

FRESH NOTES

A TECHNICAL UPDATE PUBLISHED BY HORTGRO SCIENCE



PACKHOUSE
ACTION GROUP

Fresh Notes feedback of a Packhouse Action Group (PAG) meeting held on 04 March 2021

Contact details are listed at the bottom of the Fresh Notes.

Feedback on visits to PAG quick link on the Hortgro Website

[Fresh Notes 182 – PAG Feedback \(November 20\) - 23](#)

[Container Handling Procedures - 23](#)

[Jaco Visagie - Trends in Container Technology and Supply – 23](#)

Moratorium on High-Cube Containers

Contact: Jacques du Preez

No further change. DOT research has not commenced as yet. There is no concrete further movement on the AARTO regulation 224B - Road height restrictions 4.3 meters. Minister Mbalula mentioned Hi-cubed heavy trucks damaging roads, and made no mention to regulation 224 and height restrictions.

The extract from his speech - as reported by Times Live:

“We are putting in place long-term interventions that will introduce rail reform, thereby making rail more effective, efficient and competitive both in respect of freight and passenger transport. This includes a rail policy and legislation which will support and facilitate investment in rail infrastructure, rail modernisation and technology, safety and economic regulation, and facilitate the participation of the private sector in rail,” said Mbalula.

“Similarly, high cubed heavy trucks will no longer get exemptions to be on the road, considering the impact and the damage they do to our roads. The challenges we have to overcome are vast, but not insurmountable,” he said.

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Basic Cooling principles of Pome Fruit

Contact: Johan Strydom

A document summarising the cooling and shipping guidelines for pome fruit was compiled and is available on Hortgro's website (Science & Technology). This makes provision for the new temperature sensitive cultivars.

See <https://www.hortgro.co.za/wp-content/uploads/docs/2021/03/Basic-Cooling-Principles-for-Pome-Fruit-5-Feb.pdf>.

PPECB T13 Dispensations

Contact: Johan Strydom

A workgroup has been appointed to look at ways to utilise feedback data from PPECB's T13 operational dispensations as source for research and informed decisions.

Load-out Temperatures

Contact: Bernard Henning

The previous load shedding dispensations which were granted for the last two seasons, have been included into the PPECB HP28 regulation, as follows:

Upper temperature limits:

- | | | |
|----------------|--------|---|
| ➤ Summer pears | 1.5 °C | (as the tolerance is currently applied) |
| ➤ Winter Pears | 2.0°C | |
| ➤ Apples | 3.0°C | |

The principle that should be applied is an upper temperature limit, rather than a tolerance. This should be irrespective of whether the fruit is packed in plastic bags or not. This will simplify the implementation of the temperature requirements by the assessors and inspectors.

It should be noted that the shipment of early Granny Smith at +5°C has been included in HP28, a practice that was applied several decades ago.

Container Effectiveness and Certification

Contact: Bernard Henning

The PPECB, together with Stellenbosch University is developing a protocol to measure container effectiveness and certification.

Logistics

Contact: Jacques du Preez

A multi-disciplinary work group has been set up to look at Cape Town port berthing delays, equipment and operational inefficiencies. High level meetings had been held with port authorities to resolve the issues. The additional capacity under the auspices of FSA had allowed the preparation of a Daily Report which monitored productivity, and was placed on the Hortgro website. See <https://www.hortgro.co.za/logistics/>

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Alternatives to SOPP

Contact: Bernard Henning

Research conducted by Citrus Research International has shown that two alternative products looked promising, but the registration status for pome fruit was unknown. This will be followed up.

Plastic Strategy

Contact: Dr Malcolm Dodd

Plastic Work Group has classified plastic materials used in the pome industry into their risk categories. The next phase includes a brainstorming on plastic strategy.

Packhouse Benchmarking

Contact: Dawid Malan

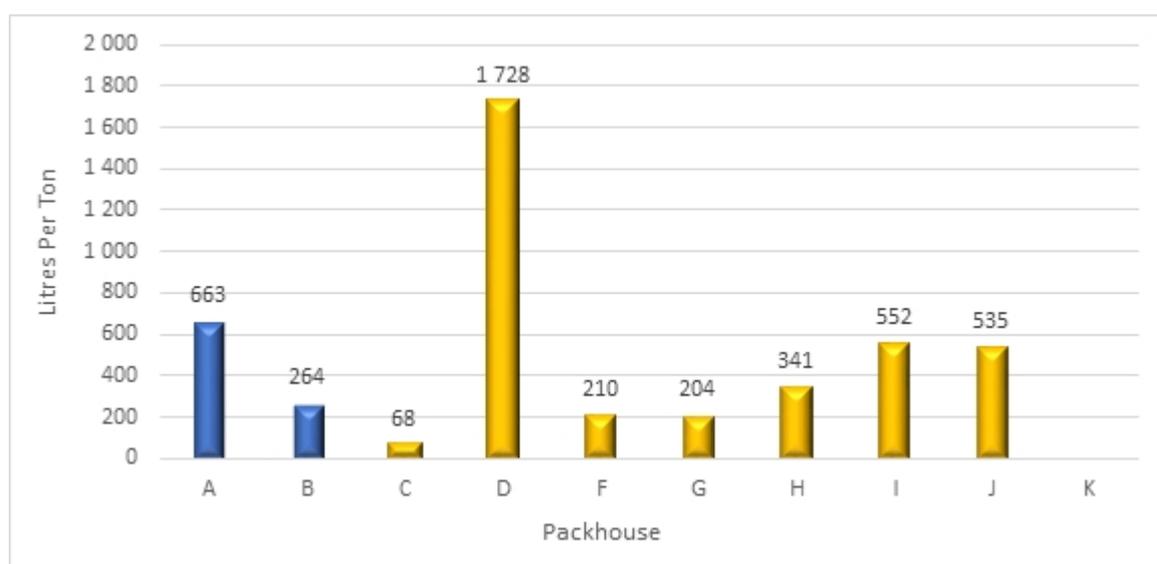
Twenty four packing lines of 16 organisations have participated in the Packhouse benchmarking, and additional packhouses were coming on board. The benchmarking data was included in the previous PAG Fresh Notes. Only four packhouses participated in the defect benchmarking.

Packhouses are encouraged to participate – please contact Dawid Malan.

Packhouse water management project

Contact: Eddie Vienings

Figure 1 (below) shows the anonymised 2019 results for the packing line section. The two packhouses in blue passed the data sense checks for this section and the packhouses in yellow indicate some level of data incompleteness. As can be seen, water consumption in packing lines varied between 264 and 663 litres per ton packed. The large variances in this figure suggests opportunities for, in some cases significant, water use efficiency improvements.



For full report, see: <https://www.hortgro.co.za/industry-news/industry-water-benchmark-study-helps-manage-risks/>

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Packhouse Audits and Costs Contact: Henko Vlok

It was previously reported that audit costs and man hours were an issue with smaller packhouses.

SIZA gave information on the compliance requirements of the various audits to bring transparency and credibility to the supply chain. The decision was made to ensure a business includes all sections of its operations as part of the business and cannot exclude a particular commodity or unit. In addition to this, it is expected that all packhouses and processing facilities ensure full compliance of all suppliers throughout their supply chain. This was a SIZA Board decision and was also supported by Fruit SA. The intention is to drive a best practice approach and drive continuous improvement. Implementation is scheduled for 1 April 2023.

Some producers only audit some of the production units, and this was problematic as it caused frustrations with global and local markets. SIZA will consider accommodating smaller suppliers, but the parameters still need to be defined.

SIZA also manage Sedex requirements on behalf of the producer if they select Sedex visibility via SIZA. Sedex requires 100% completion of their SAQ, resulting in SIZA members needing to complete all questions on their Social SAQ, and also their Environmental SAQ if requested by their market. SIZA negotiated a reduced fee for RSA suppliers who require Sedex visibility. Visibility on Sedex and GlobalG.A.P. is important for global markets and is well-managed on behalf of SIZA for the RSA growers.

It is SIZA's vision to drive a single audit approach for each standard e.g. environmental and social. In order to achieve this vision and to avoid duplication, SIZA provide visibility to markets on platforms such as GLOBALG.A.P and Sedex. The goal is to save costs for the producer and avoid duplication of other audits.

Market Access Feedback Contact: Jacques du Preez / Lindi Benic

Confirmation for 2021 orchard and packhouse approvals from Mexico, China and Taiwan were being awaited. The same procedures as last year are expected, involving DALRRD performing these functions, as inspectors from these countries aren't able to travel to SA. The same orchards registered for last year can still be used.

India now requires a non-GMO certificate, obtainable from DALRRD. The in-transit cold treatment has not been approved yet.

The Minister is engaging China regarding pear access. China is looking at a trade-off with poultry access to South Africa.

Access to Thailand is being followed up.

Best Practice Stepwise Cooling for Cripps' Pink Contact: Dr Elke Crouch

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Dr Crouch has co-ordinated this document with inputs from technical members in the industry. It will be circulated to producers by the SA Pink Lady® Association. The document is available on Hortgro's website under Science & Technology – Pome Fruit Handling Protocols.

See <https://www.hortgro.co.za/wp-content/uploads/docs/2021/03/Cripps-Pink-Best-Practice-March2021.pdf>.

See also webinar: <https://events.hortgro.co.za/best-practice-protocol-for-preventing-internal-browning-in-pink-lady-webinar/>

CA Engineers' Webinar

Contact: Richard Hurndall

A webinar meeting is tentatively scheduled for 18 May. It will involve one or two presentations on packhouse issues, where after members can discuss topics of their choice. The mandate of the group needs to be defined for future meetings. Please supply agenda points that will be of interest to packhouse engineers.

PAG Disciplines and Coordinators

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

Chairman – Koos Bouwer (bouweb@orangenet.co.za)

Engineering – Henk Ryke (henk@tad.co.za), **Koos Bouwer** (bouweb@orangenet.co.za)

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Environmental Footprint – Eddie Vienings (eddie@bluenorth.co.za) / **Hugh Campbell** (hugh@hortgro.co.za)

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Hortgro – Jacques du Preez (jacques@hortgro.co.za), **Lindi Benic** (lindi@hortgro.co.za)

Research – Prof Wiehann Steyn (wiehann@hortgro.co.za)

SIZA – Henko Vlok (henko@siza.co.za)