

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (24/14)

Justin Chadwick (27 June 2014)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK "I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots" **Albert Einstein**

AMBASSADORS VISIT THE CITRUS INDUSTRY

Having the EU Ambassador (who is from the Netherlands), the Spanish Ambassador and the Dutch Agricultural Counsellor together meant that the one subject that was not raised was the World Cup soccer!! The three dignitaries, along with the EU delegate (Riaan De Lange), Spanish Economic Counsellor (Emilio Calvo) and Italian Commercial Attaché (Gerardo De Maio), were invited by Department Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), Directorate International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and CGA to visit Rosle' Farm in Groblersdal. Charles Rossouw and his staff were excellent hosts, after an early start (meeting at 1 degree C in Pretoria at 06h15) a good cup of coffee and eats were served before the delegation were exposed to the myriad of requirements, certifications and audits necessary to remain a world class exporter. There is no replacement for hands on demonstration and actually seeing what is being done – one can explain for hours what is being done; seeing it in action makes it that much more clear and understandable. After seeing all the documentation and administration required to meet export requirements the group inspected the chemical stores and observed a spray machine in the orchards. While in the orchards the group saw firsthand how fruit is selected for the ethephon testing; in addition to seeing pickers going about their business. All the while Ambassadors van de Geer (EU) and Sell (Spain) were firing questions – fortunately we had Dr Hennie le Roux of CRI who could field the technical queries; while Mooketsa Ramasodi, Julian Jaftha, Mashudu Silimela and Salamina Maelane of DAFF answered all the regulatory and inspection queries.

The Packhouse was the highlight for the visitors – with packing in full swing the advanced technology could be observed in action, while the job opportunities presented by an export Packhouse was very evident. The PPECB inspector was on hand to explain his role in phytosanitary and quality assurance. The group also observed the next steps in the testing of fruit from the orchard – dipping of fruit into ethephon and two week storage. Once again the administration in the Packhouse is really impressive – as was the information carried on the business end of the carton and the pallet identification.

Lara Swart of DIRCO must be thanked for putting the tour together – she worked tirelessly to get a representative group together. Her colleagues Marcella McMenamin and Mapeete Mohale accompanied us on the trip and ensured that we all behaved!!

This was an opportunity to show that the industry is totally committed to CBS control – extensive measures, procedures and controls are in place. This should result in a dramatic decrease in number of interceptions in the EU. On the way back to Pretoria Ambassador van de Geer commented that he was impressed by the "samewerking" between government (DAFF, DIRCO and PPECB) and industry (CGA and CRI). He was confident that he could report back that South Africa is serious about meeting EU requirements.

ETHEPHON TESTING

Nobody said it was going to be easy!!! With many orchards requiring testing in a short period of time there is going to be frustration and unhappiness. DAFF is working tirelessly to get the job done, and PPECB's turn will start soon. All parties will need to work together to keep the fruit moving. Growers have recognised that this is not only an EU requirement, but also an opportunity to manage their own risk.

The uncertainty regarding date of implementation is a concern – shipping is not a definite science and there is a worry that fruit could arrive in the EU without the necessary certification. With any new measure there will be teething problems; it is hoped that there will be some flexibility on arrival in the EU.

PACKED AND SHIPPED

With 2.9 million cartons now packed (original estimate 2.7 m) the soft citrus focus group have increased their estimate by 14%. The Valencia and Navel Focus Groups also met and decided to leave their predictions unchanged.

To Week 26 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed
SOURCE: PPECB	2012	2013	2014	2013	2014	2014	2014	2013
Grapefruit	8.9 m	12.5 m	11.2 m	10.8 m	9.1 m	16.5 m	14.4 m	17.9 m
Soft Citrus	5.1 m	5.3 m	6.2 m	4.7 m	5.3 m	9.2 m	10.5 m	8.4 m
Lemons	5.2 m	6.9 m	8.1 m	6.2 m	6.9 m	12.1 m	12.3 m	10.6 m
Navels	14 m	13.4 m	11.4 m	8.9 m	8 m	25.8 m	25.8 m	25.4 m
Valencia	3.9 m	2.8 m	2.7 m	1.3 m	0.8 m	49.5 m	49.5 m	51.4 m
Total	37.1 m	40.9 m	39.6 m	31.9 m	30.1 m	113.1 m	112.5 m	113.7 m

GROWERS' ENSURE A COMPETITIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CITRUS INDUSTRY BY FUNDING AND GUIDING THE CGA GROUP (CRI; CITRUS ACADEMY; CGACC; RB AND XSIT)