

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (39/18)

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Justin Chadwick 28 September 2018



“A discovery is said to be an accident meeting a prepared mind” Albert Szent-Gyorgyi

RESEARCH FACILITIES RETURN TO THE INDUSTRY

In an exciting and somewhat emotional ceremony on Wednesday evening Capespan handed over the keys of the Nelspruit research facility and Uitenhage foundation block to the CGA. CGA would like to thank Capespan for enabling the CGA to take ownership of these important industry assets, and to Tonie Fuchs, Angelo Peterson, Dawie Ferreira and Rowan Vickery for travelling from the “Republic” of the Western Cape to partake in the occasion. In the 1970’s the Solomon family donated the land on which the present Nelspruit facility stands and it was fitting that Marc Solomon represented the Solomon family and shared some historical perspective of those early days. Piet Smit (CRI Chairman) opened proceedings, I had the privilege of receiving the purchase and sale agreement from Tonie Fuchs, Tim Grout and Paul Fourie gave some interesting information on the workings of the Nelspruit and Uitenhage facilities respectively and Vaughan expressed the importance of a permanent home for the CRI staff. Finally, Ben Vorster unveiled a plaque commemorating the occasion.

CRI TECHNICAL AWARD 2018: HANNES DE LANGE

This is an extract from the second CRI Technical Award speech at the recent CRI Citrus Symposium:

This recipient obtained a M.Sc. in plant physiology from the University of Pretoria in 1969 for his work on endogenous hormones in citrus. Thereafter he worked at the Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Crops in Nelspruit, where his research on the pollination requirements of citrus cultivars was recognised with a D.Sc in 1972. During that period, he conducted pioneering research on breeding of easy peeler citrus types and travelled widely, importing promising new cultivars. He negotiated the importation of the Miho Wase Satsuma from Japan and spent six months conducting research at the Division of Fruit Breeding at the Volcani Institute in Tel Aviv.

He bred the Valley Gold mandarin, which is being planted in various citrus areas of SA to this day. Over 100 000 buds of this cultivar have been supplied by the Citrus Foundation Block annually over the past three years.

It was early in the 1970s that the then revolutionary technique of shoot-tip grafting (STG) was being developed at the Riverside campus of the University of California. This ground-breaking new technology enabled citrus propagation material to be free of viruses and other pathogens, thereby enabling the safe importation of a wide range of highly productive cultivars and rootstocks. During the 6th International Conference of Citrus Virologists, which South Africa hosted in 1972, scientists were informed about the new STG technique being developed in California. Following a visit to California by Louis von Broembsen to view the technique in 1974, the recipient of the award was appointed to take on the project of introducing it to South Africa. He did this with resounding success and was awarded the Transvaal Agriculture Researcher of the Year prize in 1982 for his contribution. His remarkable achievement in painstakingly commercializing the delicate STG process has had a huge and lasting impact on the ongoing success of the SA citrus industry.

In 1986, he moved on to the National Botanical Institute at Kirstenbosch where he established the tissue culture unit used for the preservation of endangered plant species. Thereafter he conducted an extensive study of threatened fynbos species and in 1992 was awarded a Ph.D. by the University of Stellenbosch for his work on the embryology and ecology of these endangered species and this research has received worldwide recognition. He also initiated research into the production of Honey bush, which led in 1999 to the establishment of the SA Honey bush Association.

Since his official retirement in 1999, he has conducted contract research to develop various South African plant species for pharmaceutical and other purposes. He is currently involved in a long-term project with the Rooibos industry for the genetic improvement of their propagation material. Throughout his career, he has shown himself to be a professional researcher in every sense. Dedicated, focused, yet very modest. His immense contribution to the citrus industry is highly appreciated.

PACKED AND SHIPPED (note PPECB system still down – week 37 and 38 packing captured manually)

To Week 38 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed 2016	Packed 2017	Packed 2018	Shipped 2017	Shipped 2018	Original Estimate 2018	Latest Prediction 2018	Final Packed 2017
SOURCE: PPECB/Agrihub	2016	2017	2018	2017	2018	2018	2018	2017
Grapefruit	13.8 m	15.6 m	18.6 m	14.6 m	17.5 m	16.8 m	18.6 m	15.7 m
Soft Citrus	12.1 m	13.4 m	15.9 m	12.9 m	15.5 m	14.7 m	17 m	13.4 m
Lemons	14.9 m	19 m	19.2 m	18.5 m	18.6 m	20.6 m	19.9 m	19 m
Navels	26.2 m	21 m	26.4 m	21.2 m	26.1 m	25.7 m	26.4 m	21.1 m
Valencia	41.2 m	50.3 m	44.1 m	44.6 m	43 m	53.9 m	51.2 m	53.8 m
Total	108.2 m	119.3 m	124.2 m	111.8 m	120.7 m	131.7 m	133.1 m	123 m

CGA GROUP OF COMPANIES (CRI, RIVER BIOSCIENCE, XSIT, CGA CULTIVAR COMPANY, CGA GROWER DEVELOPMENT COMPANY & CITRUS ACADEMY) ARE FUNDED BY SOUTHERN AFRICAN CITRUS GROWERS