

Press release: 18 December 2019

Industry drought action

The deciduous fruit industry body, Hortgro, has been closely monitoring the situation of producers and agricultural workers affected by the prolonged drought.

Especially stone fruit producers in the Little Karoo from Montagu, Barrydale, Ladismith, Calitzdorp, through to Prince Albert, have suffered severely; with some even losing their farms, and many farmworkers without income and jobs. More than 300 hectares of deciduous fruit trees have died and more than 610 farmworkers have lost their jobs with an estimated 2440 dependants.

Hortgro in association with the Canning Fruit Producers' Association, Agri Western Cape, Agri SA and Wine TU have pooled resources to help producers in the Little Karoo financially to carry on with the rest of the production season. Funds were also made available to contain regional crop protection risks.

On the humanitarian front, Hortgro recently held a 'resilience workshop' for producers and farm workers in Ladismith to empower them mentally with coping strategies. Funds were also made available for a thousand food parcels that will be distributed to affected farmworkers in the region, before Christmas.

We are urging producers and stakeholders in other parts of the country that want to help with the drought effort, financially or in any other capacity, to please contact Hortgro's Group Operational Manager, Mariette Kotze (Mariette@hortgro.co.za).

Hortgro wishes everyone a blessed Festive Season and a prosperous New Year.

Sagtevrugtebedryf droogte-aksie

Hortgro, die sagtevrugtebedryfsorganisasie, moniteer reeds vir 'n geruime tyd die situasie van produsente en landbouwerkers wat deur die langdurige droogte geraak word.

Veral steenvrugprodusente in die Klein Karoo vanaf Montagu, Barrydale, Ladismith, Calitzdorp tot by Prins Albert kry veral baie swaar, met sommige wat reeds hul plase verloor het. Honderde plaaswerkers sit ook sonder inkomste en werk.

Hortgro, die Inmaakvrugteprodusentevereniging (IVP), Agri Wes-Kaap, Agri SA en Wine TU het hulpbronne saamgevoeg om Klein Karoo produsente finansiëel by te staan om sodoende deur die produksie-seisoen te kom. Fondse is ook beskikbaar gestel vir die beheer van gewasbeskerming in die streek.

Op 'n humanitêre vlak het Hortgro onlangs 'n 'veerkragtigheidswerkswinkel' vir produsente en plaaswerkers in Ladismith gehou om hulle geestelik met hanteringstrategieë te bemagtig. Fondse is ook beskikbaar gestel om sowat 'n duisend kospakkies nog voor Kersfees aan die betrokke plaaswerkers in die streek te versprei.

Ons doen 'n beroep op produsente en belanghebbendes in ander dele van die land wat finansiëel of op enige ander manier wil help met die droogte-ondersteuningsprogram, om Hortgro se groepsbedryfsbestuurder, Mariette Kotze (Mariette@hortgro.co.za) te kontak.

Hortgro wens almal 'n Geseënde Kerstyd en Voorspoedige 2020 toe.



Picture 1: Early morning at Ladysmith, making hampers for our producers' farmworkers.



Picture 2: Hampers being loaded for distribution to Calitzdorp, Barrydale and Montagu.



Picture 3: The team from Hortgro and Ladysmith area that made the hampers for the farmworkers.