



Dear FPEF Members,

Here is another edition of our newsletter which brings you a summary of recent information shared with you.

The stone fruit and table grape seasons came to an end and the final Joint Marketing Forums took place recently. In both categories, an overall increase in production and volumes have been experienced. The same trend is being observed with pome fruit as well as the citrus season – where the season has already started, and another record crop is being forecasted for this season.

These increases reconfirm the importance of efficient functioning of the ports, access to new markets and enabling legislation. We are constantly engaging the relevant authorities on these matters and more information is being provided in this newsletter.

With regards to legislation, we are still awaiting information on the next steps with the ***Agricultural Produce Agents' Amendment Bill (APAC)*** after we have provided our submissions.

The moratorium on the use of **high-cubed containers** on South African roads lapses on 30 June and thus our industry, in conjunction with the road transport industry, are working hard to find a solution to this.

MARKETS

Philippines

Despite many challenges with the issuance of import permits, the South African Agricultural counselor in Tokyo has been continuously supporting the industry in expediting the process for the issuance of import permits. The Philippines **BPI (Bureau for Plant and Industry)** reported that importers were not totally compliant in providing the information the BPI require to process import permit applications. Confirmed by importers and exporters alike, the BPI want the name of the company who will be the shipper or supplier according to their description ("Name of organisation") linked to the various pack houses where export fruit will be packed and exported to the Philippines. The **NPPOZA (National Plant Protection Organisation of South Africa)** provided all the required information as stipulated in the approved official workplan. The NPPOZA has been pro-active and requested feedback from the BPI regarding the information required. Follow up communication was again addressed to the BPI this week. Regaining market access to the Philippines was no easy task and many resources were allocated towards successfully negotiating market access for citrus. South African fresh produce trade relations with the Philippines are deteriorating as a result of the delays experienced in issuing import permits, which is leaving many South African exporters frustrated and unable to export. Again, it seems like we lack certainty in the ever-changing commercial environment we operate in and export our fruit. We welcome all members to contact the FPEF and discuss the status of the ongoing delays.

China

According to the protocol with China the registered PUC and PHC list is sent to China each year, and once approved, exporters may export fresh produce from these approved facilities. Regrettably, the PUC and PHC list is still outstanding and not yet approved. However, exporters are allowed to export to the Chinese market, according to the 2020 approved and registered list of PUC and PHC's. Industry and DALRRD are jointly working on expediting the process for approval of the 2021 registered PUC and PHC list.

RUSSIA – M/V Cool Eagle

On May 17 the first ship with fresh fruit from South Africa to Russia was unloaded in the port of St Petersburg. The **M/V "Baltic Purple"** "Baltic Shipping" delivered over three thousand tons of citrus fruit, pears and apples.

This specialized reefer service is especially in demand at the present time, when there is a shortage of containers in the world. In this regard, additional modern refrigerated vessels, recently built in Japan, were delivered to the line. These are the largest specialized reefer-vessels in the world with a capacity of up to 7500 pallets (high cubed) in the holds (under deck) and 300x40 feet containers on deck. The **M/V Cool Eagle** represents these modern specialized reefers that was built this year and berthed in Durban on 14 May, while also loading in other South African ports.



CITRUS MINIMUM EXPORT STANDARDS

The amended citrus minimum export standards were published on Friday, 14 May 2021. It is important for exporters to note the specific amendment in respect of the grapefruit category. The flesh colour for grapefruit is now a marking requirement which means it must be indicated on the carton, consignment note and export certificates similar to peaches and nectarines.

E-CERTIFICATION

Recently, exporters had challenges with authorities in some markets not accepting the e-certification process of South Africa. The authorities agreed to accept A4 white paper, stamped and signed and couriered to the destination. Members can contact the FPEF directly if there are any challenges at the various export destinations with the new e-certification process.

PORT TERMINALS

Exporters are already feeling the pressure in the port of Durban as volumes are increasing and specialized reefer vessels, the **Cool Eagle** and **Sprint** reap up these volumes. Durban port last night and the day before reported almost 500 trucks standing in the queue and waiting to offload, cold treatment cargo included, with delays in booking requests and a +/- 7-hour backlog. Transnet will provide more resources towards the end of the week, to the truck booking division.

Reefer occupancy is still low and the Eastern Cape citrus export volumes will only start picking up in the next week or so. **Nqura Container Terminal** reported 553 export containers over five vessels with reefer stack occupancy at 21%. **Port Elizabeth/Gqeberha** terminal looking at 560 exports containers over three vessels and stack occupancy around 30%. **Cape Town Container Terminal** has one broken crane, however the other cranes are still in production aligned with 7 gangs/ work teams.

Cape Town MPT terminal report on 19 May:

MEASURE	TARGET	ACTUAL	COMMENT
Volume (BULK/MANGANESE)	54000	39071mt	KUDUMANE
Volume (BULK)	0	0	
Volume (CONTAINERS) Excl hatch covers	0	191	NYK PAULA
Volume (TEU's) Excluding Hatch covers		333	
Number of vessels at anchor	0	1	CHESAPEAKE BAY
Berthing delays (hrs)	0	0	
Ship Working Hour	19	9,9	Straddle breakdown (53min) Spreader faulty (45min)
GCH	17	8,82	Poor Visibility – standby due to sunlight (1h56min) Stevedore delay – Unlashing (41 min)
Tons per hour			
Truck TAT (mins)	16	36,02	187 TRUCK VISITS
Number of incidents	0	0	
Total Equipment Availability	0		Mobile cranes – 1 Straddle carriers – 3 Reach stackers – 3
Absenteeism rate	0	0	

TRANSNET WAGE NEGOTIATIONS

The **United National Transport Union (UNTU)** and the **South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU)**, the only two recognised Trade Unions in the Transnet Bargaining Council (TBC) are disputing wage negotiations in 2021. Transnet, is on the verge of a potential three-week strike - similar to the one it endured in 2010.

No official information on potential strike action has become available yet. FPEF members will be informed should new information come to the fore.

ASIA FRUIT LOGISTICA 2021

Asia's premier fresh produce trade show cannot take place in September this year because international business travel remains severely limited due to COVID19 restrictions. The next edition of **Asia Fruit Logistica** returns to Hong Kong's Asia World-Expo on 7-9 September 2022.

FRUIT ATTRACTION 2021

Fruit Attraction will take place from 5 to 7 October 2021 in Madrid, Spain. It will be a face-to-face event with an add-on online option. FPEF registered a stand, but due to uncertainty of travel restrictions due to Covid, this will be reviewed on a regular basis.

EXPORT DIRECTORIES 2021

Copies of the FPEF's annual Fresh Produce Export Directory were recently sent to all members via courier. Please contact Marletta Kellerman (marletta@fpf.co.za) if you have not received your copy.

TRANSFORMATION – FPEF GRADUATE INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

We are pleased to announce that it has been a record year for the FPEF's graduate internship programme with 14 appointments made so far at 12 FPEF member companies! Thank you for the support of every FPEF member that has appointed graduates through the programme since it launched in 2016. We are confident that this programme will make a significant contribution towards transforming our industry as it continues to gain momentum.



Last week the FPEF hosted a lunch for the 2021 interns. It served as an opportunity for the interns to network amongst each other and create an informal peer support structure, which is particularly valuable for interns who have relocated from other provinces.

For more information on the FPEF's graduate internship programme, please contact Johannes (johannes@fpef.co.za).

COVID-19: THE LAUNCH OF PHASE 2 OF THE NATIONAL VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Phase 2 of the national vaccination programme targeting the over 60's commences this week. We remind our members of the survey regarding vaccine rollout plans at the workplace for employees to assist in the planning for vaccination of workers (and possibly families and community members in the geographic area that you operate in). If you have not yet done so, please complete the survey by clicking the weblink. Click on this Weblink for survey: https://redcap.link/NDoH_OHS_Covid-19_Vaccine_Survey.



BUDGET SPEECH: MINISTER THOKO DIDIZA



On 13 May, **Ms Thoko Didiza, Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development**, delivered her Budget Vote Speech. The speech touched on several important policy themes such as land reform, agricultural land leases, agricultural expansion, finance and the sectorial master plans.

The speech centred on the theme of private-public-partnership for the development and expansion in the sector and emphasised various programmes that the social partners are already working collaboratively on with the government. The Agricultural and Agro-processing Master Plan, also got attention in her speech. The master plan is at its final stages, with the sector role players, which include community representatives, labour, government and the private sector, set to meet for consultation in June 2021.

Stay safe!

Kind regards,
Anton Kruger