



KEEPING IT FRESH



News from the FPEF – 07 June 2023

Dear FPEF Members,

During the stone fruit and table grape export season for this year we all have experienced challenges and or applied our knowhow of our industry to try and address those challenges, such as logistics (ports), unreliable electricity supply and developments in the regulatory environment which are not conducive to maintaining and/or creating a sustainable and profitable fresh produce export industry. The input and assistance of our members to the FPEF staff, especially with regards to providing quantified information to empower us even more in dealing with the challenges, are highly appreciated.

We are continuing in the same vein now with the citrus season as well as other fruit types.

Most of these challenges are also experienced by other agricultural industries and Agbiz's Chief Economist, **Wandile Sihlobo** wrote an excellent piece on it.

Herewith, some of the key points of his article which are of special relevance to us:

Implementation of the AAMP (Agricultural and Agro-Processing Master Plan):

Implementation of the plan is vital for building trust in the sector, not only between the government and existing role-players in agriculture but also other South Africans who aspire to join the sector and have followed these programmes from inception with hope for inclusion and economic opportunities. Notably, the sector's stakeholders will also be more appreciative of the seriousness of government programmes and policy if there is a full-scale implementation of all the steps.

If the implementation of this plan is slow, we may again find ourselves with another "good on paper but not implemented plan". Getting out of this state of inertia requires the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) to reconvene the social partners with an implementation proposal at hand to propose.

We, together with the other Fruit South Africa members, share these sentiments; especially since we were signatories to the plan a year ago. A few days ago, the Director-General of the DALRRD, announced that the plan will be revised. We trust that the core aspects impacting our industry will still be included.

In the meantime, we continue to be involved in the issues now at hand - of which you can read more in the next part of this newsletter.



Market Access

Government Engagement

Export process assistance

Provide Information

Transformation

Research, Development and Innovation

TRANSFORMATION

FPEF Graduate Placement Programme

In February, we shared a video with you in which FPEF member companies and graduates shared inspiring testimonials of the positive impact the programme has had in their businesses and careers respectively. Please find below a link to a second video with interview responses from graduates appointed through the programme. The purpose of the video is to promote the FPEF's Graduate Placement Programme to students at career fairs and on online platforms, however, it provides excellent insight into the high calibre of graduates appointed through the programme.

<https://youtu.be/J5P809QiTwk>

So far, 11 graduates have been appointed to FPEF member companies through the programme in 2023, with further interviews at a number of FPEF member companies underway. The FPEF provides recruitment services through our service provider Agrijob and the FPEF makes a salary contribution of R5,000 per month for the first 12 months for any graduate appointed through the programme. Agrijob has excellent candidates available and if you are interested in appointing a graduate or would like to find out more, please contact Johannes Brand, johannes@fpef.co.za, 071 688 1888.

LOGISTICS & OPERATIONS

The National Logistics Crisis Committee (NLCC) announced by the President on the 5th of April has been focussing on getting the framework and resources in place including a communications department that will start formal communication with stakeholders in due course. The NLCC will include representatives from the Department of Transport, Department of Public Enterprises, National Treasury, Department of Trade, Industry and Competition as well as Transnet.

A Joint Strategic Operations Committee (JSOC) will be established between the NLCC and private sector, co-ordinated by Business for South Africa. The fruit sector will participate through Agbiz, and participants have been asked to make time and resources available.

The development of the Freight Logistics Roadmap, coordinated by Operation Vulindlela was released last week and include both the measures required to improve operational performance in the short term and to address the structural constraints in the longer term.

Port and Rail

Adverse weather impacted the Port of Cape Town the past week, not only wind delays but high swells delayed vessel movements (berthing and sailing) as well as ranging in the port halted vessel operations on a few occasions. Shore tensioners, when deployed are minimizing delays but berth 601 remains exposed. The Cape Town Temporary Truck staging area has been closed until the 15th of June for maintenance, the surface did not stand up well against the recent storms and intensive work is required. Looking back at the month of May, it has been an unusually windy month with 94 hours of weather delays recorded compared to 35 hours in 2022 and 65 hours in 2021.

Cable theft on the Natcor line has slowed although transit times are often extended as the line is subject to loadshedding enroute and the volumes of trains are increasing. Pier 1 struggled with equipment to the extent that services have been impacted and Coega's Moormaster is still out of commission.

Border congestion

Land border posts are experiencing congestion and delays with the N4 corridor to Maputo being the most affected as a result of technical challenges and the added time to process movements manually.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



We would like to extend a hearty welcome to **TWO** new members:

- **GrapeHub – Exporter Member**
- **KHold – Associate Member**

We look forward to a long and rewarding association with you.

FRESH INDIA SHOW

• GLOBAL CONFERENCE
• EXHIBITION
• NETWORKING MEET
• AWARDS

9-10 June 2023
Pride Plaza Hotel
Aerocity, New Delhi, India

Fresh India Show
Connecting fresh businesses

Join me

TOPIC
Global Stone Fruit Industry and Future Business Opportunities

Mr. Anton Kruger
Chief Executive Officer,
Fresh Produce Exporters'
Forum, South Africa

While you are reading this, I will be boarding a flight to New Delhi in India to attend the **Fresh India Show** taking place from **9-10 June** at the **Pride Plaza Hotel** as one of their speakers. Highlights will be shared with you in our next edition of *Keeping it Fresh*.

Best regards
Anton Kruger



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