



# PRESS RELEASE

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**20 June 2019**

## **PMA Fresh Connections: Southern Africa bringing together the entire fresh fruit and vegetable supply chain in Cape Town**

The Produce Marketing Association's (PMA's) Fresh Connections: Southern Africa Conference and Trade Show is the only annual event in Southern Africa connecting the entire fresh produce supply chain. This year, Fresh Connections: Southern Africa will be taking place from 30 to 31 July in Cape Town at the Century City Conference Centre.

Now in its 9<sup>th</sup> year, Fresh Connections: Southern Africa has proven itself as a key connecting point for global and regional decision makers from across the entire fresh fruit and vegetable supply chain including retailers, producers, importers/exporters, distributors, wholesalers, service and input suppliers, associations and government officials. The event is a successful combination of conference, exhibition and new connections roundtable.

"I believe that the challenges and opportunities facing the fresh produce industry worldwide are much too promising, or too challenging, for any one organisation to think that it's capable of making progress alone," says Anouk Sijmonsma, PMA Regional Vice President.

"Building partnerships matters, as does creating global connections, driving produce consumption, and contemplating the sustainability of our business. It is essential for retailers to know and show the end consumer what produce is available. For them to do so, it is imperative that they have direct connections to growers.

"In addition, a big part of our industry is international and international trade can only be accomplished if the correct interpersonal relationships are in place," says Sijmonsma. "Fresh Connections brings people together and enable them to connect - something that is essential in an industry in which success is based on personal connections that cross borders."

Key topics that will be addressed at the conference include

- Insights into challenges impacting the global produce supply chain
- Consumer demands and sustainable business practices
- Impact of technological disruptions on how we interact and engage in the near future
- What does the promising economic landscape in Southern Africa mean to the produce industry?
- Rethinking business strategies for strengthening existing relationships, penetrating new markets and understanding potential markets.

The speaker line-up

- Ruth McLennan, Fresh Produce and Bakery Commercial Director Southeast Asia, Dairy Farm Group
- Tatjana von Bormann, Programmes and Innovation Lead, WWF South Africa
- Jack Vera, Agricultural Counsellor, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in South Africa
- James Lonsdale, Group Sustainability Manager, SPAR Group
- Siglinda Lösch, Group Environmental Manager, Food Lover's Market
- Johan van Deventer, Managing Director, Freshmark
- Anouk Sijmonsma, Regional Vice President for Asia, Africa, Europe and Australia/New Zealand, PMA
- Rutendo Hwindingwi, Associate Director at Deloitte, South Africa
- Joel Stransky, Springbok rugby legend and business speaker
- Charley Xu, WinChain (Alibaba Company) and Dalian Xiang YeYuan Group (aka GloryTimes)

Siv Ngesi, South African actor-comedian will step up to the podium as master of ceremonies.

### **Additional networking and career development**

The Center for Growing Talent (CGT) will host the following events:

- Women's Fresh Perspectives Breakfast on 30 July with keynote speaker Caroline Ravenall, former top executive at Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Group who now helps business leaders and their teams to embrace change, ignite innovation and turn business into an adventure.
- Young Professionals Breakfast on 31 July for professionals 35 and younger who work in the fresh fruit and vegetable industry.
- Career Pathways programme will inform top university students about potential careers in the fresh fruit, vegetable and floral industries.

PMA Fresh Connections is part of an international series of events that PMA annually organises and promotes across the world. These events are hosted in Australia New Zealand, China, South Africa, Mexico, Brazil, Chile and the United States of America.

For more information on the programme and registration visit [www.pma.com/FCSouthernAfrica](http://www.pma.com/FCSouthernAfrica) or contact:  
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#### **ABOUT PMA:**

The Produce Marketing Association (PMA) is a trade organisation representing companies from every segment of the global fresh produce and floral supply chain. PMA helps members grow by providing connections that expand business opportunities and increase sales and consumption. PMA has a unique network of more than 63 000 contacts from more than 2 700 member companies, based in 95 countries across six continents. These contacts span all sizes and types of businesses across the supply chain.

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