Dear FPEF Members,

It is both a privilege and an honour to pen my first message to you as CEO of the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum. Over the past weeks, I have had the opportunity to engage deeply with our industry – not only through the analyses and planning sessions with Anton and our team, but also through meaningful conversations with many of you.

My recent visit to Fruit Attraction Madrid was a powerful reminder of the global relevance of South Africa's fresh produce sector. It was inspiring to see the pride with which our exporters represent our country, and equally encouraging to witness the strong relationships we have built with international partners, importers and retailers. These relationships are not only the foundation of our market access, but also a vital pathway to growth, diversification and long-term competitiveness.

As I step into this role, my mission is clear: to serve our members, to strengthen our partnerships, and to ensure that the FPEF remains a trusted and enabling platform for the industry. Together with you, I want us to build on the Forum's legacy of integrity and impact – whilst preparing our sector to thrive in a changing global trade environment.

The road ahead will require collaboration, innovation and unity of purpose. I am confident that with the dedication of our staff, members, stakeholders and partners, we will continue to position South African fresh produce at the forefront of world markets.

I look forward to working alongside you – keeping it fresh, keeping it competitive and keeping it South African.

Fruit Attraction Madrid 2025

Fruit SA hosted a **160 m² stand** at the recent Fruit Attraction trade fair, held at IFEMA Madrid – from 30 September to 2 October. The stand was funded by the FPEF and various growers' associations. The event was well attended by more than **80 FPEF member companies**, which highlighted the importance of this show.

According to estimates for this year's edition, Fruit Attraction brought together 2 460 exhibiting companies from 64 countries, representing an 8.4% increase in comparison with last year. At 78 000 m², the exhibition occupied 10% more space than in 2024, and attracted over 120 000 trade visitors from 150 countries.

Although we were located in a **new hall**, separate from the others, the Fruit SA stand remained consistently busy with South African companies conducting meetings throughout the event. There were 24 tables available to accommodate as many companies as possible, though this was sometimes insufficient during the first two days. However, the new booking system worked very well, allowing us to accommodate more members than in previous years.

The **Get Connected** cards will be sent out soon to all members. In addition, we will begin gathering **feedback** from members about their experience at the stand and request insights into the value of the business conducted during the event. This information will be invaluable in shaping our future initiatives.

fruit attraction

Anton Kruger, Dr Ivan Meyer (Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism) and Piet de Jager at Fruit Attraction in Madrid.

Marletta Kellerman and Dr Ivan Meyer at Fruit Attraction.

Export Directory 2026

The FPEF Fresh Produce Export Directory is annually updated and distributed by the FPEF. It includes details of FPEF members, statistics from the previous fruit and vegetable seasons, as well as other relevant information about the South African fresh produce industry.

It is time to compile the **FPEF Export Directory for 2026**. Each member is kindly requested to ensure that their **correct information** is listed in the new edition. Please send the required information to marletta@fpef.co.za by no later than 17 October 2025 (please refer to the email sent on 6 October 2025).

FPEF members are also invited to **advertise** in the 2026 Export Directory. If you are interested in booking an advertisement, please contact Marletta Kellerman at marletta@fpef.co.za by 29 October 2025 (please refer to the email sent on 7 October 2025).

OPERATIONS – WERNER VAN ROOYEN

PPECB to manage the e-Cert platform from 1 October 2025

This announcement confirms the transfer of the e-Certification platform's administration to the Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) – effective from 1 October 2025.

The e-Cert platform, which facilitates the phytosanitary certification for agricultural exports, is critical for maintaining efficiency and trust in global trade. Centralising its management under the PPECB offers significant benefits, including improved process alignment, enhanced service delivery through combined resources and sustainable long-term governance.

A collaborative transition, with Fruit SA and the Department of Agriculture, is underway to prevent any service disruption. Further guidance and feedback on the progress will be provided in the coming weeks.

Market Access visit to the Philippines and South Korea

A market access visit by a Fruit SA delegation to the Philippines and South Korea, took place during the same time as Fruit Attraction. Both of our trading partners responded favourably, and we are eager to move our market access activities along quickly.

The East remains one of the most crucial areas for creating new markets for South African fruit and vegetables. The Fruit SA delegation also arranged meetings with the relevant business and commerce partners, providing much-needed insight into both markets. Subsequent meetings with the Agricultural Departments of both importing countries proved important in reviving cooperative ties, re-establishing collaborative relationships, discussing technical market access matters and negotiating pending new market access applications.

Both trading partners responded positively towards Fruit SA's strategy of gaining new markets and optimising existing markets.

FINANCES – MARINDA ROUX

Exported Volume Declarations

All FPEF Exporter members – please take note!

You will receive an official request via email from Marinda Roux (marinda@fpef.co.za) to declare your exported volumes for the period of 1 October 2024 to 30 September 2025 during the course of **next week**.

Please note that the **deadline for submission is 31 October 2025**.

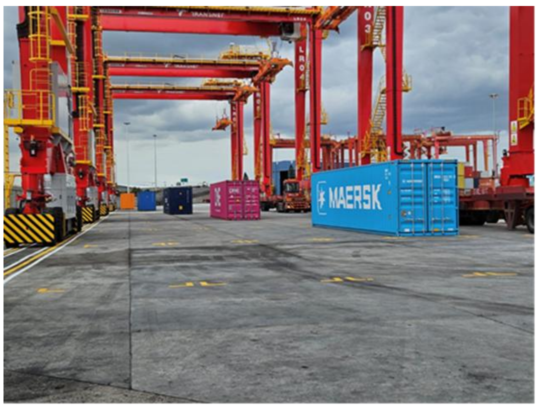
We kindly urge all members to prioritise this request, as the submitted information directly impacts our **planning and budgeting for the upcoming financial year**.

Confidentiality Commitment: We recognise the sensitivity of this information and ensures that all member-declared information remains confidential and is strictly limited to authorised personnel.
Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

LOGISTICS – ANTOINETTE VAN HEERDEN

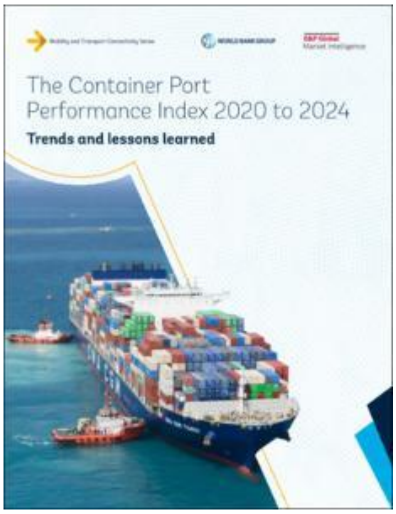
Cape Town Container Terminal equipment update

We have received an update from Transnet that the second batch of Rubber Tyred Gantries (RTGs) will only start the 100 hours of endurance training next week. During this time, the machines will operate in the container stacks and handle containers. Barring any serious issues, these machines will be deployed by mid-November. This amounts to a total of 18 new machines that will be operational for the season.



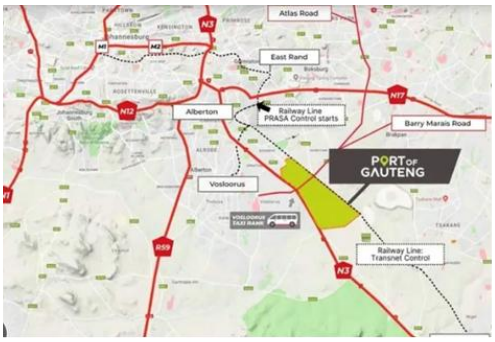
During the deciduous season, the terminal will deploy 18 new machines and 10 old machines – with a few back-up machines.

<u>Cape Town's showing in the 2024 CPPI</u>



In the latest **Container Port Performance Index**, Cape Town registered one of the most significant year-on-year rebounds in 2024 – despite starting from a low base. Whilst the port still faces structural challenges and ranks among the lower-performing globally, its improvement signals that incremental reforms – especially around congestion reduction, operational efficiency and infrastructure investment – can yield tangible gains. The report measured a period during which the port operated with old equipment.

Early data, available for 2025, confirms that the investments and improvements have already made a measurable positive impact on performance. Based on the latest data provided by Transnet, between mid-2024 and August 2025, vessel anchorage in South African ports decreased by about 75%, gross crane moves per hour improved by 13%, and ship working moves increased up by 25%.



<u>Port of Gauteng: A game-changer for SA's freight landscape</u>

A new White Paper has laid out an ambitious **R50 billion Inland Port of Gauteng project**, aimed at overhauling the South African freight and logistics system. Strategically situated where the N3, N12 and N17 highways meet the Container Rail Corridor, the development will include 2.2-km flat rail alignments, a container and car terminal, customs and deconsolidation centres, as well as green infrastructure like solar power and water harvesting.

The project promises to ease pressure on the overburdened Durban-Gauteng freight corridor, to shift more goods from road to rail, to reduce truck traffic (especially on the N3), to enhance road safety and to generate about **50 000 permanent jobs**. However, challenges remain: securing regulatory approvals, ensuring rail reliability, reforming tolling and permit policies and delivering fast container turnaround times will be key to its success.

Until next time,

Piet de Jager