



# KEEPING IT FRESH



**News from the FPEF – 12 June 2026**

## *Dear FPEF Members,*

As we move deeper into the 2026 export season, one thing remains clear: success in our industry is never achieved by chance. It is the result of thousands of decisions made every day by growers, packhouses, logistics providers, exporters and service partners, all working together to keep South African fruit moving to markets around the world.

The past month has been a particularly busy one for the FPEF team. We have engaged across the value chain through industry meetings, member visits, governance processes and stakeholder engagements, all aimed at strengthening the environment in which our members operate.

At the **Ports Consultative Roadshow**, we were encouraged by the long-term infrastructure plans presented by **TNPA**, particularly the focus on expanding and modernising the **Cape Town Container Terminal**. While these plans are promising, experience has taught us to remain cautiously optimistic. The real measure of success will be implementation, delivery and improved operational performance. The ongoing corporatisation and unbundling of TNPA may, however, create new opportunities for competition and investment that could benefit the industry in the years ahead.

We also hosted the **Fruit SA biannual logistics meeting**, where industry stakeholders reflected honestly on the successes and shortcomings of the past season. One outcome was the development of a clear priority and escalation framework to ensure that operational, tactical and strategic challenges are addressed effectively through the appropriate industry structures.

Governance and industry credibility remain equally important. At our recent **Board meeting**, significant time was devoted to membership applications and compliance matters. While we are encouraged by the growing interest in joining FPEF, membership carries responsibilities. Protecting the reputation and integrity of the fresh produce export sector requires us to uphold high standards and ensure alignment with the newly gazetted **APAC agency regulations**. This has resulted in some difficult decisions, including the termination of memberships where compliance requirements were not met and not approving several new applicants.



Market Access

Government Engagement

Export process assistance

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Transformation

Research, Development and Innovation

Our travels also took us to the **Eastern Cape** for the **Agbiz Congress** and visits to several members' operations. These engagements provided valuable insight into the realities faced on the ground, including the impact of recent heavy rains, logistics constraints and the resilience required to keep businesses operating under challenging conditions.



As I write this, we have just concluded a highly successful **PHI Phase 5 Gala Dinner in Stellenbosch**, celebrating another milestone in industry innovation and collaboration. We look forward to sharing more on the outcomes and impact of the programme in future editions.

The citrus season is now gathering momentum, bringing with it both opportunity and pressure. Logistics performance remains under scrutiny, global uncertainty continues to influence markets, and weather conditions have once again reminded us of the risks inherent in agriculture. Yet despite these challenges, the industry continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience.

Our task as FPEF is to ensure that we remain focused on what matters most: creating the conditions that allow our members to compete, grow and succeed.

**Thank you for your continued support, engagement and commitment to our industry.**

## NEW MEMBERSHIP – CLAUDIA WALKLETT

We would like to extend a hearty welcome to the following new members:

**Associate Category:**

Commercial Cold Holdings Manco (CCH Cold)  
C. Steinweg Bridge  
Pacific International Lines (PIL)

**Exporter Category:**

Juva Fruit



## TRAINING – JOHANNES BRAND



Employees from **five FPEF member companies** completed the FPEF's **Harvest to Home (H2H) fruit export value chain training programme** this week. The training was delivered in an interactive online format and spanned a total of 6 days split into three blocks. The up to date curriculum covers the entire value chain including export economics, primary production, quality management, compliance, cold storage, packing, logistics, commercial management and marketing. The course is designed primarily for employees in junior to middle management positions within fruit export companies, packhouses, and logistics service providers. Participants gain an excellent understanding of the entire value chain, along with deeper knowledge and insight into their specific areas of responsibility. **The next online H2H programme starts in October.** To register contact **Johannes Brand** | [johannes@fpef.co.za](mailto:johannes@fpef.co.za)

**EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) 2025/40**

The new packaging and packaging waste regulation impacts all suppliers of packaged agricultural products to the EU market. Last week, a webinar was scheduled under the umbrella of Fruit South Africa. At the webinar, several speakers addressed topics related to the **EU's Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)** and its implications for South African exporters.



After welcoming remarks by **Mr Jyrki Torni** of the **EU Delegation** and an overview of the **Economic Partnership Agreement** support programme by **Dr Alexander Toto**, **Ms Angeles Jimenez Redondo** from **DG Environment** unpacked the PPWR's new plastics and packaging requirements, timelines, and compliance measures for third-country operators. Finally, **Ms Axelle Rupert** from **COLEAD** presented technical documentation and conformity requirements, including a case study on how an African smallholder can meet the regulation.

The PPWR refers to a Declaration of Conformity (DoC) that suppliers must comply to from **12 August 2026** for each packaging type. Final responsibility lies with the brand owner / producer of the packaged product.

For clarity, the term "suppliers" refers broadly to any entity in the export value chain that provides packaged agricultural products for the EU market, including:

- **Producers / brand owners (the trademark holders who place the product on the EU market – these bear final legal responsibility).**
- **Exporters who sell under their own brand or a retailer's brand.**
- **Packaging suppliers / manufacturers who provide the physical packaging materials.**
- **Contract packers (co-packers) who fill packaging on behalf of a brand owner.**

However, it is critical to note that not all suppliers bear the same legal obligations under the PPWR.

- **Only the "producer" (brand owner / trademark holder) is legally required to hold the Declaration of Conformity (DoC) and technical documentation.**
- **Other suppliers (e.g., packaging manufacturers, logistics providers) have an informational duty: they must provide the necessary data, test reports, and specifications to the producer to enable compliance.**

More information on compliance to the EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) 2025/40 will be shared with all members.

## **FPEF hosted the South African Revenue Service**

The Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (**FPEF**) hosted the South African Revenue Service (**SARS**) for a productive two-hour session at the FPEF offices in Platteklouf, with **Mr Warren Hero, Head: Segment, Product and Process**, leading the SARS delegation. The meeting focused squarely on customs-related issues affecting the fruit export sector.



The FPEF provided context on the export value chain and complexity. An important part of the discussion was around the fruit industry concession categorisation under category B, of which SARS confirmed in previous communication to the FPEF that the concession is legally enabled but not yet operational.

In other words, the legislative framework enabling the concession is already in place, however, the supporting operational systems, electronic processes, or detailed procedural policies required to implement the legislation are not yet fully operational or automated. As such, the current interim arrangement with regards to the historical concession, remain applicable.

Discussions covered industry operational challenges, where FPEF members highlighted specific customs-related constraints that hinder export flows, including delays and documentation bottlenecks. On trade facilitation and modernisation, both parties reviewed digital process improvements and system enhancements aimed at improving client experience. Compliance and risk areas were examined from both perspectives, identifying key concerns such as phytosanitary alignment and valuation risks. Finally, the group explored concrete stakeholder collaboration opportunities, agreeing on mechanisms to strengthen ongoing engagement, including regular technical working groups and a dedicated SARS-FPEF liaison channel. The FPEF will formally engage SARS and put forward a technical workgroup. The FPEF committed to providing further member input, while SARS acknowledged the value of the sector's insights for addressing operational challenges.

## **LOGISTICS – ANTOINETTE VAN HEERDEN**

### **Transnet progress update**

Yesterday, **Transnet Port Terminals (TPT) CEO Jabu Mdaki** shared a progress update with industry stakeholders, highlighting performance improvements achieved since 2023, the status of equipment deliveries, and procurement plans for the next financial year.

The engagement also covered key operational challenges and the root causes that have been identified, followed by the interventions being implemented to address these constraints.

In addition, robust performance targets for the next financial year were outlined as part of TPT's commitment to improving operational efficiency and service delivery.

## **Durban Gateway Terminal**

The Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (**FPEF**) and Citrus Growers' Association (**CGA**) recently visited the **Durban Gateway Terminal** as part of a follow-up engagement to better understand progress at the terminal and to reaffirm industry support.

The terminal has been mandated to **increase volumes by 2028**. To support this objective, management plans to redesign the terminal layout within the current year. Additional space has already been created through the removal of two redundant ship-to-shore (STS) cranes, with plans underway to remove a further two cranes to optimize terminal capacity and operations.

The terminal is also keen to **expand back-of-port rail capacity** and is open to engagement with interested stakeholders.

To support operational coordination during the citrus season, **Tim Keit** has established weekly meetings. Interested parties are welcome to contact [Antoinette@fpf.co.za](mailto:Antoinette@fpf.co.za) should they wish to receive an invitation to participate.



**Werner van Rooyen**, (FPEF Corporate and Industry Affairs Executive), **Grant Bahlmann**, (Chief Commercial Officer, Durban Gateway Terminal), **Charl du Bois**, (Chairman of FPEF Board), **Piet de Jager**, (FPEF CEO) and **Antoinette van Heerden**, (FPEF Logistical Affairs Manager)

Until next time,

***Piet***