

Press Release

Marquis Macadamias expands footprint with opening of Pongola Depot

Stability and security in the macadamia market received another boost with the opening of the Marquis Macadamias Pongola Depot. Serving the greater northern KwaZulu-Natal region, the depot will ensure farmers can easily deliver their crop, and access the expertise of the world's leading macadamia processor and supplier of quality nuts. The Marquis Group currently cracks 48 000 tonnes, selling 11 000 tonnes of kernel per annum. This represents roughly 20% to 25% of the world's macadamia crop.

Pongola, including the larger KwaZulu-Natal, is one of the fastest growing regions for macadamia production in South Africa. Given the significant crop forecasts, it is therefore prudent for growers to have the necessary support, be it at an advisory or processing level, to assist with maximising grower profits and increasing sustainability.

At the Pongola Depot, nuts will be dehusked, dried, sorted and bulk packaged, where it will be sent to the Marquis Macadamias facility in Alkmaar, Mpumalanga, for further processing and pasteurisation to maintain consistent quality standards.

Marquis Macadamias director Roelof van Rooyen, explained that maintaining consistent quality across all nut sales was crucial to developing markets. "Providing high quality, standardised macadamias in big volumes will give the market confidence to develop new products and make macadamias part of their staple line of products. This will bring stability to prices as the world heads towards huge crop increases."

The global macadamia crop is set to grow from 230 000 tonnes to 400 000 tonnes within the next five years, and then to 600 000 tonnes in the five years that follow. This represents a tripling of the world's crop in less than ten years.

"The number sounds daunting," said van Rooyen, "but it is exactly what the world needs to bring more certainty to the industry in the medium to long term. Industries like citrus, avocados and apples have been through the same growing pains. Our industry will go from being niche, to a bigger, commercial and consolidated industry as the volumes grow. But the success of the industry lies in more strategic marketing.

"When your product is in high demand, marketing is easy and can be a function that is neglected in a company's development strategy. But turn the situation around and the value of well-developed markets, strategic relationships and innovation becomes crucial to survival."

Van Rooyen added that conventional marketing is changing from being a selling function to a specialised marketing function. “The balance of power is shifting in the supply and demand curve towards the end user. This means we need to work harder than ever to spot market trends. We also need to develop new products and find more innovative ways to sell nuts much faster.”

This is where Marquis Marketing, the world’s largest marketer of macadamia nuts, plays a crucial role. The company consists of over 20 experts in various pillars of marketing, from R&D and new product development, finances, sales, logistics, and data analysis. These are all critical functions for a successful, prosperous marketing process.

The team handles product from four Marquis Macadamias factories, two in South Africa and two in Australia. There are also five partner factories in Kenya.

Graeme Taylor, international operations manager for Marquis Marketing, said that quality, reliability and consistency of products is paramount to the industry’s success. “It takes a high level of sophistication to get new products off the ground. Those sourcing ingredients want to know that nuts have been farmed and processed responsibly, ethically and safely. This is why we have implemented a five-log pasteurisation system at all of our processing facilities, ensuring our customers have peace of mind regarding the safety of our products.

Marquis is therefore able to supply a uniform product that meets stringent quality standards. Being able to provide high volumes of this product will create consistency and confidence in the market.

Speaking at the opening of the Depot, van Rooyen said that Marquis was geared to grow and expand with the industry, and would invest in more facilities as needed. “We are committed to making it easier for farmers to deliver their crop and receive a good return on their investment. Marquis is now part of this community. We are here for the long run, to walk this journey with you.”

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Photo caption:

Marquis Macadamias directors Luke Dunstone and Roelof van Rooyen officially opened the Marquis Macadamias Pongola Depot on 28 January 2022.

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