



Press Release: Fruit Industry Position on Possible USA Dockworker Strike

Paarl, 18 December 2024 — South African fruit industry representative bodies the South African Table Grape Industry (SATI), Hortgro, and the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (FPEF) are aware of the potential strike by dockworkers at USA East Coast ports should unions and employers fail to reach a contract settlement before the 15 January 2025 deadline.

USA dockworkers, represented by the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), are threatening to go on strike again due to unresolved contract negotiations which started earlier in 2024 with the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX), which represents port terminals on the East and Gulf Coasts.

The main issues at play are port modernisation and a new long-term wage agreement. Despite assurances that no jobs would be lost due to modernisation efforts, the ILA has expressed concerns about potential job losses.

Recent media reports by USA-based publications indicated that President-elect Donald Trump appeared to support the dockworkers union in its contract dispute which could potentially help avoid further strike action.

At this stage, the fruit industry associations cannot quantify the potential outcomes should the strike occur. However, we will remain in close contact with local and international stakeholders to monitor the situation. Producers are encouraged to stay in touch with their respective representative bodies for updates.

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JOINTLY ISSUED BY HORTGRO, SATI AND FPEF

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