



news

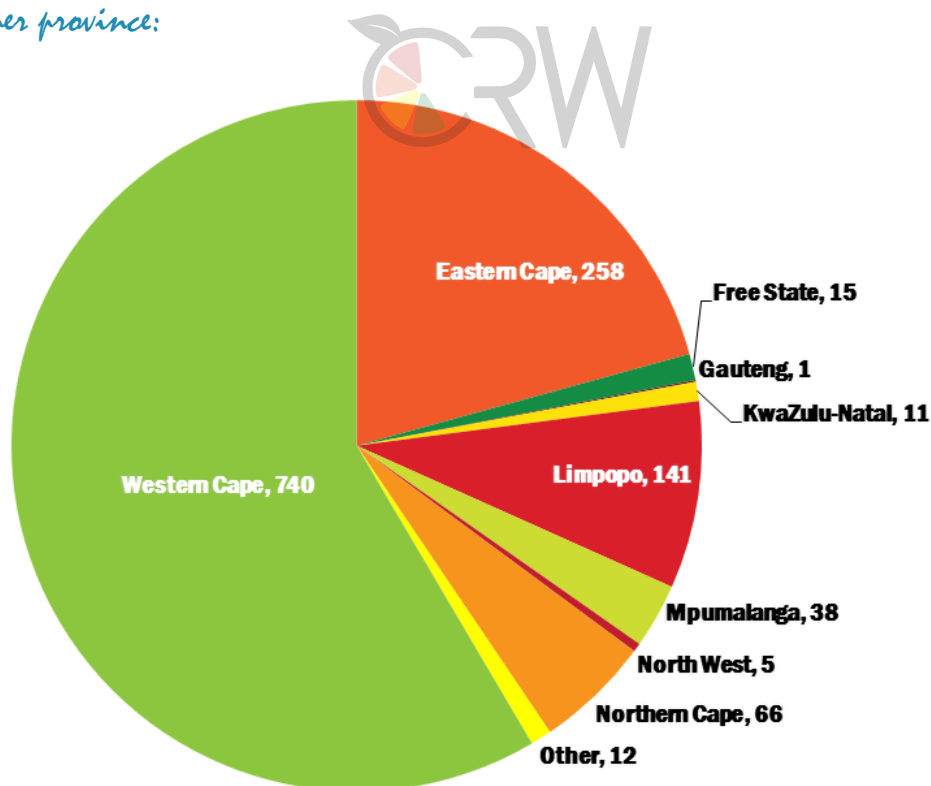
MARCH 2015

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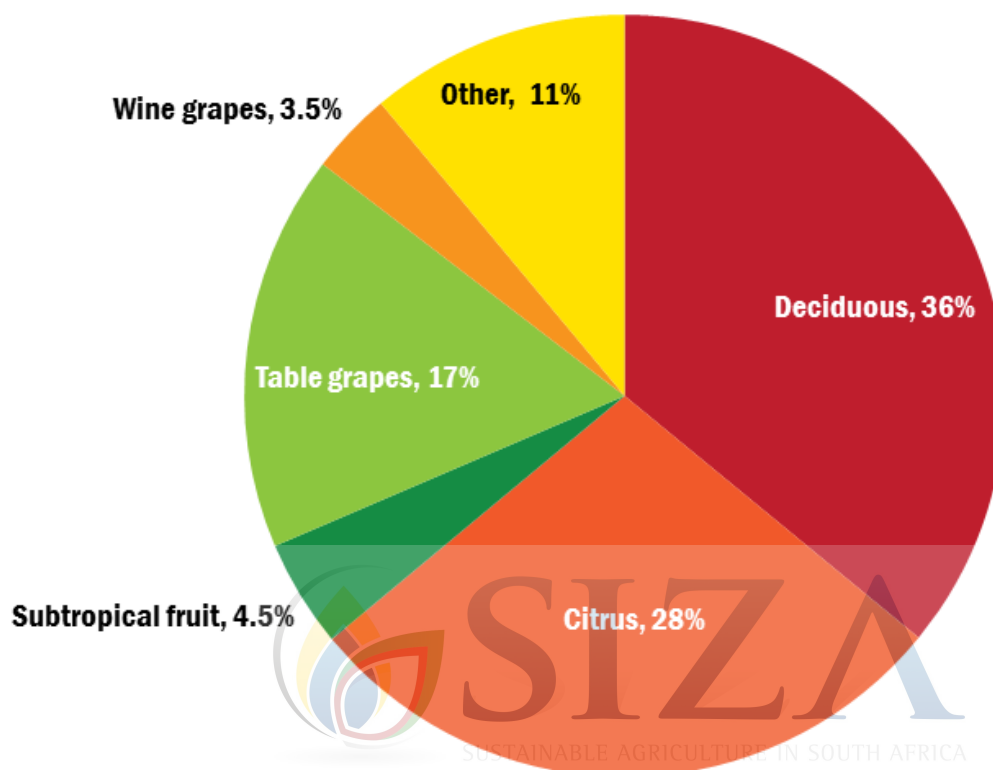
Membership

The SIZA programme took great strides during the past year. A significant milestone of 1000 registered members was reached by November 2014, and now – at the end of March 2015, there are already 1,287 SIZA members. Whilst the majority is producers; an increasing number of exporters, importers and retailers have joined the programme. A membership increase is expected at all levels from June this year, when the data platform will be fully functional. The data platform will provide a range of benefits to assist with more efficient risk management.

SIZA membership per province:



SIZA membership per commodity:



Retailer recognition of SIZA helps to avoid the duplication of audits

The SIZA Standard is aligned with South African legislation and it complies with international standards. It is recognised by all UK retailers, including Tesco, Marks & Spencer, Waitrose, COOP, Sainsbury's and Morrisons; as well as a large number of EU retailers. SIZA is engaging with the Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI), a European-based social compliance scheme with most major EU retailers as its members, to extend the mutual recognition agreement which has been in place. SIZA is also working with various retailers in the USA and Canada to gain recognition.

South African producers benefit by only having to comply with ONE ethical labour standard, instead of a number of different standards linked to different retailers. In other words, there is ONE standard and ONE audit, regardless of which retailer the producer is supplying. Locally, SIZA is working with South African retailers to get full local endorsement of the SIZA programme.

SIZA data platform

SIZA has contracted a local service provider to develop its data platform. The data platform will provide improved electronic registrations, renewal of registrations, self-assessment functions, as well as the capturing of audit reports and CAP reports. Phase 1, which includes registration and self-assessment questionnaires (SAQ), will 'go live' for new registrations in the first week of April. Phase 2 will be functional in mid-June and includes reports on audits and corrective actions. The data platform will also provide a variety of reports and industry profiles.

FSA AB membership on Sedex

Fruit South Africa (FSA) will continue with its AB membership on Sedex in 2015 and customers will retain full visibility of SIZA members' self-assessment questionnaires (SAQ), audit reports and CAP/final audit reports via the FSA AB account. SIZA administration will continue to see to the needs of customers and their suppliers on Sedex. If a site wants to be registered as an employment site under the FSA AB account in order to be visible to buyers, please contact info@siza.co.za for more information.

SIZA audit oversight

In order to retain the integrity of the SIZA audit programme, it is necessary for SIZA to conduct random shadow audits on SIZA members and on auditors conducting audits. The purpose is to improve the auditing system by ensuring that auditors apply audit processes consistently and interpret requirements correctly. SIZA works with audit bodies to encourage consistency in implementation. Shadow audits are a necessary part of the programme, aimed at improving service delivery.

SIZA / WIETA mutual recognition

SIZA and WIETA are involved in a process, focused on achieving mutual recognition between the two programmes. The standards and audit process documents have been benchmarked against each other and a practical review of audits is being conducted.

According to the current agreement between SIZA and WIETA, producers wanting to do a SIZA audit can still be recognised by WIETA and obtain WIETA certification. However, WIETA will first perform spot-checks before certification to ensure that corrective actions have been completed. Vinpro members can recover the costs from Vinpro. WIETA is also concluding its GSCP equivalence process, which will support the process of mutual recognition.

SIZA Capacity Building programme

The SIZA Capacity Building programme is focused on the training of Ethical Trade Facilitators (ETFs) through countrywide workshops. In 2015, a total of 2,699 people throughout South Africa received ETF training.

This year, workshops have commenced in February, during which 35 Intermediate ETF workshops with 592 participants and 108 Basic ETF workshops with 2,107 participants were conducted by training service providers in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, the Free State and the Northern Cape. Positive feedback was received after the workshops, which were jointly funded by the Western Cape Department of Agriculture (WC DoA) and the Netherlands-based 'Sustainable Trade Initiative' (IDH).



ETF training and group discussions

SIZA VISA programme

The SIZA VISA programme is a national initiative, which commenced with awareness workshops in February 2015. SIZA VISA is a resource for SIZA members, offering an induction training programme that consists of a DVD (available in English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa and Sesotho); three posters and an informative User Guide.

The DVD can be used by people who have attended the SIZA VISA workshops, allowing producers and pack houses to conduct their own training. The DVD contains a basic introduction to the SIZA programme and four stand-alone modules – Ethical Trade and the SIZA programme; Health and Safety; Hygiene; and Workplace policies and procedures. All workers who do the training will receive a SIZA VISA card, which is a record of the training they have completed.

To date, a total of 264 participants have attended workshops with a reach of over 53,000 workers. Workshops have been scheduled over the next four months in the following provinces: the Western Cape (Ladismith, Robertson, Paarl, Grabouw, Villiersdorp, Ceres, Stellenbosch and De Doorns); the Eastern Cape (Kirkwood, Hermitage, Patensie and Langkloof); the Northern Cape (Augrabies and Kakamas); KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State (Eshowe, Richmond and Bethlehem); as well as Limpopo and Mpumalanga (Nelspruit, Hazyview and Burgersfort). For information contact admin@rss-africa.com.

SIZA model for small-scale producers

SIZA is currently developing a model for small-scale and developing producers that will help them comply with ethical requirements and support access to a broader range of markets. SIZA is developing this model in collaboration with FSA member associations and the international NGO, Solidaridad. In 2015, the model will be piloted in three provinces: Limpopo, the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape. For information contact Colleen Chennells at: chennell@iafrica.com.

Environmental framework

Fruit South Africa (FSA) is working with WWF SA to finalise a locally relevant and internationally recognised environmental framework for the South African fruit industry – to support the achievement of environmentally sustainable fruit farming. The framework will be subjected to the same GSCP equivalence process that the SIZA social Standard underwent and should be available for implementation by the second half of 2015. The environmental framework will complement the social component of sustainable business practices under the SIZA programme. Ultimately, the SIZA social Standard and the environmental framework will be the two main pillars that uphold the programme. For information contact David Farrell on: david@bluenorth.co.za. (David Farrell is currently standing in for Shelly Fuller).