



Fresh Notes feedback of a Packhouse Action Group (PAG) meeting held on 1 August 2019. Contact details are listed at the bottom of the Fresh Notes.

Moratorium on High-Cube Containers Contact Andy Connell

There has been no progress in the last year. The Department of Transport has not conducted a study on the hi-cube containers. They are expected to go out on tender for such a study once again. There appears to be no immediate danger of enforcement on 1 January 2020, but this could just lead to another extension of the moratorium. The transport and affected industries will convene a new task group in August, and embark on a revitalised effort to bring reason to bear on the Department of Transport through engagement.

Revised steri market protocols for newer cultivars Contact: Henk Griessel

Further trials at a shipping temperature of 1°C are still scheduled.

Load-shedding and load out temperatures

The PAG recommended that the dispensation will operate for another season, and will accordingly apply for an extension.

The dispensation applies to the possible build-up of uncooled or partially cooled fruit at cold stores due to load-shedding, for the maximum load out temperature tolerance for apples of +3.0°C to be applied, and for winter pears +2°C. (Presently set point plus 2.0°C which in practice normally equates to a tolerance of +1.5°C). The dispensation applies only in the case of power cuts, and this needs to be verified with the local PPECB inspector.

This arrangement cannot be applied to summer pears due to the risk of quality problems.



Plastics Strategy Contact Dr Malcolm Dodd/Bryce McIntyre

There has been a delay in this work group due to the unavailability of the original jockey. Dr Malcolm Dodd is convening a group of industry specialists and researchers in August to provide short and long term guidance to the industry.

Packhouse and Quality Benchmarking Contact Dawid Malan

Ongoing

Environmental Footprint Contact Eddie Vienings

Blue North is looking for more participants for data collection for its packhouse water management project.

A carbon tax information package is included in this Fresh Notes. Primary agriculture is exempted until 2022. Organisations with a combined stationary combustion capacity exceeding 1 MW (thermal) will be subject to carbon tax in Phase 1, thus with immediate effect.

DPA Contact Lindi Benic

The reduced EU MRL of 0.05mg/kg applicable for apples and pears was implemented from 1 May 2019. In preparation for this change, it was deemed important to determine the comparability of South African laboratories' testing / measurement capability.

A ring proficiency testing study was commissioned through the National Metrology Institute of South Africa (NMISA) to evaluate local laboratories, and to benchmark them against selected overseas laboratories. NMISA results indicated that all participants' results were satisfactory. These results confirm that if the laboratory quality systems are maintained, the analysis of DPA at the new regulatory limit should pose no threat to the apple industry.

This will assist towards ensuring that lower EU MRL levels can be met, thus avoiding/preventing MRL exceedance notifications and recalls of South African agricultural exports. Vigilance is however crucial in preventing DPA cross-contamination.



Market Access Contact Lindi Benic/Jacques du Preez

Mexico

Golden Delicious volumes had increased from 42 000 – 63 000. An attempt would be made to make the protocols less onerous.

Taiwan

Teething problems were related to PhytClean compliance.

India

The last in-transit cold sterilisation trial has been completed and feedback is being awaited.

China

A draft protocol for pears has been received. Provisional registration by 16 August 2019 is required for this market. Nine quarantine pests (no diseases/pathogens), which did not include FCM, are listed. Fruit fly sterilisation treatments are required. Codling moth requirements are the same as for Taiwan. A non-compliant orchard embargo clause, not included in the apple protocol, is included.

Saudi Arabia

A separate arrangement for fruit safety testing of residues is required, though there is uncertainty as to which version is being applied.

There is a new requirement for Arabic labelling.



PAG Disciplines and Coordinators

Please contact the relevant person if you have any queries regarding the PAG.

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