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Media statement by Fruit South Africa

COLLABORATION AND TIMELY SUPPORT – VITAL COGS IN THE WHEEL OF INCLUSIVE GROWTH

The clarion call is growing louder in the fruit industry of South Africa: elevate transformation efforts for tangible inclusive growth on the ground.

But, given the complex ecosystem, is inclusive growth attainable?

On 19 March 2025 Fruit South Africa (Fruit SA) hosted a transformation showcase in collaboration with the South African Subtropical Growers Association (Subtrop) at Tshivhase Agridam Farm outside Thohoyandou, Limpopo.

The goal of the showcase was to present progress on industry transformation efforts to attending guests. And with a view to further strengthening collaboration – especially with government – Fruit SA used the event as a platform for stakeholders to interrogate their experience of working with new entrants and black participants in the industry.

In his opening remarks Subtrop CEO Derek Donkin highlighted the integration of black growers into the industry as a meaningful driver of economic growth.

And giving a snapshot of industry transformation initiatives, Fruit SA CEO Fhumulani Ratshitanga issued a stark reminder: For the fruit industry, transformation is not about box-ticking. We are dealing with real people and real lives. As economic role-players, we have a mandate to fulfil.

Agricultural Development Agency (AGDA) CEO Leona Archery led a robust panel discussion that comprised government representatives and banking executives. The topics that drove dialogue included the need for a shared vision, an environment that is conducive to growth, focused relationship-building, and trust. It also became clear that collaboration and timely support are critical in the realisation of these ambitions.

Subtrop Transformation Coordinator Stephen Mantshe shone the spotlight on Subtrop's transformation initiatives and its growing collaboration with local government. He also drew



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attention to the importance of skills development, citing the effectiveness of the association's study groups – among other initiatives – with emerging black growers.

The well-attended transformation showcase bore testament to the commitment of Fruit SA (and all its members), and the attending delegates, to accelerating transformation efforts for sustainable inclusive growth.

Photos available on request.

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