

Hortgro Pome

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The 2019 apple and pear season can be described as one where although more normal rainfall was experienced in most of the regions, the climatic conditions during blossom time led to some challenges on the quality side, whilst some varieties were negatively affected on the volume side. At the time of writing and in comparison with the 2018 season, apple exports were up 7% while pear exports stayed the same.

The marketing of our fruit also presented us with challenges with certain markets being somewhat oversupplied with a "basket of fruit". Some of these markets were, therefore, less attractive than in the past. This sentiment was not only confined to the South African industry. During the World Apple and Pear Association (WAPA) meeting held in Belgium in August 2019 many of the European delegates also sketched a very negative picture of how their previous season had played out.

Marktoegang en die behoud van bestaande markte, is belangrike items op die Hortgro Pome begroting en bly kritieke bedryfsaktiwiteite vir die personeel. Hierdie boodskap is ook baie duidelik vanuit die bedryf ontvang tydens verskeie gebiedsvergaderings wat vroeër in die die jaar gehou is en wat op die hernuwing van die bedryf se statutêre maatreëls gefokus het. 'n Herprioritering van die begroting het daartoe gelei dat daar voortaan meer fokus op bogenoemde aspekte geplaas gaan word. Gedurende die jaar is verskeie vergaderings met die departement van landbou gehou om die kritiese belang van marktoegang te beklemtoon en om nuwe maniere te kry om samewerking op hierdie terrein tot voordeel van nie net die appel- en peerbedryf nie, maar ook die hele land te bewerkstellig.

The Hortgro Pome Board as well as the Pome Producer Council met on numerous occasions during the year to debate the activities that make a positive difference to our producers. The budget items of especially Research and Development, Trade and Market Access, Transformation and Training and General Industry Services and Communication were thoroughly debated to ensure that the producer levy is being spent in the correct and most cost-effective way. Not only does the industry call on its board and council members to give inputs on behalf of the industry, but there are also numerous other platforms that call on experts and representatives within the industry to add value and give the board and personnel additional support on specific technical and marketing matters. Specific areas that were focused on include amongst others the new plant breeding and acquisition strategy, independent evaluation, continued debates on transformation objectives and strategies which included comments on the expropriation without compensation issue, market access and retention, and effective communication strategies.

Daar is toenemend druk op ons bedryfsorganisasie om meer kwessies as ooit tevore te hanteer. Dit plaas groot druk op die begroting en kapasiteit van Hortgro se personeel, van wie daar verwag word om meer dienste met 'n beperkte begroting te verrig. Fokus op kerndienste en funksies en vermyding van enige duplikasie bly 'n prioriteit in ons oorsigrol. Potlode is herhaaldelik skerp gemaak en berekeninge weer en weer gedoen, om te verseker dat die styging van die heffing vir die volgende 4-jaar siklus (vanaf Oktober 2019) binne perke bly, maar dat maksimum uitsette tot voordeel van die bedryf behaal word.

The contribution, time and effort spent by the Hortgro Pome Board and Hortgro Producer Council can therefore not be underestimated and I would like to thank them and all the personnel for their inputs in helping steer the strategic direction of our industry and ensuring that we remain a competitive and relevant participant in the world apple and pear environment. Together with Anton Rabe and his very capable team, Hortgro Pome strives to create an enabling environment in often very turbulent times for the apple and pear producer to flourish in.

I wish all apple and pear producers a blessed and prosperous 2020 season.