

“People Who Say It Cannot Be Done Should Not Interrupt Those Who Are Doing It”

ON FARM VACCINATIONS

A few weeks back this newsletter covered vaccination drives on farms in Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces. There was a call to get more growers to take up the challenge and assist in worker vaccinations. Citrus Academy did a survey on this matter – and this is the preliminary report after receiving almost 50 responses (covering 16 000 hectares/ 37 million cartons). Responses came from farms and packhouses across all citrus growing regions. Fifty percent of the respondents have no COVID in their business at present; 20% indicated a decreasing COVID infection trend, while stable and increasing trends were both 15%. 80% indicated that COVID did not affect their ability to do business.

Ten percent of respondents had 76-100% vaccination rate in the farm/packhouse; 17% had 51-75% vaccination rate; 19% 26-50% and 13% 11-25%. The majority (40%) had a vaccination rate of 0-10%; indicating that there is a lot of work to do. The sample was split evenly in terms of those who had experienced vaccination resistance, and those who had not – the reasons for resistance were cited as fear, suspicion, apathy and misinformation.

The sample was also almost evenly split in terms of those who had a vaccination drive and those who did not. Activities included in a vaccination drive were information campaigns, transport to vaccination sites, and vaccination stations at the workplace. Those who had a vaccination drive indicated that what worked well was management getting vaccinated and serving as an example, and assistance from the local Department of Health.

We appreciate the contributions of those that took part in the survey. It is still open and will be until Friday, the 27th of August, and we would appreciate further responses. Please go to <https://survey.zohopublic.com/zs/MkRPWv>.

SHIPPING LINES ADDRESSING SUPPLY OF REEFER EQUIPMENT TO MEET DEMAND [Mitchell Brooke]

The scenario of container shipping from South Africa has become quite constrained, global and local dynamics at play are creating a complex situation. The massive demand for sea freight from east to west, coupled with massive freight rates sees container and vessel allocations focusing on those routes. Vessel delays and congestion are very evident due to the volume flow coupled with recent closure of ports and terminals in China due to COVID, this is tying up much needed container equipment. This trend has been at play since late 2020 and has caused all sorts of problems routing empty containers to South Africa. Locally we are at boiling point as terminal operations were affected by the July uprising in KZN and then days later the Cyber Attack on Transnet IT systems, coupled to this severe weather impacts across the port terminals. All of this now coming to a head. CGA and FPEF Executives met with representatives from Maersk and MSC this week to understand their view point on these issues. In general, shipping schedules locally are upside down as delays are extensive and this is resulting in many vessels omitting ports or bypassing SA altogether to avoid delays. The routing of empty containers to SA has been problematic up to now but further impacted by the delays and the bypassing of vessels that were earmarked for bringing empty containers to SA ports. We have learnt that reefer equipment is planned across all lines and aligned for the balance of the citrus season. We can surmise however that reefer equipment can become constrained based on the above factors, but we were assured that local representatives of shipping lines are not taking a back seat and are hard at work to ensure equipment is available at each port.

PACKED AND SHIPPED

End of Week 32 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed
SOURCE: PPECB/AGRIHUB	2019	2020	2021	2020	2021	2021	2021	2020
Grapefruit (17kg)			14.8 m		13.1 m			
Grapefruit	16 m	14.2 m	16.7 m	12.9 m	14.9 m	18 m	17.2 m	15.5 m
Soft Citrus	15.3 m	19.8 m	24.3 m	16.9 m	19.4 m	30.5 m	30.3m	23.6 m
Lemons	19.9 m	25.6 m	27.5 m	23.1 m	24.3 m	30.2 m	27.7 m	29.6 m
Navels	21.3 m	23.3 m	24.4 m	20.7 m	20.3 m	26.3 m	26.2 m	26.2 m
Valencia	20.1 m	26.1 m	24.4 m	16.8 m	15.4 m	58 m	55.2 m	55.1 m
Total	92.6 m	109 m	117.3 m	90.4 m	94.3 m	163 m	156.6 m	150 m