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R30m fresh produce market for Maputo

MAPUTO - The Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) and a consortium of private equity partners have just concluded a financial package to build and operate a state of the art fresh-produce export terminal in Maputo Port. The project is valued at R30 million and will have two major shareholders, Port Elizabeth Cold Store and a Mozambican company, Fidelity Investments. This facility will be able to handle 70 000 tons of citrus in a six-month period and 10 000 tons of frozen juice. This increase in capacity of the Maputo Port through put and the fact that there is now a weekly direct sailing from Maputo to the Far East will save South African farmers about R15 million per year just in inland logistics costs. One of the promoters and investors in the Project, Jacey Strauss, says that this only

represents about 20% of the potential export needs of the Lowveld, Limpopo and Swaziland farmers. If all the product could flow through the natural harbour for this area, then the saving to agriculture could be as high as R80 million per annum. He says that this facility will have dedicated container loading capacity as well as steri capacity especially for markets like China, Korea and Taiwan. "Due to the fact that Japanese steri protocols require the work on quay side, that market will remain in Durban." "The facility is 500m from the quay side and can handle 3 200 pallets at a time. It also has capacity to store 4 800 drums of juice concentrate. It will employ 60 people, 95% of whom will be Mozambicans. Construction will start at the end of April 2007 and the facility will be ready for the 2008 season.