

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (8/12)

Justin Chadwick (2 March 2012)

MAKES YOU THINK *"Why do people who know the least know it the loudest?"*

FURTHER FEEDBACK FROM ROADSHOWS AND WORK SHOPS

The last two weeks spent on the road have been the most testing and the most pleasant. The most testing as growers demand their pound of flesh – and ask thought provoking questions at the meetings. The most pleasant as it is a fantastic opportunity to visit and spend time with members of the CGA – who also happen to be the most hospitable people around. A big thank you to all the CGA Directors, all of whom attended their regional meeting, and assisted in addressing the various queries raised. Feedback from those who attended is that they appreciated putting faces to names as staff presented on their area of responsibility – and the time spent away from home was well worth it (thanks to the wives who kept the home fires burning).

As always Gloria did a fantastic job in ensuring that flights were booked, car rentals organised, accommodation and venues arranged – and ran the office while we were in the regions.

And finally a big thank you to all growers who attended the meetings – we appreciate that you have work to do and were very happy with the turnout at all meetings.

This last week was heavy in terms of distance travelled – with visits to Citrusdal, Stellenbosch, Kakemas and Hartswater. The government's commitment to improving infrastructure added two hours to the journey from Kakemas to Hartswater as roadworks meant many frustrating stops. We complain enough about the roads – so let's not complain about the roadworks!! Roadworks were also evident on the pass linking Citrusdal to Piketberg – once completed this will make a big difference in the journey to the port. All the regions visited approved the new levy proposals in full – mandating their regional Director to take this message back to the CGA Board meeting on 13 March.

Growers were reminded that River Bioscience belongs to them – and were encouraged to support RB through purchasing their products. For details on those agents dealing with RB products please contact Keith Danckwerts keith@riverbioscience.co.za. Products include Cryptogran, Helicover, M3 fruit fly range and BI fruit fly range.

Feedback from Hannes Bester and his team at the Packhouse Workshops is that over 600 people attended the workshops. I have been told that the information supplied is ESSENTIAL for all involved in the packing and export of citrus fruit. It was suggested that more growers should attend – as the days of waving goodbye to fruit in the orchard and taking no further interest in the packing, packaging, transport and storage of your product are over. Growers should build on their understanding of post harvest activities.

The excellent attendance and information provided underlines the importance of continuing with the Citrus Cold Chain Forum (CCCF). All involved in post harvest (growers, packhouse personnel, packaging companies, pallet manufacturers and exporters) recognize the value that this Forum adds to the industry.

MEETINGS IN MARCH

On Thursday 8 March the newly formed CGA Cultivar Company Board will meet for the first time. There has been considerable interest in this initiative in all regions – with the proposal of regional representation on an Advisory Committee receiving widespread support.

On 13 March the CGA Board will hold their first meeting of 2012 – with the Budget and new levy proposal on the agenda.

14 March is the date for all the Variety Focus Groups to meet. The export volume estimates will be discussed at these meetings. This estimate will then be presented to the Citrus Marketing Forum (CMF) to be held the next day (15 March).

**GROWER FUNDED ACTIVITIES OF THE CGA, CRI AND CITRUS ACADEMY
ENSURE A GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CITRUS INDUSTRY**