Dr Boitshoko Ntshabele
16 October 2026
Week 42/26

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

"Writers don't give prescriptions. They give headaches!"
(Chinua Achebe)

ACKNOWLEDGING WHAT EMERGING GROWERS NEED

This week I read the President's newsletter which addressed how agriculture can be grown in South Africa. Amongst other things, it referred to the support that emerging growers need to succeed. This is a welcome conversation from his side. It was wonderful to see President Ramaphosa acknowledge the strides the citrus industry has made in transformation, particularly the meaningful transfer of knowledge and expertise from established growers to the next generation of producers. Our Grower Development Company and Citrus Academy has, indeed, had a profound impact.

In my travels around the country, I am always filled with pride and encouragement when I see how young people are looking at agriculture as a real opportunity to create and build a livelihood. For a long time, frankly, it was seen as the domain of old people, even retirement. This has been a challenge all over the world, where growers are an older population, and the need to infuse youth into the sector is pronounced.

A lot has been written about agriculture's potential, but it seems the struggle lies with implementation, and perhaps policy dissonance. At this juncture, agriculture faces many headwinds: geopolitical tensions and related market access issues, a likely drought related to El Niño, biosecurity risks, the Middle East war and its consequences, reliance on road for the transport of produce to ports, and inefficiencies at our ports - all quite well-known subjects of discussion, and almost an endless list.

The support package that emerging growers need sits with various government departments and related public sector institutions. All these institutions have good intentions to provide the services and support as mandated. The experience of the growers is, however, something else. Those that provide finance are not always well coordinated and in some instances are in the same space as commercial banks when considering the terms for lending money - with the effect that the grower does not necessarily get the 'developmental' aspect as mandated. It is in times like these, given the headwinds, that growers need patient capital. Particularly in a sector such as citrus, which has generally proven over the years to be on a trajectory of success. Growers need capital that allows them to walk, then jog and when the energy is back, to start running again, lest they foreclose as the terms under which finance was given does not provide for 'difficult' times.

Similarly, the roll-out and issuing of title deeds to growers must be expedited. In a recent meeting with the Director General of Land Reform and Rural Development, this was one of the issues we discussed. I for one left his offices with a lot of encouragement. Hopefully progress towards this essential issue is fast-tracked and translates into benefit for the growers, and ultimately, the growing of agriculture, as desired by the President and, indeed, every South African.

OBSOLETE PESTICIDE DESTRUCTION

Crop Life SA has started phase II of their obsolete plant protection product stock removal, this time, countrywide. The service will be available, free of charge, from now until **mid-November 2026.** Growers are encouraged to contact Gerhard Verdoorn (gerhard@croplife.co.za) and Mark Campbell (northernobspesticides@croplife.co.za) **by the end of October 2026** for more information on how to partake in the initiative.

CITRUS MARKETING FORUM

The final Citrus Marketing Forum (CMF) will be held on **Friday, 30 October** at **10:00 AM** via **MS Teams**. Please contact Portia Magwaza at portia@cga.co.za to receive the registration link.

INTERESTING FACTS

The Citrus Academy Bursary Fund, established 20 years ago by the CGA, has awarded over 1,000 bursaries, totalling over R35m.

For the latest South African citrus packed and shipped volumes, please visit the CGA website:

Stats 01 – Shipping & Cold Stores
Stock Statistics Dashboard | CGA

CGA CITRUS SUMMIT

Registration for the 2027 CGA Citrus Summit is now open to ***everyone!*** We encourage you to register early to secure your place at the Summit from 9-11 March 2027!

There are still some sponsorship opportunities available – should you be interested, please contact tanya@cga.co.za.

CGA GROUP INFO

FINAL CITRUS MARKETING FORUM (CMF)
Date: 30 October 2026
Time: 10:00am
Venue: MS Teams
Link: Please contact portia@cga.co.za to receive the link

PACKED AND SHIPPED VOLUMES

End of week 40 million 15 kg cartons	*Packed*	*Packed*	*Packed*	*Shipped*	*Shipped*	*Original Estimate*	*Latest Prediction*	*Final Packed*	*Vision 260*
SOURCE: PPECB / AGRIHUB	2024	2025	**2026**	2025	**2026**	2026	**2026**	2025	**2026**
***Grapefruit**	14.4 m	15.3 m	15.3 m	15.2 m	14.9 m	17.8 m	15.4 m	15.3 m	15.5 m
Lemons	34.7 m	41.3 m	51 m	40.8 m	48.5 m	45.9 m	51 m	41.6 m	43.4 m
Mandarins	41.7 m	53.5 m	50.7 m	51.7 m	49.1 m	52.7 m	50.8 m	53.5 m	50 m
Navels	25.1 m	31.5 m	25.2 m	30.8 m	24.5 m	30 m	25.2 m	31.6 m	32.3 m
Valencia	48.6 m	61.3 m	58.3 m	57.9 m	53.7 m	63 m	58.8 m	62 m	67.8 m
Total	**164.5 m**	**202.9 m**	**200.5 m**	**196.4 m**	**190.7 m**	**209.4 m**	**201.2 m**	**204 m**	**209 m**

* **Grapefruit Packed Distribution**: Class 1 & 2 volumes remained relatively stable at 12.5 m cartons (2026) vs 13.4 m (2025) and 13 m (2024), while PP volumes increased to 2.8 m cartons from 1.8 m (2025) and 1.4 m (2024).