



# KEEPING IT FRESH

**fpef**  
fresh produce  
EXPORTERS' FORUM  
SOUTH AFRICA

**News from the FPEF – 21 April 2021**

## ***Dear FPEF Members,***

The extension of the Covid-19 Disaster Management Regulations to 15 May 2021, linked to the forecasted increase in export volumes of fresh fruit, will continue to test our industry's resilience and will require continuous engagement and partnering with vital entities such as the *Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development* (DALRRD), the PPECB and Transnet. President Ramaphosa's recent visit to the Durban Port thus shows the importance of the logistics sector and the attention being given to various challenges.

A positive outcome of the *Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan* is to a large extent dependent on an efficient and cost-effective logistics industry.

### **Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan: Status update**

We are currently involved in the sector Master Plan. The success of which is based on a partnership between government, labour, civil society, and industry, referred to as the 'social compact'. The process included consultations with constituencies of various social partners, comprising industry, government, labour and civil society. This document will then serve as a guide for inclusive growth in the sector.

The AAMP promotes a meaningful private-public partnership that seeks to produce a globally competitive, improved, dynamic, growing, ecologically sustainable, safe, fair and inclusive industry in 2030 through a range of interventions and programmes undertaken with and for employers and their employees (and other beneficiary communities) in small, medium and large-scale farms as well as agribusinesses, with the appropriate support from government, development finance institutions and other organisations. The achievement of the objectives of the plan should be monitored and communicated on an ongoing basis.

### **MARKET ACCESS**

#### **Indonesia**

It was reported that South Africa's "Country of Recognition" status to utilise the Port of Jakarta for exports to Indonesia has lapsed. The South African *Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and rural Development* (DALRRD) applied in July 2020 for renewal of the status, but it has not been granted as yet. DALRRD and the Embassy are following up as a matter of urgency.

### **SARS REGISTRATION, LICENSING AND ACCREDITATION (RLA)**

Exporters with warehouses and producer-exporters should take special notice: On 23 April 2021, SARS will make updates to their RLA system. The updates will introduce 28 new client types to the 45 already qualified to use the RLA framework as of April 2020. These 28 additional client types will also be allowed to request new registry applications online. The majority of the 28 additional client types include primarily warehouses and suppliers. To see a complete list of client types qualified to use on the RLA system, please visit the RLA webpage ([www.sars.gov.za](http://www.sars.gov.za) > Customs & Excise updates > New Customs legislation update > RLA).

## **e-Cert**

- Additional modules with new functionality has been implemented since 01 April. DIS E-inspect eCert module consists of two types of inspections namely orchard and fruit inspection. Users will be able to request inspection and DALRRD officials will be able to flag the status of the inspection process.
- The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) amended the process for the issuance of phytosanitary certificates. From 01 April 2021 the use of security paper will be discontinued. Clients will have to print the electronic phytosanitary certificates on A4 paper. Electronic certification will carry a unique number which will be available for clients to print. The DALRRD indicated that trading partners were notified on the new arrangements. However, we (the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum) have received feedback from concerned trading partners who were not aware of the new work procedure. The FPEF engaged with some trading partners to create awareness, sensitise authorities and harmonise across the business sector the above-mentioned process. Additionally, e-Cert applied a unique code on the phyto which can be scanned with using your mobile phone camera, scan the QR code or download a barcode scanning app off Play store. Importing country officials are then able to efficiently authenticate phytosanitary certificates.

## **PHILIPPINES**

A list of PUCs and PHCs was sent to the Philippines' Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI). This is a condition of the phytosanitary protocol between the Republic of South Africa and the Philippines. According to the embassy's feedback, importers encountered difficulties obtaining an import permit in the absence of a registry of exporters. The FPEF/CRI replied promptly and supplied the BPI with a list of exporters with FBO codes. We ensured that FPEF exporters were included on the exporter list given to the BPI with some non-FPEF members not receiving the same preferential treatment as FPEF members. We are hopeful that importers will successfully obtain an import permit and looking forward to FPEF members exporting the first consignments to the Philippines. We encourage all exporters preparing their first citrus fruit shipment to the Philippines, to contact the FPEF. We would like to have media reports of the first consignments landing in the Philippines in cooperation with the embassy. Please contact [claudia@fpef.co.za](mailto:claudia@fpef.co.za).

## **FRUIT ATTRACTION MADRID 2021**

Fruit Attraction will be hosted from the 5<sup>th</sup> till the 7<sup>th</sup> of October 2021 in Madrid, Spain and it will be a face-to-face event with an additional online option.

For us to make an informative decision if we should organize a national pavilion and the size of the pavilion (we need to book by the 28<sup>th</sup> of April), we need to know the interest of our members. Please send an email to Marletta Kellerman ([marletta@fpef.co.za](mailto:marletta@fpef.co.za)) by Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, of your intention to attend the show. This will be with the assumption that we will all be able to get vaccinations before October and that quarantine won't be necessary.



## **FPEF TOC Fruit Export Value Chain Training Programme**

The FPEF's latest online Top of the Class fruit export value chain training programme commenced on the 13<sup>th</sup> of April. Nineteen employees of FPEF member companies are participating together with four emerging exporters, who are being sponsored to attend under the FPEF's Emerging Exporter Support Programme. The training will be delivered in three blocks of two days each and the purpose of the programme is to provide an overview of the entire fruit export value chain from field to fork including production, cold chain management, quality management, compliance, packing, logistics, documentation and marketing.

The next online TOC training programme will be commencing in September. If you would like to find out more or enrol employees to participate, please contact Johannes Brand – [johannes@fpef.co.za](mailto:johannes@fpef.co.za), 071 688 1888.



## **SMART TECHNOLOGY TRACKS AND PREDICTS HOW PACKHOUSES TREAT THEIR AVOS**

The way avocados are handled in the packhouse has a direct influence on their shelf life and the state in which they arrive in the consumer's kitchen. The technology now exists to quantify packhouse performance and pinpoint areas that need to be improved to boost fruit quality.

Prof. Wynand Steyn, Head of the Department of Civil Engineering, and Prof. Lise Korsten, **Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences**, University of Pretoria, who registered this Post-harvest Innovation (PHI) research project, collaborated with the recently launched Engineering 4.0 research facilities who successfully developed an avo-mimicking device called smAvo, shorthand for smart avocado.



Simply put, smAvo, is a data logger. The device is battery operated and fitted with a microchip that, through physiological sensing, captures the impact of high-intensity accelerations, freefall events and rotational velocity.

### **Results of the research**

Mechanical rollers emerged as one of the most detrimental components of the packline. Impact forces (high-intensity accelerations) and poor handling conditions (freefall events) ended up forming the basis of the problem in packhouses. Handling smaller volumes at a time proved to be kinder to the fruit. Continuous training of staff remains crucial to minimise instances of freefall and impact loads experienced by the avocados.

*Figure 1: smAvo device*

### **What the future holds**

The next generation of smAvo instrumentation will be able to classify packhouse performance in real time and relay the information to a cloud-based digital twin of the facility.

Research is currently underway to deploy such technology to monitor road and sea transportation routes to comprehensively map and define the farm-to-fork journey of fresh produce. These data-driven investigations promise not only insights for the producer but will also guide road authorities in their quest to improve infrastructure quality to the benefit of the larger community.

- The South African avocado industry produced a total of 121 156 tonnes during 2019.
- An estimated 20.5% of the fruit produced annually, gets damaged along the farm to table journey causing 1 085 558 kg waste and ultimately financial loss amounting to R26 726 438.
- Losses incurred by handling/picking were 4.37% of 20.5% total lost or 0.896% (239 468kg) of total production.



*Figure 2: Avo mimicking data logger devices equipped with the latest microchip technology are proving highly effective at finding the weak links in handling procedures in the packhouse.*

*Kind regards,  
Anton Kruger*