

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (9/11)

Justin Chadwick (11 March 2011)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK “Anyone who goes to a psychiatrist ought to have his head examined” S Goldwyn

VARIETY FOCUS GROUPS AND CITRUS MARKETING FORUM

Now that all variety focus group members have been elected they need to start getting their regions crop estimates together for discussion at the VFG's on 23 March 2010. Our track record of estimating has been pretty good – so let's put in the effort to get close to the mark in 2011 [and save yourself the embarrassment of receiving the “furthest from the pin” award at the final CMF]. The CMF on 24 March will consider the VFG estimates.

CITRUS ACADEMY

Jacomien de Klerk, the energetic head of the Citrus Academy highlighted the activities and outputs from their bursary fund during the CGA workshops. It is five years since the Academy was asked to administer bursary funds. An amount of R4 million has been paid out directly in bursaries. But the Academy has proven that just handing out funds does not necessarily result in success – all Citrus Academy bursary students are provided with a range of support services – this includes direct personal support to handle the stresses of studying and student life (although from my memory most stresses were self induced – I believed that University was the fountain of knowledge where students came to drink), arrangement of vacation work to expose students to the working environment and exposing possible employers to “soon to be job seekers”, experiential learning opportunities where students attend citrus related conferences, trade shows or congresses, internship and workplace experience. These activities almost double the amount invested in the students – and results in a finished product ready to use. Over the five years 112 students have received bursaries, 34 are still studying, and 11 did not complete their studies meaning that 57 have completed their studies. As part of their study commitments all but one of these students worked back their time in the citrus industry (the one who did not paid back his bursary as per his contract). Of those now working 25 have remained in the citrus industry, 7 work in other agricultural sectors, 6 with Department of Agriculture and 3 in the food business sector. 14 graduates are looking for work in the citrus industry – including 2 with MSc's, five with BSc's, six with National Diploma's in Plant Production and one with a B Tech in Agricultural Management. They have been through the full Citrus Academy experience, and would be a useful addition to any business. If you would like more information about the Citrus Academy or these job seekers, contact Jacomien at

jacomien@citrusacademy.org .

ROADS

What a pleasure to drive from Pretoria to OR Tambo this afternoon in less than ½ hour, no delays, no stop start – plain sailing. This is a far cry from our experience last Friday when returning from the road shows in Mpumalanga. Despite strong advice from Pongola growers we chose to take the N2 from Piet Retief, through Pongola to Durbs. BIG MISTAKE. The road is a mess – it is a national road and yet there are delays of hours (not minutes) – with the road reduced to dirt for many kilometers. Where have all the fuel taxes gone, where has the entire budget for roads gone? Surely maintenance of a national freeway MUST be a priority. Anyway – like the Pretoria – OR Tambo road it is good to see it is receiving attention. Growers planning to transport fruit from the north down the N2 to Durbs better think again.

GROWER ROADSHOWS

This week we completed the CGA Road Shows, and I would like to thank all growers for the hospitality that we received in the regions – it is a pleasure to serve this great industry with such a great group of growers. We learnt a lot at the meetings, and got the message that CGA is on the right track with its present activities. The outcomes from the Road Shows will be discussed at the CGA Board meeting on 22 March 2011. If there is anything specific that you need your regional Director to raise at the Board meeting please let them know. This Board meeting we discuss the budget – so if there is an issue of importance let us know so that resources can be directed appropriately.

**GROWERS LEVIES ARE USED TO FUND CGA, CRI AND CITRUS ACADEMY ACTIVITIES.
ENSURING A GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CITRUS INDUSTRY**