

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (32/16) (Follow me on Twitter justchad_cga)

Justin Chadwick 26 August 2016

"Oh my God! From lane eight, a world record" Michael Johnson

CELEBRATE SUCCESS

How many of you remember the Beijing Olympics? – Team South Africa returned with a solitary silver medal. London was appreciably better (6 medals) – but the team in Rio made South Africa proud – 10 Olympic medals. I am sure Wayde van Niekerk's gold AND world record will be a lasting memory for all South Africans (and to break Michael Johnson's 17 year old record from lane 8 was breathtaking). To add to the amazing story was that his coach is a 74 year old grandmother. Golden girl Caster Semenya brought back the other gold, winning the 800 m by a big margin.

CRI CITRUS RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Driving from Durban to Drakensberg Monday morning I was filled with mixed emotions. On the one hand excitement and filled with anticipation for 3 days of excellence at the 9th CRI Citrus Research Symposium; on the other hand I had a heavy heart as I realised that the force behind the Symposium would not be there. Hennie Le Roux has without doubt been the driving force the 8 previous symposiums, he is now battling serious illness and I ask all in the citrus industry to keep him in their thoughts and prayers. We all know that Hennie is "tougher" than most – but he needs our support. The Symposium did not disappoint – we applaud the work of the organising committee; Hannes Bester, Liezl van der Linde, MC Pretorius and Dawid Groenewald. The venue was fantastic (although we were subject to some cold treatment as the wind blew off the snow covered Drakensberg). The Champagne Sports Resort has now hosted a number of these events and everything runs like clockwork, excellent food, great accommodation and a beautiful setting. The programme was packed into 12 sessions with a total of 90 presentations. The standard of presentations was truly world class – short and to the point that even a layman like myself could understand. Well done to all presenters, you are truly valuable members of the southern African citrus industry. Almost 600 delegates made the trip to the KZN Drakensberg and they contributed to the networking opportunities and discussions. A rough count indicates that at least a quarter of the delegates were growers or their technical representatives; they commented that they could not afford to miss such an event. Of course such an event involves a great deal of socialising – which was made easier by the entertainment and sponsored food and drink. The Symposium has attracted a number of sponsors over the years without whom such an event would be impossible – thank you to all the sponsors.

In later newsletters highlights from the Symposium will be unpacked further – but for this week it is important to highlight the sessions covering Asian Greening (or HLB). There were a number of take home messages, including the following:

✓✓ Asian Greening is not the same as African Greening – it is a different beast altogether and has devastated once thriving citrus industries around the world. ✓✓ It is not a case of "if" Asian Greening will find its way to South Africa – but "when". ✓✓ Being prepared is the only way to lessen the impact. We have a little time now to get prepared so it is best to make the most of that time (prepare, prevent and work in partnerships). ✓✓ Nurseries need to ensure that they have the correct structures so that their trees remain healthy. ✓✓ A statutory Citrus Improvement Scheme is not a "nice to have" it is an imperative. ✓✓ Funding for Asian Greening in California alone is around US\$ 20 million per annum (about R300 million – the entire CRI budget is less than R60 million per annum). ✓✓ Asian Greening has decimated the Florida industry – the area under citrus has dropped from 800 000 acres in 2002 to about half of that today. ✓✓ Southern African growers and stakeholders need to visit Florida, California and Brazil to understand what they could (will?) be facing. ✓✓ Asian Greening has a number of impacts on tree health – videos showed fruit literally falling off the tree when shaken, acids increase and sugars decrease making fruit unsuitable even for juicing. ✓✓ Industry and government need to have a coordinated awareness/outreach program. Everybody needs to know what the psyllid looks like, what the disease looks like and what to do should they be concerned.

PACKED AND SHIPPED

To end Week 19/8/16 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed
SOURCE: PPECB/AGRIHUB	2014	2015	2016	2015	2016	2016	2016	2015
Grapefruit	15 m	15.7 m	13.3 m	14 m	12.7 m	12.4 m	13.5 m	16.1 m
Soft Citrus	9.1 m	8.9 m	10.7 m	8.6 m	10 m	11.2 m	11.9 m	10 m
Lemons	12.8 m	13.9 m	13.9 m	13.7 m	13.6 m	16.1 m	14.6 m	15.1 m
Navels	24.3 m	23.5 m	25 m	22.1 m	24.1 m	25.1 m	25 m	24.5 m
Valencia	30.7 m	31.8 m	24.7 m	22.8 m	20.8 m	46.4 m	41.3 m	52.7 m
Total	91.9 m	93.8 m	87.6 m	81.2 m	81.2 m	111.2 m	106.3 m	118.4 m

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