

“Whenever men take the law into their own hands, the loser is the law. And when the law loses, freedom languishes” Robert Kennedy

CITRUS ACADEMY CITRUS PACKING SHORT COURSE

The Citrus Academy will be having a Citrus Packing Short Course in Paarl on 23 - 25th June 2021. The Citrus Packing short course is the ideal induction course, covering citrus packhouse practices, and looking at the latest technology that is being implemented in citrus packhouses. The course is aimed at those working in packhouses, both old and new, those working in citrus production that needs to develop a better understanding of the rest of the system, and those working in the export supply chain after fruit leaves the packhouse. For more information and registration, please visit our website at

<https://citrusacademy.org.za/contact-learning/> or contact Sive at sive@citrusacademy.org.za

EASTERN CAPE

This past week I have been visiting citrus growing regions in the Eastern Cape – these are my reflections:

- The enormous employment opportunities created by the citrus industry in the province. Whether this be on the farms, in packhouses, service providers and in all the peripheral businesses in the region. Bustling towns like Kirkwood, Patensie, Hankey, Fort Beaufort and others depend on their existence to the surrounding citrus industry.
- The capital investment in orchards, netting, packhouses and infrastructure. Industry growth requires additional packing facilities and some architecturally impressive packhouses have been erected.
- The resilience of growers depending on the Gamtoos river system and the Kouga dam. The sight of a dam 96% empty is quite distressing, yet growers have risen to the challenge and ensured that they set a reasonable 2021 crop. Many boreholes have been sunk, at great expense. One would expect an air of despondency – but that is not the case. Growers are adapting to the reality, and adopting what they can to see themselves through to the next rains. They will come.
- The impact of industry growth on road infrastructure. Roads from PE to the different packhouses were not built to carry the load as more and more trucks travel between the port and the packhouses. Many of the roads are narrow and these big trucks, coupled with crumbling road verges makes driving a hazardous activity. The provincial road authorities need to prioritise road repairs and development in order to save lives and assist in growing the economy.
- While approaching Grahamstown from Fort Beaufort, burning material was strewn across half the road, and a “protester” was running with a shovel full of burning material to close off the road – I just made it through. I was luckier than many others who could not get to work, or those who wanted to get their cargo to port, or those who just wanted to go about their daily lives. These acts of lawlessness in the name of a “taxi strike” need to be sorted out – strong leadership at national, provincial and local level is needed; the economy cannot be held to ransom by a minority who have no respect for the law, property or common decency.

PACKED AND SHIPPED

End of Week 20 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed
SOURCE: PPECB	2019	2020	2021	2020	2021	2021	2021	2020
Grapefruit	6.7 m	7.5 m	10.1 m	4.6 m	6.5 m	18 m	17 m	15.5 m
Soft Citrus	3.6 m	5 m	7 m	3.2 m	3.4 m	30.5 m	29.5 m	23.6 m
Lemons	6.5 m	13 m	12.2 m	10.4 m	9.8 m	30.2 m	30 m	29.6 m
Navels	1.9 m	2.8 m	3.5 m	1 m	1.3 m	26.3 m	26.3 m	26.2 m
Valencia	0.3 m	0.1 m	0.2 m	0.1 m	-	58 m	58 m	55.1 m
Total	19 m	28.4 m	33 m	19.3 m	21 m	163 m	160.8 m	150 m