

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (12/12)

Justin Chadwick (30 March 2012)

MAKES YOU THINK "Why, if love is blind, is lingerie so popular?"

CHANGING HABITS

When I was growing up we did not have cell phones, so if you needed to communicate with somebody you would either have to wait until you got home, or find a callbox to make a call; likewise we did not have computers so if you wanted to write a letter you either did it by hand, or waited until you got near a typewriter, we also did not have television, so if you wanted to watch a rugby match you got in your car and drove to the stadium – or listened on the radio. Obviously things are different now and we expect “instant gratification”. This expectation of instant gratification goes for everything – even the food we eat. Fast foods means no waiting around for somebody to cook the meal, while those youngsters who do believe in the need for “5 a day” want it immediately in the form of a high energy drink or tablet (sorry – I mean pill, tablet is now some computer device, we need to learn the new lingo as a mouse is no longer a small, furry rodent and to be gay does not necessarily mean being happy).

So what has this to do with citrus?

Well, firstly it explains to a certain extent why consumption of grapefruit has been on the decline in most (if not all) markets. Instant gratification does not mean slicing a fruit in half, cutting around the edge of the pith, and using a spoon to extract the grapefruit pieces while sitting at a table (and then having to clean up all the paraphernalia used). We are going to have to come up with a novel way of consuming our product.

Secondly, it explains why countries like Spain and China are predominantly soft citrus growers. The convenience of a soft citrus (or more aptly named easy peeler) is fairly self evident – they are easy to peel and easy to consume. You do not end up with juice all over your clothes and they are small enough to be a snack. The Southern African citrus industry is dominated by oranges – with over 70% of citrus exported falling into this category. This is obviously due to the ideal climate for producing top class oranges; but will the need for instant gratification lead to changing planting trends in the future? The challenge is now to find soft citrus cultivars suitable for those regions presently supplying these top class oranges – so that we can always be in a position to supply what the market wants. The transition will not be easy, as most soft citrus producers will tell you there is a big difference between hard citrus and soft citrus, and soft citrus needs to be handled more like a deciduous fruit than a hard citrus fruit.

VARIETY FOCUS GROUPS 2012

REGION	VALENCIA	NAVEL	GRAPEFRUIT	LEMON	SOFT CITRUS
Letsitele	Barend Vorster	Ben Vorster	Piet Smit	Jacques Nel	Andrew Cooper
S.R. Valley	Deon Joubert	Hannes De Waal *	Francois Joubert *	Hannes Joubert	Charl Tibshreany *
Senwes	Marisa v d Heever	Hendrik Schoeman *		Peter Pullinger *	Ista Upton
Limpopo River	Peter Nicholson		Danie Erasmus	Peter Nicholson	
Hoedspruit	Fanie Meyer		Kobus van Staden	Gert Bezuidenhout	
W. Cape	Stiaan Engelbrecht	Gabrie van Eeden		Rikus Groenewald	Gerrit v d Merwe
Nelspruit	Andrew Muller	Graham Piner		Guy Turner	A J Esser
Onderberg	Cornel vd Merwe		Charlie van Veyeren		
Patensie	Tertius Meyer	Phillip Dempsey		Phillip Dempsey	Martina Odendaal
Swaziland	George Brown		Stuart Geldenhuys		
Boland				Richard Allen	Stefan Bruwer
S-KZN	Andre Austin *	Andre Austin *		Peter Button	
Nkweleni	Shane Dellis		Michael Wafer *		
Orange River	Andre Spangenberg		Jannie Spangenberg		
Vaalharts	Danie Mathewson	Danie Mathewson		Danie Mathewson	
Zimbabwe	Paul Bristow		Paul Bristow		
Pongola	Andre Barnard		Antoine Rouillard	Andre Barnard *	
E Cape Midlands		Lew Roberts		Das de Villiers	Jock Danckwerts
Grower Development Chamber	Samson Qomondi	Eric Nohamba	Mzo Makhanya	Petros Shiba	Lawrence Mgadle

* New members

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