

FRUIT SA NEWSLETTER SEP–OCT '25

CEO's note



We congratulate the South African Table Grape Industry (SATI) and Transnova Africa who've just received the prestigious Platinum Award for their innovative logistics model, at the [2025 GIBS Business School Logistics Achiever Awards](#).

This advanced digital prescriptive model was designed to mitigate prevailing logistics challenges in the export chain. And its Phase 2 results were unveiled at Fruit Attraction Madrid 2025.

China and South Africa have also just signed a protocol for the export of South African stone fruit to China.



This is a significant achievement for the industry, particularly amid the urgency to diversify markets for export of the country's products. The pace at which this process was concluded bears testament to the importance of responsiveness and the impact of working together.

In the vein of making an impact, the eCertification (eCert) platform has done just that in the South African agriculture sector.

In 2018 Fruit SA was appointed by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) to build the eCert platform to receive, verify, process and deliver certification documentation to trading partners associated with agricultural export products.



And on 30 September 2025 Fruit SA passed the baton to the Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB), concluding a rewarding journey that emanated from an exemplary public-private partnership. I wish the eCert team and the PPECB success in this new chapter.

And with the food-security focus of this month, the industry, with its >300 000 on-farm employees and >1.2 million dependents, is reminded of its crucial role in job creation and retention. On World Food Day, Fruit SA (with the support of its member associations) partnered with the Department of Agriculture (DoA) to sponsor non-perishable food items to help momentarily sustain 300 families in need, in KwaZakhele township, Gqeberha. Residents were also issued with seedlings to start their own produce gardens.

As we navigate the challenges, may we leverage our collective collaborative spirit as we remain cognisant of our victories.

Fhumulani

Southern Hemisphere Association of Fresh Fruit Exporters rebranding



The Southern Hemisphere Association of Fresh Fruit Exporters (SHAFPE) has rebranded as Southern Hemisphere Fruit Alliance (SFA).

With a keen focus on enhanced unity, the rebranding is intended to better reflect the 34-year-old organisation's mission of unifying the diverse and unique southern hemisphere fruit sector, championing its cause and nurturing environmentally, socially and economically sustainable global value chains for the region's fruits.

“The organisation is no longer a trade association for the southern hemisphere fruit industry, but rather the allegiance aimed at advancing its cause”, says SFA President Nathan Hancock.

“By definition, an alliance is an entity forged for the mutual benefit of all,” highlights Jorge de Souza, vice-president of the Alliance.

Fruit SA, a current member and treasurer of SFA, is pleased by the organisation’s efforts to strengthen unity, and looks forward to continued participation in SFA. Read more about the rebranding [here](#).

MARKET ACCESS

Strengthening diplomatic ties with South Korea By Sahabne Ullah

Role-players in the South African fruit industry understand the importance of strengthening diplomatic relations with trade-partner countries. And South Asia is a major focus in the industry’s market diversification strategy.

Recently, a Fruit SA delegation, along with Ms Kelebogile Brandt – an official from the DoA – went on a courtesy visit to South Korea, which is deemed a priority market. Ms Brandt maximised the opportunity to engage with her South Korean counterparts regarding progress on market access, and to explore opportunities to further expand bilateral fruit trade. The visit was also important for fostering dialogue between the two National Plant Protection Organisations (NPPO’s). And it presented an opportunity to connect with leading South Korean importers.

Officials of the South African Embassy in South Korea played a vital role in compiling an itinerary for the delegation to meet with South Korean officials and importers. Meetings with top importers of South African fruit provided great insight into South Korean market dynamics.



Members of the DOA/Fruit SA delegation met with EMART management – a major South Korean importer of South African fruit

Given the efficient freight routes, South Africa is logistically well placed for robust trade with South Korea.

International Blueberry Organisation Summit, 25–27 September 2025



South African blueberries in the global berry market

By Fhumulani Ratshitanga

I was pleased to attend the International Blueberry Organisation (IBO) Summit at the Cape Town International Convention Centre in September. This was the first time that the event was hosted on African soil.

In their welcome addresses, Agriculture Minister John Steenhuisen highlighted the South African berry industry's 7% y-on-y export volume growth, alongside growing production volumes and investment in modern production methods and phytosanitary management. Western Cape Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism Ivan Meyer dubbed the event “a celebration of collaboration, resilience and the shared vision of a thriving global blueberry community”.

With topics ranging from global berry production to the climate crisis, logistics and machine harvesting the summit provided a compelling forum for knowledge transfer.

Presentations from the Summit can be accessed [here](#).

TRANSFORMATION

Citrus Growers' Development Chamber Grower Indaba, 11-12 September 2025



The Citrus Growers' Development Chamber (CGDC) hosted its first-ever Grower Indaba in September 2025 at the Birchwood Hotel, which drew citrus growers and stakeholders from across the country. The event set the stage for the 10-year anniversary celebration of the Citrus Growers' Association Grower Development Company (CGA-GDC). It was

also an opportunity to recognise the significant strides made by the CGA to ensure meaningful participation of black growers in the citrus industry, and to reflect on the success of the Citrus Growers' Development Chamber.

Tabled industry plans for the development of black growers were aligned with the citrus industry's Vision 50 and 260 goals. Then came the well-timed launch of the CGA Transformation Strategy, which focuses on creating economic opportunities for black participants in the industry, and highlights opportunities for black businesses to thrive.

Black citrus growers currently contribute 25.6% towards industry output, far above the national average of 13% across agricultural commodities. This is a true endorsement of the citrus industry's impact over the last decade, as well as the strategic importance of transformation in the fruit industry of South Africa.