

# CGA Grower Roadshows



DIE JOERNAAL VIR DIE VRUGTEBEDRYF IN SUID-AFRIKA

*The A Team: Piet Smit (Chairman CRI); Justin Chadwick (CEO, CGA); Mitchell Brooke (CGA); Johan Vorster (River Bioscience); Sive Silo (Citrus Academy); Sean Moore (CRI); Jon Roberts (CGA Cultivar Company) Lukhanyo Nkombisa (CGA Grower Development Company)*

The biannual Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) Grower Roadshows kicked off on 10 February for two weeks, when two teams from the CGA and associated company staff took off to visit 15 regions in SA and Eswatini.

The teams were led by Justin Chadwick and Paul Hardman, respectively.

**T**his time around Nelspruit and Onderberg citrus growers met jointly in Nelspruit; growers from Zimbabwe travelled down to Musina to join the Limpopo growers and Pongola growers travelled to Eswatini for their Roadshow.

Citrus growers in the new region of Burgersfort/Ohrigstad proudly welcomed the CGA team.

The citrus producing regions visited by Justin and his team were Nelspruit/Onderberg, Burgersfort/Ohrigstad, Eswatini, KZN (Nkwalini), Eastern Cape Midlands (Fort Beaufort), Sundays River and Patensie. Paul's team travelled to Limpopo, Letsitele, Hoedspruit, Senwes, Oranje Rivier, W Cape and Boland. The KZN Midlands roadshow was held on 11 March in Richmond.

Some observations by Justin Chadwick and Paul Hardman:

- Justin reported that the rain followed them around, from Mpumalanga and all the way through to Ohrigstad and then Eswatini and the next week there was heavy rain from PE to Fort Beaufort. The countryside looked lush and green wherever they went. Paul also reported good rains when travelling in Limpopo.
- Growers have planted a lot of citrus, all over. With large swathes of netting covering mostly new lemon and soft citrus plantings. The anticipated growth in these categories could even be understated. More reason to work closely with government, to ensure markets for the increased volumes, and to work with Transnet to get the ports working efficiently.
- It's refreshing to see the number of young people in the industry. Many are graduates from the Citrus Academy, or have



Top: Letsitele roadshow – CRI Chairman explaining presentation to the growers

Above left: Swaziland roadshow – CGA Director, Per Noddeboe with Hunt Holly

Above right: E Cape Midlands roadshow – CGA Director, Dr Jock Danckwerts addressing growers

received training with Citrus Academy material. This bodes well for the longevity of the citrus sector.

- It was also pleasing to see the fruits of the CGA Grower Development Company (CGA GDC), as many black growers attended the meetings.
- When you visit with growers, there's a lot of red meat and drink going round. Hospitality is the name of the game in these rural communities, and it was great to spend quality time chatting with CGA members.
- There's visible growth in the economy of towns and villages that owe their prosperity and very existence to the citrus industry. Justin Chadwick, who has been visiting these regions for twenty years, is amazed by the development: top-class accommodation (B&Bs and guest houses), restaurants, functioning infrastructure and great service. At one guest house/restaurant there were 12 employed staff members (just five years ago this establishment did not exist). This is job creation in action.
- The citrus growing regions in Southern Africa have an aesthetic beauty that is hard to capture with a camera. We are truly privileged to visit these areas, and to call it work. And our growers take their environmental stewardship responsibility seriously.

## CGA levy referendum

The main topic at the CGA Grower Roadshows was the levy administered by the CGA. Growers were informed of the CGA Board proposal in terms of the levy for 2021 - 2024. Before the roadshows, growers were also provided with documentation explaining the proposed levy and business plan. The National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC) require that the CGA illustrate sufficient support for this plan from those who will pay the levy. As such, all growers were urged to complete the referendum forms and return them to the CGA.

## Thanks to sponsors

Thanks also to the sponsors: firstly, Nedbank who sponsored all three roadshows in the Eastern Cape; Inteligro sponsored Nkwalini, Limpopo and Oranje Rivier; Wenkem sponsored the Western Cape; Nelspruit/Onderberg was sponsored by Noordchem; Senwes by Loskop ICT; Letsitele by River Bioscience and Burgersfort/Ohrigstad by Farming & Security Solutions.

The roadshows were enthusiastically attended by a total of 537 growers. ✿

