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## **ARE ONLINE MARKETPLACES THE FUTURE TRADING PLATFORM FOR FRESH PRODUCE?**

Online marketplaces have increased over the last couple of years, creating new markets where none existed.

Selling via online marketplaces offers many advantages for farmers, buyers and sellers. It overcomes time and space constraints, provides inclusive market access, cuts costs, and shortens the supply chain, which is critical within fresh produce and agriculture.

Online marketplace experts Grant Jacobs, CEO of HelloChoice and Louis de Kock, founder of Nile.ag took a deep dive into this topic during a live broadcast hosted by the Produce Marketing Association (PMA) in partnership with Beanstalk.Global.

Jacobs says anyone who wants to be successful in the 21st century needs to embrace digitisation. “We see varying supply and demand in the agricultural sector, sellers who are largely isolated, and buyers who find it difficult to access products. Online marketplaces are mechanisms that make it easy and cost-effective for sellers and buyers to trade digitally.”

De Kock says the power of the online marketplaces lays in their digital ecosystems. “Foremost, you need to create mutual trust among all the involved parties in terms of transactions, quality and pricing mechanisms. On top of that comes the physical movement of produce from the seller to the buyer. The main aim is to connect farmers with the markets with the biggest need for their produce. These markets are not necessarily closest to the farmers. It could be deep rural areas, neighbouring countries and further abroad.”

Jacobs explained how trading on online marketplaces could prevent unnecessary costs and time in situations where farmers, for example, send products to distant markets where buyers close to them buy that exact product.

His advice to commercial and smaller farmers who are still hesitant to trade online is to learn more about it, try it out to see how it works, and start making use of it or to reach out for support.

***About Produce Marketing Association***

Produce Marketing Association (PMA) is the leading trade association representing companies from every segment of the global 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 53,000 member contacts from more than 2,900 member companies, which are based in 54 countries across six continents. These contacts span all sizes and types of businesses across the supply chain. For more information, visit [www.pma.com](http://www.pma.com)

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