



Southern Hemisphere Association of Fresh Fruit Exporters Newsletter

December 2024 –
January 2025



Association update

Working Group on Sustainability

SHAFFE's Working Group on Sustainability met on 4 (Africa and South America) and 5 (Australia and New Zealand) December 2024. On the agenda were the following items: the planned webinar on bio-inputs; our ongoing discussions with GlobalGAP on the Environmental Sustainability Solution (see further in this Newsletter); and a roundtable discussion on current sustainability-related developments and initiatives in the various SHAFFE countries.

Bio-inputs are becoming increasingly important as growers look for alternatives to chemical inputs. In 2021, commercial bioinputs' sales stood at US\$10 billion; it is expected that sales will double or even triple by 2028, driven especially by strong growth in Latin America. Our webinar on bio-inputs, planned for February, therefore comes at a timely moment.

Abrafrutas, our member association in Brazil, presented an overview of sustainability management in the Brazilian fresh fruit industry. In 2023, Abrafrutas launched its own sustainability certification, "Frutas do Brasil", which recognizes producers who comply with international standards of good agricultural practices and sustainability (for more information, see <https://frutasdobrasil.org/en/blog/certificacao-frutas-do-brasil/>)



Frutas de Chile, our member association in Chile, announced the upcoming release of its *Reporte de Sostenibilidad* or *Sustainability Report*. This report aggregates information about sustainability efforts in the Chilean fresh fruit industry and lays down a number of commitments of the industry to fill sustainability "gaps" in the medium and long term. AGAP, the Association of Agricultural Producers Guilds of Peru and one of our members in Peru, presented an overview of its initiatives to promote responsible business conduct in the Peruvian agricultural sector. Of particular note is AGAP's involvement in the CERALC project (Responsible Business Conduct in Latin America and the Caribbean; see <https://rbclac-fund.org/?lang=en>).

Working Group on Statistics

On 19 December, SHAFFE members gathered for a meeting of the Working Group on Statistics, where participants discussed the association's revised system for the reporting and sharing of statistical data. Until now, this system has been limited to exports of citrus fruits. The aim of the revision that was done over the past months is to improve and expand SHAFFE's statistical system to cover not just citrus fruits but also other products, and include not just export data but also data on production. We will be using new, more user-friendly templates with updated graphics to gather statistical data, while users will be able to consult the data on our new statistical dashboard, on the SHAFFE website. The new system will be launched in early 2025.

Welcome to the Newsletter of the Southern Hemisphere Association of Fresh Fruit Exporters! This Newsletter is a work in progress, and we welcome any suggestions from readers that can help us improve this publication. You are all warmly invited to send any information that you want to share through this Newsletter to the SHAFFE secretariat at secretariat@shaffe.net.

Save the date!

All SHAFFE members are warmly invited to our next general assembly meeting, which will take place in the sidelines of Fruit Logistica 2025, in Berlin. More details will follow soon.





SHAFFE takes up vice-presidency of GlobalGAP's Working Group on the Environmental Sustainability Solution

Over the past months, SHAFFE has been actively involved in GlobalGAP's Working Group on the new "Environmental Sustainability Solution" (ESS), with several of our members participating in discussions on the various chapters of the new standard, on water, soil health, biodiversity, footprinting, greenhouse gasses and food loss and waste. Also, Ellen Pay, SHAFFE's general secretary, was invited to act as vice-president of the ESS Working Group, a position that provides us with a unique opportunity to shape GlobalGAP's future new standard, and ensure that it takes due account of the challenges and unique circumstances faced by fruit growers in the Southern Hemisphere. Over the next couple of days, SHAFFE members will discuss the various chapters of the ESS internally. After that, we will transmit all shared comments, observations and questions of the Southern Hemisphere fruit industry to GlobalGAP. Any members who wish to participate in this process are kindly – but urgently – invited to contact the SHAFFE secretariat.

SHAFFE member Hortgro organizes webinar on green financing

On 11 December, SHAFFE member Hortgro organized the second webinar in its new series about resource management and sustainability, the Hortgro Footprint Webinar Series. This series aims to spotlight sustainable practices, mitigations and risks in the South African deciduous fruit industry. Hosted by Nitasha Baijnath-Pillay, Hortgro's Resource Management and Sustainability Manager, the second webinar focused on the issue of green financing for pome and stone producers. The recording of the webinar is freely available at

www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHhufnggzg4.



Dr Boitshoko Ntshabele, newly appointed CEO of the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa

Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa welcomes new CEO

The Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) has announced the appointment of Dr Boitshoko Ntshabele as its new Chief Executive Officer. He will be leading the association that champions the vital role the citrus industry plays in South African agriculture and the economy. The CGA represents over 1 560 citrus growers from South Africa, Eswatini, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia. The South African citrus industry is largely export-orientated and brings in over R30 billion a year in foreign revenue for the country.

Dr Ntshabele has extensive experience spanning the areas of academia, the private sector and the public sector. For the past five years he has been the Director Biosecurity at the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD). Originally trained as a veterinarian, Dr Ntshabele has also held leadership positions at Onderstepoort Biological Products. He was the Minister Counsellor Agriculture in the South African Embassy to Belgium, Luxemburg and the Mission to the European Union from 2015 to 2019. His successful track record in management, policy development, international engagement and negotiation positions him as a knowledgeable advocate for the interests of local citrus growers. "I am looking forward to help shape the future of the local citrus industry. This is a crucial time for the sector. We must make sure that the projected growth in citrus production is translated into increased economic opportunities. A key to achieving that is expanding market access for our growers," says Dr Ntshabele.

Dr Ntshabele takes office from 1 February. "Continued focus on sustainability is a priority as well. I have always believed true sustainability is of little meaning if it does not embrace inclusive growth. In this area it is important for the citrus industry to continue building on the exceptional work it has done. If all obstacles are removed, Southern African citrus can create even more significant economic opportunities for all," Dr Ntshabele continued. Justin Chadwick, the outgoing CEO, welcomed the appointment: "I have known Dr Ntshabele for many years, and I am thrilled that he has accepted the post of CEO of the CGA. His ability to calmly assess and reason, as well as his diplomacy, will be a huge asset to the CGA as the industry strives to continue on its growth path during more and more uncertain times. I wish Dr Ntshabele well as he takes the organisation forward."

After many years as CEO, Chadwick is retiring at the end of March. "I have been incredibly fortunate to have been afforded the opportunity to be CEO for the past 25 years, and I have no doubt that Dr Ntshabele will take the CGA from strength to strength," Chadwick said.

Source: Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa, 7 January 2025



Global Coalition of Fresh Produce – update



The Global Coalition of Fresh Produce – of which SHAFFE is a founding member – held a regular members’ meeting on 9 January 2025. SHAFFE was represented at the meeting by its general secretary (who is also the secretary of the Global Coalition), as well as by Edwin Córdova, Head of Sustainability with AGAP (Peru). Among the points discussed by participants from Australia, Africa, Canada, Ecuador, Europe, Peru and the United States were:

- the uncertainty regarding the United States’ future trade policy in anticipation of the new US presidency;
- the aversion of a new strike by dock workers in ports on the United States’ East and Gulf Coasts, following earlier union actions in October 2024; a deal between workers and their employers – including a resolution on automation, which had been the thorniest issue on the table – was reached last week;
- the approval by the Council of the European Union of the block’s new Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (see the article on the next page of this Newsletter);
- a recent Canadian report quantifying the functionality of plastic packaging for fruits and vegetables (<https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/sector/horticulture/reports/quantifying-functionality-importance-plastic-packaging-fresh-produce-needsbenefit-perspective>);
- the ongoing review by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission of supermarkets’ pricing practices; an interim report has already been published

(<https://www.accc.gov.au/about-us/publications/serial-publications/supermarkets-inquiry-2024-25-reports>), while the final report is expected by the end of February 2025;

- the industry sentiment among Australia’s vegetables growers, following the recent publication of a report by AUSVEG, a Coalition member (ausveg.com.au/app/uploads/2024/12/AUSVEG-Industry-Sentiment-Report-2024-Digital.pdf);
- the APEC summit that was held in Peru in November 2024, and the concomitant opening of the Chinese-built deep-water port of Chancay in Peru by president Xi Jinping;
- the harm done to the image of the Ecuadorian banana industry by drug trafficking, and the pricing of bananas in supermarkets with retailers using bananas as loss leaders to attract consumers;
- the finalization in Canada of the Grocery Sector Code of Conduct, which is expected to become fully operational by the end of 2025 (see <https://canadacode.org/>, “Code Documents”); and
- the recent passing in Canada of Bill-280 or the Financial Protection for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Farmers Act, which establishes a financial protection mechanism for fresh produce sellers in Canada that will help secure payment in the event of buyer bankruptcy (see CPMA’s press release on Bill-280 at <https://cpma.ca/docs/default-source/media-releases/2024/fpa-press-release---bill-c-280-passed-in-senate---december-10-2024.pdf>).

Summerfruit Australia: Trevor Ranford departs as CEO

At the end of December, Trevor Ranford departed as CEO of Summerfruit Australia, one of SHAFFE’s members in Australia. On behalf of the industry, the Summerfruit Board extended its heartfelt thanks to Trevor for his dedication and service as CEO for the past seven years. Board Chair Dean Morpeth commented: “We would like to acknowledge and thank Trevor for his exceptional contribution to Summerfruit Australia.”



Summerfruit Australia’s Trevor Ranford

The Board has announced the commencement of the search for a CEO as part of a strategy to angle the summerfruit industry to become more competitive and resilient.

Source: Summerfruit Australia, 19 December 2024

Save the date!

Global Coalition of Fresh Produce
Panel discussion on logistics
 Thursday 6 February, 3-4 pm
 Logistics Hub
 Fruit Logistica



Update on packaging rules in the European Union

EU packaging regulation becomes law: crackdown on fruit and vegetable plastic packaging from 2030, but exact implementation remains unclear
France's ban on plastic packaging for fruit and vegetables annulled

On December 16, 2024, the Council of the European Union approved the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation, which sets out common rules to prevent and manage packaging waste in the EU Member States. The approval by the Council concludes the legislative process that started two years ago with the legislative proposal submitted by the European Commission in November 2022, and consolidates the provisional political agreement reached between the representatives of the European Parliament and the Presidency of the Council in March 2024. From 1 January 2030, several types of single-use plastic packaging will be banned, including for pre-packaged fresh fruits and vegetables weighing less than 1.5 kilogram (e.g. nets, bags, trays, containers), food and beverages consumed in bars and restaurants, and single-serving items (e.g. condiments, sauces, coffee creamer, and sugar). The regulation also foresees that sticky labels for fruits and vegetables must be compostable in industrially controlled conditions in bio-waste treatment facilities; member states may also require that these labels are compatible with home composting standards. In addition, the text bans using so-called “forever chemicals” — namely, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), above certain thresholds in food-contact packaging to avoid harmful health effects. At the same time, the regulation introduces the option for member states to grant exemptions in respect of the ban on single-use plastic packaging for pre-packed fresh fruit and vegetables weighing less than 1.5 kilogram, if there is a demonstrated need to avoid water loss, turgidity loss, microbiological hazards or physical shocks, oxidation, or if there is no other possibility to avoid commingling of organic fruits and vegetables with non-organic fruits and vegetables.

The Regulation will now be published in the EU's Official Journal; its rules will apply eighteen months after its entry into force. However, the Commission must still work out various delegated and implementing acts to specify the criteria, requirements and methodologies to be observed for compliance with the new requirements (for example, those related recycling criteria, harmonized labelling, re-usability targets, the calculation of the percentage of recycled content, etc.). By early 2027, the Commission must publish guidelines to explain Annex V – which sets out the restrictions on the use of packaging formats – in more detail, including examples of banned packaging formats, and any exemptions from the restrictions, and provide a non-exhaustive list of fruits and vegetables that will continue to be allowed to be sold in single-use plastic packaging of less than 1.5 kilogram. The full text of the packaging regulation can be found at <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/PE-73-2024-INIT/en/pdf>.

Meanwhile, France's highest administrative court has annulled a government decree from June 2023 that banned plastic packaging for fruit and vegetables. In its ruling, the Conseil d'Etat stated that the French government published the decree without fully adhering to procedural requirements and acted prematurely, as it had been asked to delay the decree by the European Commission to allow EU-wide packaging regulations to be introduced uniformly, applying common standards across all 27 member states. The French government may issue a new implementing decree, as the European regulations that were adopted in December allow member states may maintain national provisions restricting the placing on the market of packaging in the formats and for uses listed in Annex V until 1 January 2030. However, the French government will have to notify the European Commission in advance and respect any deadlines imposed by EU law before adopting a new decree.

Source: Eunews, Garrigues, Council of the European Union, FreshPlaza, The Local Europe.

EU Court overturns Commission's decision on mancozeb renewal based on flawed evidence

The European Court of Justice has overturned part of the European Commission's non-renewal of mancozeb, citing reliance on outdated scientific data. On 4 October 2024, the Court ruled that the Commission relied on outdated scientific evidence when deciding not to renew the approval of mancozeb, a widely used fungicide. The court found that the Commission's reliance on an old opinion from the European Chemicals Agency's was unjustified, partially overturning the General Court's previous judgment.

Mancozeb, a fungicide commonly used to protect crops such as potatoes and tomatoes from fungal diseases, has faced increasing scrutiny due to concerns over its potential toxicity. In 2020, the European Commission issued a regulation refusing to renew the substance's approval, largely based on concerns about its classification as toxic to reproduction. However, two companies that



produce products containing mancozeb, appealed the Commission's decision. They argued that the Commission relied on outdated and flawed data without fully considering new scientific evidence, particularly the updated assessment report submitted by the new rapporteur member state, Greece, in 2020. The Court agreed, highlighting that this procedural oversight led to a flawed risk assessment of mancozeb. It will now re-examine the evidence based on updated scientific data and decide whether the Commission's decision to refuse renewal still stands. The Court's ruling emphasizes the importance of making regulatory decisions on pesticides using the most current scientific evidence available. As the European Union continues to refine its pesticide approval process, this case sets a significant precedent, ensuring that regulatory bodies thoroughly evaluate new data and respect applicants' rights.

Source: Foresight, 22 October 2024, www.useforesight.io.

Informe comercial chileno: exportaciones marcan récord impulsadas por las frutas frescas

Destacan los propios récords de las exportaciones de kiwis, ciruelas y cerezas, y de los incrementos en los despachos de uvas, manzanas, peras, arándanos, paltas y vinos.

El valor de las exportaciones de bienes y servicios continúan mostrando un importante crecimiento en 2024: en el período enero-octubre registraron alzas de 4,9% y 22% respectivamente, marcando nuevamente valores récord, según el adelanto del Informe Comercial Mensual elaborado por la Dirección de Estudios de la Subsecretaría de Relaciones Económicas Internacionales (SUBREI), con datos del Banco Central y del Servicio Nacional de Aduanas. La subsecretaria de SUBREI, Claudia Sanhueza, señaló que el crecimiento sostenido del valor de las exportaciones muestra la importancia del sector exportador para el desarrollo del país. "Las cifras nos permiten ver cómo sectores estratégicos como los servicios están creciendo, impulsando el desarrollo productivo y creando oportunidades para nuestras emprendedoras y emprendedores a lo largo del país. Esto refuerza las oportunidades que genera el sector exportador, especialmente en regiones que son las que generan más del 90% de los envíos de Chile al mundo", agregó.

Los envíos de frutas frescas también muestran niveles históricos, con operaciones acumuladas por US\$ 6.327,4 millones, cifra que refleja un alza de 13,9%, frente a igual lapso de 2023. Destacan los propios récords de las exportaciones de kiwis, ciruelas y cerezas, y de los incrementos en los despachos de uvas, manzanas, peras, arándanos y paltas. Las exportaciones de alimentos acumulan embarques por un monto de US\$ 10.624,7 millones, marcando una leve baja de 1,3%, en comparación a igual período de 2023, ante menores envíos de salmónidos y aceites de pescados, frutas en conserva y jugos de fruta, entre otros. A pesar de lo anterior, el sector presenta importantes alzas en las exportaciones carnes, frutas congeladas, conservas de pescado, hortalizas frescas, aceites vegetales, lácteos y productos orgánicos, entre otros.

Fuente: Diario Fruticola, 14 noviembre 2024

Chilean trade report: exports set records driven by fresh fruits

The records of exports of kiwis, plums and cherries stand out, and the increases in shipments of grapes, apples, pears, blueberries, avocados and wines.

The value of exports of goods and services continue to show significant growth in 2024: in the January-October period they registered increases of 4.9% and 22% respectively, again setting record values, according to the preview of the Monthly Trade Report prepared by the Directorate of Studies of the Undersecretary of International Economic Relations (SUBREI), with data from the Central Bank and the National Customs Service. The undersecretary of SUBREI, Claudia Sanhueza, pointed out that the sustained growth in the value of exports shows the importance of the export sector for the development of the country. "The figures allow us to see how strategic sectors such as services are growing, promoting productive development and creating opportunities for our entrepreneurs throughout the country. This reinforces the opportunities generated by the export sector, especially in regions that generate more than 90% of Chile's shipments to the world," she added.

Shipments of fresh fruits also show historical levels, with accumulated operations for US\$ 6,327.4 million, a figure that reflects an increase of 13.9%, compared to the same period in 2023. The records of exports of kiwis, plums and plums stand out, and cherries, and increases in shipments of grapes, apples, pears, blueberries and avocados. Food exports accumulate shipments for an amount of US\$ 10,624.7 million, marking a slight decrease of 1.3%, compared to the same period in 2023, due to lower shipments of salmonids and fish oils, canned fruits and juices of fruit, among others. Despite the above, the sector presents significant increases in exports of meat, frozen fruits, canned fish, fresh vegetables, vegetable oils, dairy products and organic products, among others.

Source: Diario Fruticola, 14 November 2024 (automatic translation)



European Union and Mercosur agree on free trade agreement; uncertainty over ratification looms large

After 25 years of negotiations, the European Union and the Southern Common Market, commonly known as Mercosur and comprising Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay, signed a free trade and cooperation agreement – although it faces a tough battle to secure approval by the 27 EU member states. Negotiations between the European Union and Mercosur began in 1999, but the agreement stalled for years due to opposition from France and other EU countries, who demanded environmental guarantees from Brazil and expressed concerns over the potential losses to European farmers.



On 6 December 2024, a new agreement was signed in Montevideo. This deal is the largest ever concluded by the European Union and the only one Mercosur has with a major trading bloc. Its ratification process, however, poses significant challenges, particularly on the European side. In Mercosur, the agreement must be approved by the national parliaments, but even if some countries fail to ratify it, the deal will still apply to others that do. In the European Union, however, the process is more complex. After translation, the agreement will go to the European Council for ratification, where countries are represented by their trade ministers. A minimum of four states representing at least 35% of the EU population could block the agreement. France, Austria, and Poland have stated that they oppose the agreement, but they would need another large country to reject the agreement at the European Council. If the agreement is not blocked, it then must be ratified by the European Parliament. This approval only applies to the ratification of those provisions that fall within the exclusive competence of the European Parliament, mainly those related to trade liberalization, and do not require ratification by national parliaments. Following ratification, the trade agreement would take effect, with gradual implementation expected to begin within approximately a year. The rest, those provisions involving aspects of jurisdiction and sovereignty, such as dispute settlement mechanisms or investment protection, must be unanimously approved by national parliaments to enter into force.

Under the agreement, the European Union will liberalize 82% of Mercosur agricultural imports, and Mercosur will remove tariffs on 93% of tariff lines for EU exports. For some products exported from Mercosur to the European Union – including beef, poultry, pork, sugar, ethanol, rice, honey, maize and sweet corn – tariff-rate quotas will apply. There are also potential safeguard measures to address possible market disturbances. Mercosur will give the European Union duty-free quota for cheeses, milk powders and infant formula, and phase in tariff reductions for EU olive oil, fresh fruit, canned peaches and tomatoes, pork products, chocolate, and soft drinks.

Several current trade flows of fruits between the European Union and the Mercosur countries are likely to benefit from the tariff removals. Relevant exports from the European Union to Mercosur currently include apples, pears, kiwifruit, citrus fruit and plums, mainly from southern EU countries. Until now, these exports were subject to a baseline tariff of 10%, which will be eliminated immediately under the new agreement. As for exports from the Mercosur bloc to the European Union, seven types of fruits (avocados, lemons, limes, melons, watermelons, table grapes, and apples) will enter the European market tariff- and quota-free. Fresh table grapes will benefit from immediate tariff-free access (contingent on meeting entry price conditions); for the other products, full liberalization will not be immediate, with gradual tariff reductions planned. For example, the current 4% tariff on avocado exports to the European Union will be phased out over four years. For lemons and limes, the 14% tariff will be eliminated over seven years. Apples will start with a 10% tariff, phased out over 10 years. Watermelon and melons will see a 9% tariff reduced over seven years. Entry prices for imported fruits and vegetables are maintained, except for citrus fruits.

Regarding the access of fruits from the European Union into the Mercosur countries, European exporters have denounced that access for their fruits in Mercosur currently requires the negotiation of a phytosanitary protocols for each type of fruit, which makes access to these markets very difficult. It is unclear at this point whether this obligation will be maintained after the entry into force of the agreement.

According to Eurostat data, the European Union exported 181 511 tonnes of fresh fruits and vegetables to Mercosur countries in 2023, for a value of EUR 223 680 000, while imports amounted to 775 023 tonnes, for a value of EUR 959 632 000.

Sources: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Reuters, DatamarNews, FreshPlaza, Eurofruit.

While every attempt has been taken to ensure that the information contained in this Newsletter has been obtained from reliable sources, the Southern Hemisphere Association of Fresh Fruit Exporters is not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from the use of this information. All information in this site is provided "as is", with no guarantee of completeness, accuracy, timeliness or of the results obtained from the use of this information.



AGAP President dissects Peru's agricultural performance

To gain insights into Peru's agricultural development in 2025, FreshFruitPortal.com spoke with Gabriel Amaro, president of the Association of Agricultural Producers' Guilds of Peru (AGAP). Amaro expressed optimism for table grapes, Hass avocados, and blueberries, while also reflecting on the challenges of 2024, describing it as a year with mixed results. He attributed these challenges to several factors, including disruptions caused by the El Niño phenomenon and market fluctuations that carried over from 2023. Looking ahead, Amaro is hopeful that 2025 will bring improvements, supported by a stabilization of climate conditions that could help resolve the issues encountered in 2024. He noted that while the latter part of 2024 saw successful campaigns for some crops in northern Peru, a water crisis hindered a full recovery in exports from that region. This water shortage, he explained, is rooted in inadequate management of hydraulic studies, particularly in Piura. However, he emphasized that overall conditions for the agricultural sector have improved compared to the previous year. Amaro pointed out that the agricultural industry is affected by many external factors, including political and social issues, pest and disease management, and logistical challenges related to transportation costs and market variability. He indicated that Peru is actively pursuing policies to strengthen trade relations with Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries and accelerate access to new markets. Notably, he highlighted recent access to markets such as China for products like pecans, frozen fruits, and Brazil nuts from the Peruvian Amazon. Regarding the US market, Amaro mentioned the need to adapt to new political dynamics with the incoming Trump administration. He underscored the importance of reinforcing Peru's long-standing Free Trade Agreement with the US, which has been highly beneficial for the country. Amaro urged the Peruvian government to engage with US officials to further strengthen these relations. In logistics, Amaro emphasized the importance of the Port of Chancay as a key infrastructure project. He described it as the largest port in the region, which will enable direct connectivity with China and improve Peru's capacity to export products and import goods more efficiently. Despite his positive outlook, Amaro acknowledged the challenges ahead. He welcomed the recent approval of the Agrarian Law, noting that it could accelerate investment in the coming year and support small-scale agriculture, which continues to face difficulties. Addressing these issues, he said, is crucial for the sector's development. Amaro also praised the government's focus on critical infrastructure projects, including the Port of Chancay, and the Ministry of Agriculture's efforts to unblock and launch irrigation projects in regions such as Tumbes, Piura, and Lambayeque. He highlighted logistics as a key challenge for the agro-export chain and stressed the importance of improving connectivity. Amaro cited planned railroad projects, such as a commuter train linking Ica and Lima, as well as rail connections to Brazil,



AGAP president Gabriel Amaro

expressing hope that these initiatives will move forward swiftly. As 2025 approaches, Amaro recognized its significance as a precursor to the 2026 elections—a pivotal year that could shape the government's approach to addressing structural issues. He reiterated AGAP's commitment to promoting the Agrarian Law, advancing agricultural development, and collaborating closely with Senasa on pest and disease management efforts. In summary, Amaro underscored the importance of sustainable agricultural development and stressed that continued collaboration among authorities, the public sector, and producers is essential for the country's growth and progress.

Source: FreshFruitPortal, 3 January 2025

South Africa – exports of fruits to India

In a recent update from the Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa, CEO Justin Chadwick – who participated in India South Africa Business Conclaves in both New Delhi and Mumbai in early December – mentioned the strong trading ties between South Africa and India. Since 2020, both apple and citrus exports to India have tripled. Ninety percent of imported pears come from South Africa. Many importers now carry promotion material funded by HORTGRO under the Beautiful Fruit, Beautiful Country banner. Exports of citrus to India have increased from 10 000 tonnes in 2020 to almost 30 000 tonnes in 2024. Whereas the market was traditionally mostly oranges, mandarins now contribute almost a third to the citrus exports from South Africa. There is also potential to grow lemon and grapefruit volumes. What is standing in the way of real progress are the Indian import duties and shipping requirements. Import duties for citrus products into India are at 30 percent. There are discussions on how this can be addressed in a way that benefits both countries. At the moment India does not permit in-transit cold treatment of fruit, meaning that the fruit is either fumigated or treated on land, both impacting on costs and time. Recently, successful pilot in-transit cold treatment shipments were received by India which could lead to a revision of the requirements. All in the trade hope that this revision will be in place by 2025.

Source: Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa, 6 December 2024.