

"We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or we can rejoice because thorn bushes have roses"

Abraham Lincoln

NEW LEADERSHIP AT THE HELM OF TRANSNET

The CGA welcomes the appointment of Michelle Phillips as Group Chief Executive at Transnet. We especially value her extensive experience in Transnet, having come through the company's ranks. She has shown leadership as acting CEO. The stability that her continuation in that position brings is also appreciated. The CGA hopes that under her leadership Transnet will champion more Public-Private Partnerships, such as the essential joint venture with International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) to modernise and manage Durban Container Terminal Pier 2. She has recently shown appreciation for the immense contribution fresh produce export makes to the South African economy. With the citrus export season starting in April, the industry continues to engage with all role-players to make sure the ports are as efficient as possible before then.

GROWER INDABA: PORTS

Growers are asked to confirm their participation at the Port Indaba on 8 March 2024 at the CSIR in Pretoria. The meeting is called to gauge the state of readiness for the forthcoming season with important presentations by Mitchell Brooke (CGA) and Theo Boshoff (Agbiz). In addition, the citrus industry wants to learn from other sectors through presentations from the auto sector and the table grape industry.

The Indaba is restricted to CGA members (citrus growers) and since space is restricted please RSVP to tanya@cga.co.za by no later than 5 March.

SECOND WEEK OF CGA GROWER ROADSHOWS

This past week the A Team – Rob Elfick (RBX), Jacomien de Klerk (Citrus Academy), Sean Moore (CRI), Mitchell Brooke (CGA), Lukhanyo Nkombisa (CGA-GDC), Tevan Lehman (CGA-CC) – and I travelled through citrus growing regions in the beautiful Eastern Cape. The province is a powerhouse in the southern African citrus context. Once again many young growers were present at the meetings (although I am battling to get to grips with being called "Oom") and this shows the industry will be in good hands in the future.

There was generally a positive atmosphere in the Eastern Cape. The Patensie region has a full dam, while Sundays River and the East Cape Midlands both received good summer rains.

Driving through the region brings the figures behind Vision 260 into stark focus – there are so many recent plantings that are starting to mature and a lot of netting is now evident.

Citrus growers make the best hosts, but can also lead the team astray, pleasantly. Many things are sorted out around the braai fire. Thanks to Nedbank and Derrick Sissons for their sponsorship which allowed the CGA to ensure that the roadshows ended with some excellent networking.

The week was finished off on a high note when we visited Winterberg Agricultural High School in Fort Beaufort to hand over some tablet computers to assist learners as they embark on the Citrus Secondary Program (courtesy of the Orange Heart initiative, the CGA's outreach program). What a pleasure for Jacomien to address the school – and congratulations to the principal and teachers who have instilled such excellent discipline and manners at the school. It is important that schools in citrus growing regions partner with the industry and that learners get opportunities to enter a sector that is on their doorstep.

The B (Best Team) did some serious driving covering the Western Cape (Boland and Citrusdal) and Northern Cape (Kakemas). More on their final week in the next newsletter.