



**fpef**  
SOUTH AFRICA™  
FRESH PRODUCE  
EXPORTERS' FORUM

# *“Keeping it Fresh”*

**News from the FPEF – 08 April 2020**

*Dear FPEF members,*

Here we are at Day 13 of the COVID-19 lockdown! So far, this period has shown (again) South African’s resilience if one looks at the overall positive attitude in realising the need to minimise and mitigate the risks, as well as working together and finding solutions.

Our industry is very much part and parcel of it by adhering to the regulations and rules, but at the same time continuing to source, and export fresh produce despite challenges. Our challenges are mainly related to logistics (operating capacity in the ports, shipping delays, availability of containers, courier of export documentation) and markets (ports situations, customs clearance, transport, ability of consumers to purchase fresh produce and payment challenges).



As the FPEF, we address these matters via the relevant channels to try and find solutions to the matters which we can control and/or have an influence on. We also believe that timely information sharing is important in times like these and therefore you receive communication from us more than once a day. We realise that the amount of information might be overwhelming, and thus we bring you a summary of the latest developments in this weekly edition of *Keeping it Fresh*.

One important channel for raising our concerns, etc is the\_BFAP (Bureau for Agricultural Policy)'s web-based monitoring and reporting system which was developed to inform Government of challenges/hindrances/constraints experienced. We have the opportunity to log our issues via this web-based system every 48 hours. The information will be captured in a report which goes directly to the Task Team which deals with the agricultural food value chain. The information which you provide to Marletta Kellerman in her survey twice per week is being used also for this purpose, but we also use other information which you share with us.

**Herewith, the summary of current core issues:**

**LOGISTICS & OPERATIONAL MATTERS**

**Ports:**

As of yesterday (7 April), Transnet has changed the following:

- More berths open in the ports
- Upscaling the staff complement to between 60% and 90% of the usual number
- The greatest challenge for TPT is the availability of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and the lack thereof for personnel working at the terminals. Workers also fear contracting the COVID-19 virus coupled with the challenge that some workers fall in the high-risk category of contracting the disease due to TB, HIV-AIDS and pregnancy. TPT is working hard to find the necessary balance with organized labour to address this dilemma. TPT received donations to purchase PPE but the availability and supply thereof nationally is also a challenge.

The following reflects the planned position of TPT, as at Tuesday 7 April 2020 at 06h00, regarding the availability of our terminal resources:

Terminal	Effective level of operation (as a % of normal operational capacity)	Berths available	Planned waterside resources (24 hour operation unless specified)
DCT Pier 2	75%	3	10 gangs
DCT Pier 1	80%	1	5 gangs
NCT	57%	1	4 gangs
CTCT	60%	2	4 gangs
PECT	75%	1	2 gangs
CTMPT	75%	1	2 gangs

FPEF is working tirelessly to address all the outstanding challenges on the highest levels to ensure smooth operations during these challenging times.

**Easter Trading Times - Cape Town TPT:**

Please be informed of operating hours over the Easter Weekend. We will be operating with two 12-hour shifts for the periods: 06h00 until 18h00 and 18h00 until 06h00.

Friday, 10 April 2020 – Good Friday	<b>Gates Closed</b>
Saturday, 11 April 2020	06:00 – 17:00
Sunday, 12 April 2020	06:00 – 17:00
Monday, 13 April 2020	06:00 – 17:00



### **Documentation:**

The COVID-19 pandemic has driven various trading partners to reconsider the handling of hardcopy trade documents and therefore requested phytosanitary certificates to be transmitted via email. In addition, the limited human capacity at various ports of entry as well as the limited courier services exacerbates the situation. The FPEF, DALRRD and CRI have been working on a procedure for transmitting phytosanitary certificates electronically and a concept guideline document is under discussion.

Countries that have requested emailed copies of the phytosanitary certificates due to the COVID-19 pandemic are:

1. India
2. European Union
3. Mexico
4. United Kingdom
5. Turkey

As of late, a request was forwarded to the French authorities for approval of Reunion to accept electronic phytosanitary certificates. The FPEF will work on a country-by-country basis and exporters should please notify us should a country wish to receive electronic certification.

### **SUPPORT PROGRAMMES AND SCHEMES:**

- The dtic is developing a financial assistance scheme and in order to ensure that our industry is included in it, we need information from our members on how the COVID-19 situation affects you and the sustainability of your business. You therefore receive requests and reminders to provide the information to us. By adapting to the ever-changing situation, we have decided to send only two reports weekly to the dtic, on Monday and Wednesday. These two days are also in line with some of the strategic interactions that Anton has with Government. It is extremely important that we have as much detail as possible. Please send information to Marletta Kellerman ([marletta@fpéf.co.za](mailto:marletta@fpéf.co.za)).
- Some schemes are already up and running:
  - The **Employment Tax Incentive** has been expanded to include all employees earning below R6,500 with a subsidy of R500, relieving the burden on businesses as they face a decline in revenue due to the lockdown. Visit <https://www.sars.gov.za/TaxTypes/PAYE/ETI/> for more information.
  - Businesses with a turnover of less than R50 million will be allowed to delay their **PAYE** tax payments over the next four months, and their provisional corporate income tax payments over the next six months, without penalties. Visit <https://www.sars.gov.za/TaxTypes/PAYE/> for more information.
  - The **Department of Small Business Development** has allocated R500 million to assist SMEs whose operations are affected by COVID-19. Register on <https://smmesa.gov.za/>.
  - The **Industrial Development Corporation** has allocated R3 billion in funding for firms who produce essential goods to scale up their operations. Email [covid@idc.co.za](mailto:covid@idc.co.za), call 0860 693 888, or visit <https://www.idc.co.za/2020/03/24/idc-interventions-inresponse-to-covid-19/> for more information.
  - The **South Africa Future Trust** has been established to provide a further R1 billion in zero-interest loan funding to SMEs in distress. Visit <https://oppgen.com/saft/> for more information about the scheme.

## **OTHER NEWS**

Although most of the FPEF's activities are currently centered around COVID-19, the important "normal" matters must also still be managed. These include things such as our financials, our role as the official Fresh Produce Export Council, Transformation and the R30m PHI (Post-harvest Innovation) programme. Please see the following with regards to PHI.

### **ADDITIONAL FUNDING ALLOCATION TO INDUSTRIES**

In response to the PHI Programme's recent 2<sup>nd</sup> Call for Proposals to its partner industries, a total of 3 funding proposals were received from Hortgro Science and Citrus Research International (CRI). The 'Call for Proposals' was initiated due to residual funds *after* allocations were made to industries that committed to co-funding a video-based monitoring and inspection training module for phytosanitary mitigation.

The selection criteria for prioritising funding proposals emphasised a preference for postharvest related training of HDIs. Proposed projects must also be concluded within the PHI-4 timeframe, therefore an approximately 1-year project, concluding April 2021.

The following proposals were received and approved for funding:

- Hortgro: *'Providing market access training to emerging farmers within the deciduous fruit industry'*.
- CRI: *'The use of alternative fungicides in wax to control citrus green mould caused by Penicillium digitatum'*
- CRI: *'Comparison of cold-susceptibility of false codling moth (FCM) larvae in artificial diet and fruit from a range of citrus cultivars'*

An amount of R27 482.99 was also reserved for a Cape Flora SA HDI project, which is currently being compiled.

The following table illustrates the funding allocation to each proposal:

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Projects' Cost</b>	<b>PHI Contribution</b>	<b>Industry Contribution</b>
Hortgro	R96 125,00	R48 062,50	R48 062,50
CRI	R379 849,00	R189 924,50	R189 924,50
CRI	R82 537,00	R41 268,50	R41 268,50
Cape Flora SA	R54 965,98	R27 482,99	R27 482,99
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>R613 476,98</b>	<b>R306 738,49</b>	<b>R306 738,49</b>

These recent allocations bring the total cost of PHI and Industry supported projects to **R27 200 088** for the current funding phase.

### **REMINDER: FRUIT SOUTH AFRICA – CEO VACANCY**

Please be advised that applications close for this position on 9 April 2020 (tomorrow).

I realise that it is a difficult and challenging time for everyone, but we are also celebrating Easter during this time and I wish you, your families and colleagues a blessed Easter, good health and all of the best with your businesses.

***Kind regards***

***Anton***