

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (08/10)

Justin Chadwick (26 February 2010)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK “I prefer the company of peasants because they have not been educated sufficiently to reason incorrectly” Michel de Montaigne

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The joke goes something like this – “what month of the year do farmers complain the least? The answer – February, because it has the least days”. Fortunately the CGA Board is a positive group and got stuck into the job of planning CGA’s strategies with positive vigor. This was helped by the wise guidance of Stuart Symington who was called in to facilitate. Stuart did this in his usual professional, no nonsense but good natured way. In essence CGA’s objectives are little changed – the Board debated at length many contentious issues, and refined the objectives of the Association that had been last reviewed some five years ago. Each of the eight objectives that were teased out during the process has sub-objectives that will assist the staff and Board as we tackle grower delivery. The objectives (8) are as follows:

🔗 **Administer, fund and resource the CGA Group**

This objective talks to good governance, good communication with growers and ensuring adequate funding.

🔗 **Gain, retain and optimize market access**

The bedrock of CGA activities, and the reason for formation of CGA some 13 years back – this still remains our core activity. Of importance is the addressing of sanitary and phytosanitary issues; in addition the Board has emphasized more attention be given to tariff barriers.

🔗 **Fund, control and implement research and development**

If market access is the end we strive for, research is the means of getting there. Over the years we have developed structures and systems that deliver a good research product to the citrus industry. This needs to continue, and be continuously improved to ensure that we remain world leaders in citrus research.

🔗 **Provide product and quality assurance**

Quality remains the key differentiating factor in the market, and South Africa needs to enhance its image as a producer of excellent quality, safe, sustainable, ethically produced citrus fruit.

🔗 **Engage with government and other stakeholders**

CGA’s role in working with other stakeholders in achieving its objectives was stressed. The challenges facing growers are enormous; with our resources we can but address a few. But by harnessing the strengths of government, by joining hands with other fruit sectors, and by working in “coopetition” with global producers we can make a difference.

🔗 **Assist grower profitability and sustainability**

Information is key to making informed decisions, and the CGA has a role to play in providing not only growers, but the entire industry with good information. It is also under this objective that market development was discussed – with the onus on variety focus groups to guide CGA in market development initiatives that will assist sustainability.

🔗 **Drive industry transformation**

Transformation means change, and many things are changing in South Africa (and the world). CGA needs to drive these changes so that the outcome is in the best interests of the South African citrus industry as a whole.

🔗 **Facilitate efficient logistics**

Growers have control over their production practices and in many cases also in the packhouse, but the logistics chain is an area where grower interests need to be investigated and efficiencies improved. In many cases growers are taking risks over which they have no control, or paying for inefficiencies that have become a way of life.

It would be interesting to hear from growers’ how they feel about these objectives – the CGA Grower Road Shows over the next three weeks provide a good opportunity to flesh them out further, or to suggest enhancements. My group will be in the Western and Northern Cape next week - **2 March** Western Cape 09H00 [Goedehoop Raadsaal]; **3 March** Oranje Rivier 10H00 [Lake Grappe]; **4 March** Hartswater 10H00 [Pokwane Packhouse]; and then the week after up north - **9 March** Senwes 15H00 [Groblersdal Golf Club]; **10 March** Limpopo River 15H00 [Noordgrens Lapa]; **11 March** Letsitele 15H00 [The Junction]; **12 March** Hoedspruit 08H00 [FRCitrus].

Paul’s group will be heading to the Eastern Cape next week; **2 March** Patensie 09H00 [Patensie Sitrus Boardroom] and Sundays River 15H00 [Addo Polo Club]; **3 March** E Cape Midlands 10H00 [Katco]; close to home the week after - **9 March** KZN Midlands 14H00 [Victoria Country Club]; and finally **16 March** Nelspruit 14H00 [CRI Board Room]; **17 March** Onderberg 09H00 [Golden Frontiers], Swaziland 14H00 [Ngonini]. Details on www.cga.co.za.

REARRANGING THE DECK CHAIRS

Gabrie van Eeden has stepped down from the CGA Board after almost ten years of representing the Western Cape region. Gabriele has also been on the CGA Executive, and has guided XSIT through its formative years as Chairman. Thanks to Gabriele for his dedication to the grower cause. With Gerhard Uys (Patensie) also stepping off the Board, the CGA Board elected two new Executive Committee members – George Hall (Boland) and Graham Piner (Nelspruit). And finally Flip Smit will no longer be representing Hoedspruit on the Board, but fortunately he has agreed to remain on the Board as a co-opted director. Flip has taken CGA to a new level in terms of financial governance and retaining him as a director and Chairman of the audit committee will ensure that we continue to improve in this field.