



KEEPING IT FRESH

fpef
fresh produce
EXPORTERS' FORUM
SOUTH AFRICA

News from the FPEF – 22 October 2025

Dear FPEF Members,



Piet de Jager with Isohata San of the Tokyo Embassy

Greetings from a chilly **Tokyo** where we are part of a delegation of **Fruit South Africa members** attending market access meetings with the **Japanese MAFF Plant Protection and Food Safety Departments**. We will give an update in the next Keeping It Fresh, but I can mention that although progress is slow South Africa is at least on the priority list. Vietnam is up next and with the good news from China last week regarding stone fruit, it looks like our Minister of Agriculture and his department is making headway in getting us market access for certain products into priority markets.

Last week, we had the pleasure of welcoming members of the **FPEF Young Professionals Network (YPN)** at a social gathering in celebration of their participation in our Graduate Placement Programme. These talented young professionals represent the future of our industry and form a key part of the FPEF's ongoing transformation journey. The programme is designed to open doors, create opportunities, and build a more inclusive and dynamic fresh produce export sector. It was wonderful to connect with them, hear their stories, and see their enthusiasm for the industry's future. We are busy planning next year's placement – please contact us to discuss how to participate in this initiative.

FINANCIAL MATTERS – MEMBERSHIP FEES: MARINDA ROUX

Reminder: Declaration Submission Deadline – 31 October 2025

A big **thank you** to all members who have already submitted their declarations — we appreciate your cooperation and timely response!

If you haven't yet submitted your declaration, please remember that the **deadline is 31 October 2025**.



Should you need any additional information or assistance regarding the declarations, feel free to contact **Marinda Roux** marinda@fpef.co.za or +27 82 560 1019.

Thank you for your attention and continued support.

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Market Access

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Provide Information

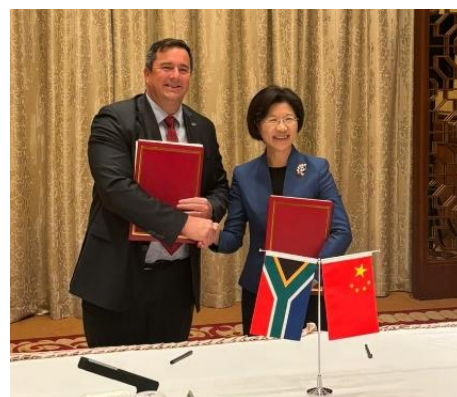
Transformation

Research, Development and Innovation

Anton's feedback on his trip with Minister John Steenhuisen to China

As Piet noted, we are undertaking our annual market access visits to our key priority markets. Last week was quite rewarding when **Minister John Steenhuisen** signed the **stone fruit protocol** with **Minister Sun Meijun from GACC** (General Administration of Customs in China). GACC is responsible for granting market access.

Minister Steenhuisen has invited a GACC technical team to visit South Africa to inspect our cherry orchards and packhouses during the current harvest period. If the inspection proceeds smoothly, South Africa is likely to secure market access for cherries to China within the next harvest cycle.



The visit was also successful from another perspective, as key senior officials and decision-makers from the Department of Agriculture formed part of the delegation — including the **Director: Plant Health** and the **Director: Food Safety and Quality Assurance**.

The delegation visited fresh produce markets in **Shanghai and Zhangzhou**, where it was encouraging to see cartons from many of our members and to hear that importers were impressed with the quality of our fruit.

The **FPEF, HORTGRO, and BerriesZA** also co-hosted a dinner in Shanghai for Chinese importers of South African fresh fruit, to thank them for their continued support of our industry.



OPERATIONS – WERNER VAN ROOYEN

Western Cape AI in Agriculture Initiative

The **Western Cape Department of Agriculture** has commissioned a study to assess the effectiveness of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** in addressing critical challenges in the sector, including climate change and resource constraints.

The **FPEF** participated in a workshop to deliberate on the study's framework. The objective was to collect insights from all stakeholders in the agricultural value chain, including producers, packhouses, exporters, input providers, technology developers, and financial services.

A series of sector-specific workshops were scheduled which took place in a variety of locations, including Paarl, Citrusdal, Swellendam, George, Oudtshoorn, and Elsenburg, from **September 23 to mid-October**. The agenda included a SWOT analysis and the development of a strategy for the future of AI in the industry. The FPEF's input is essential for determining how AI can enhance service delivery to industry and innovation in the agricultural value chain.

Asia Fruit Logistica 2025 Feedback Request

After a very successful **Asia Fruit Logistica 2025**, we would like to gather feedback from our members to assist us in making future decisions. We remain uncertain about the government's future involvement, particularly in terms of funding, and therefore need to proactively consider alternative options.

We are very fortunate that more than 40 FPEF member companies were able to attend this year's event, and we would greatly appreciate your feedback on the following questions. Please be assured that all information provided will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. The data will only be used at an **aggregated level** to help us improve future events and to provide the government with valuable insights into the **Return on Investment** for their support of this initiative.

Please click on the link to complete the form: <https://forms.office.com/r/KpkE9EbxJh> and submit your response by **31 October 2025**.

China International Import Expo (CIIE) 2025

FPEF will participate as the Export Council in the **China International Import Expo (CIIE)** from the **5th till the 10th of November**. CIIE is a trade fair held annually in **Shanghai, China**. The national pavilion is hosted by the **Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (dtic)** and the **FPEF will have a 9m² booth** on the national pavilion. The primary goal of the CIIE is to facilitate the entry of foreign products and services into China by providing an essential platform for companies to connect with Chinese businesses and professional buyers. The expo spans six key sectors: food and agriculture, automobiles, intelligent industry and IT, consumer goods, medical equipment, and trade in services.



中国国际进口博览会
CHINA INTERNATIONAL
IMPORT EXPO

FPEF Export Directory 2026 Advertising Opportunity

The FPEF Export Directory is compiled and distributed annually by the FPEF. It includes details of FPEF members, statistics from the previous fruit and vegetable seasons, and information on the South African fresh fruit and vegetable industry. A total of **2 500 hard copies** and **600 USB cards** containing digital copies were distributed at trade events and trade missions this year. The Export Directory is also accessible on the FPEF website in **both English and Mandarin**. FPEF members are invited to advertise in the **2026 Export Directory**. If you are interested in placing your **company advertisement** in the directory, please notify **Marletta Kellerman** at marletta@fpef.co.za by **29 October 2025**.



Merchant Shipping Bill

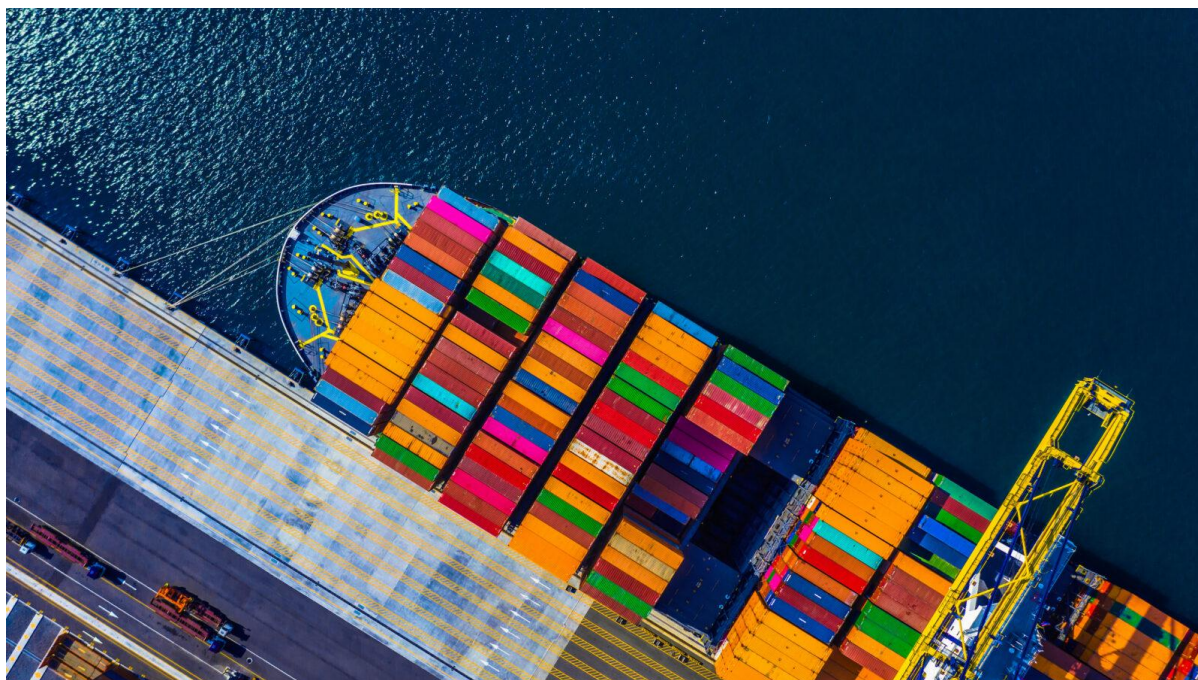
The **NEDLAC** (National Economic Development and Labour Council) **workgroup**, comprising task teams from the **Departments of Transport and Labour**, as well as teams from Community and Business, concluded a fast-tracked consultation process. The finalized **NEDLAC Merchant Shipping Bill report was submitted at the end of September 2025**, with the expectation that the Department of Transport would present the report to the Portfolio Committee on Transport. Government has since issued the following statement regarding the Merchant Shipping Bill, and we await the next steps once they are shared with the task team:

Withdrawal of the processing of the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2023

- 3.1 Cabinet approved the withdrawal from Parliament of the Merchant Shipping Bill, 2023 to allow the Department of Transport to finalise the NEDLAC process.
- 3.2 The Bill overhauls the Merchant Shipping Act of 1951 to give effect to the vision of government aimed at reviving the merchant shipping component of the maritime transport sector aimed at enhancing its contribution to economic growth.

The full statement can be found by clicking on the following link.

<https://www.gcis.gov.za/newsroom/media-releases/statement-cabinet-meeting-15-october-2025>



Pier 2/ICTSI

The **Public-Private Partnership** for the **Durban Container Terminal (DCT) Pier 2** has been legally cleared following the **KwaZulu-Natal High Court's October 2025** ruling. The judgment removes the final obstacle to Transnet SOC Ltd's agreement with **International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI)**. The next phase will see Transnet and ICTSI finalize contractual and operational arrangements to begin the terminal upgrade and launch joint-venture operations.



FPEF Young Professionals Network (YPN) Annual Networking Event – 16 October

On **Thursday, 16 October**, the **FPEF Young Professionals Network (YPN)** hosted its annual networking event at the scenic **Glen Carlou Wine Estate**. The FPEF YPN, an extension of the **Graduate Placement Programme**, serves as a platform for current and former participants who have entered the fresh produce export industry through the programme. Its aim is to promote personal growth, skills development, industry exposure, entrepreneurship, and meaningful relationship building among young professionals.



Karabelo Motsei-Mngomezulu

This year's event brought together the growing group of young professionals and representatives from both the private sector and government. A key highlight was an engaging panel discussion featuring **Karabelo Motsei-Mngomezulu** (Idea Fruit), **Cobus van Graan** (Zest Fruit), and **Craig Fulton** (Mountain Blue). The discussion was expertly moderated by **Ikarabele Legae** and centred on navigating career challenges as young professionals in the industry.

The panellists shared their personal journeys with authenticity and insight, creating an open and encouraging space for dialogue. Their stories inspired attendees to reflect on their own experiences and aspirations within the sector.





The event also provided an opportunity to showcase the FPEF's Graduate Placement Programme to both industry stakeholders and government partners. With live music, excellent food, and Glen Carlou's renowned wines, the day proved to be both memorable and meaningful - a fitting celebration of connection, learning, and growth within the industry.

SAVE THE DATE: FPEF AGM

By now you should have received the invitation to our **Annual General Meeting (AGM)** taking place on **20 November at Glen Carlou Vineyards in Klapmuts at 11h00**. If you have not received it, please contact Claudia Walklett claudia@fpef.co.za.

The main agenda items will be the **election of the FPEF Board for 2026**, **approval of the budget and audited financial statements**, and the address by the **keynote speaker, Prof Piet Croucamp** (Associate Professor: Political Studies, North-West University).

Piet Croucamp is a professor in politics and international relations at the North-West University. His research has been published in local as well as international journals. Piet is a regular media commentator and was the first presenter of the KykNet series of documentaries on mega farming in Southern Africa.



Until next time,

Piet



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