farming operations are sophisticated. Virtually all processing tomatoes are contracted prior to the season. Prices are negotiated with the producers in a specific area. Typically, the processor will acquire seed and contract nurseries to grow seedlings according to a production and harvesting window that is linked to factory capacity and throughput. The seedlings are distributed to producers on credit. Production is irrigated, with drip irrigation being widespread. Harvesting is mostly carried out by hand. The average yield varies from area to area but is typically between 65 and 90 tonnes/hectare.

Trend in tomato processing in South Africa (1989 – 2005)



The complete range of products is available, from aseptic paste (both hot and cold break) to an array of other primary and value-added canned products. These are principally destined for the South African market. With the changing competitive environment influenced hugely by initially a devaluation of the South African currency against the US dollar (around 2001) and since then an appreciation, the industry has aligned itself to international standards.