

Super Markets

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Supermarkets duped by SA fruit fraud

By Andrew Don

SUPERMARKETS in Britain may have been conned into selling South African fruit despite their commitment to finding alternative sources.

Investigations by *Super Marketing* revealed that South African fruit had entered Britain illegally relabelled as produce of Botswana.

This was confirmed this week when the Anti-Apartheid Movement showed *Super Marketing* a 5kg box of Sunfresh Sultana seedless grapes labelled produce of Botswana which was found in a grocery outlet in north west London.

Botswana does not export grapes, according to the Botswana High Commission.

The Commission's counselor in London, Sasara George said: "It's likely they come from South Africa."

The brand Sunfresh has been traced to Sunraysia, a grape growing region in Victoria, Australia.

An Australian government employee who declined to be



named said the subterfuge by South Africa was widespread.

He also said a well known brand of apple which in the UK was labelled Republic of South Africa had the labels removed on reaching Dublin.

The relabelling operation by South Africa, in the face of world-wide abhorrence of apartheid, is believed to be huge and to affect many countries apart from the UK.

In Ireland, for example, the situation is so bad that questions are due to be asked in the Dail after Easter.

Workers Party MP Proinfias De Rossa who will raise the issue told *Super Marketing*: "I've no doubt at all that South

African produce is being sold in supermarkets under false labels."

He said the tonnage of fruit exported to Ireland from Botswana had risen dramatically since January 1, 1987 — the date when sanctions against South Africa were enforced.

Trading standards officers in Ireland are appealing for information following the discovery of citrus fruit labelled with Cyprus, Israel and the US as the countries of origin.

These products had apparently been repackaged in Swaziland and Zimbabwe, they said.

The South Africans are able to enlist the help of Botswana, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Lesotho because those countries do not have access to the sea and need to pass through South Africa with their goods

for export.

The extent of the fraud is difficult to ascertain although one UK supermarket director said: "I'm sure if I put some of my buyers on the rack and threatened them with their jobs they'd be able to come up with one or two examples of this happening."



Anti-Apartheid Movement campaign organiser Mick Flynn holds South African grapes disguised as produce of Botswana

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Sainsbury's moors up

Sainsbury's new 33,154sqft superstore, in Ladbroke Grove, west London opened this week.

It is the chain's 167th store to use ICL scanning and boasts 31 checkouts. By 1990 all stores will be scanning says Sainsbury's.

Its coffee shop, on the Grand Union Canal, has mooring facilities.

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