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Hortgro Reacts to Drought

As farmers in South Africa's Western Cape province face tremendous pressure due to the crippling drought, Hortgro has sought to clear up misconceptions about water use. "We are concerned about the unfounded and irresponsible statements made by politicians and uninformed social media users about agriculture and water-use. Agriculture in general, specifically, the fruit industry, has made 'great progress' with the efficient use of water-saving technologies," said Jacques du Preez, Hortgro's Trade and Market Manager. Read more [here](#).



SA Apples Safe to Eat

Hortgro came under pressure last week when a false report was circulated in social media that linked Listeria to South African apples. "The report is false and irresponsible," said Anton Rabe, Hortgro's Executive Director. Read more [here](#).

How to wash your fruits and save water



You'll need:

- A large bowl
- One litre of water
- One tablespoon (15 ml) of bicarbonate of soda
- A veggie brush or clean microfibre cloth



Instructions:

1. Fill the bowl with water.
2. Then stir in the bicarbonate of soda, mix well.
3. Add the fruits or veggies.
4. Soak for a minute or two.
5. Scrub with the veggie brush or clean microfibre cloth.
6. And finally, rinse off the produce in a bowl of clean water.



SOURCE: FOODREVOLUTION.ORG

To save water, wash all your fruits and veggies together (as many as your bowl will allow).

Store clean produce in separate containers in a refrigerator to preserve the quality.

Don't leave the tap running when washing and rinsing fruit. Use leftover greywater to flush the loo or water plants.

Did you know?

It is crucially important to clean your fruits and veggies before consumption. Apart from contracting infectious diseases, **nearly all farmers – even organic farmers – use some pesticides.**

TIP!

HORTGRO

Stone Fruit Season at a Glance

An overview of the 2017/18 stone fruit season:

- "Positive EU market conditions offer a silver lining to stone fruit growers." - Jacques du Preez via Fresh Fruit Portal [here](#).
- To view the stone fruit export summary, click [here](#).



Minimum Wages Table

The Department of Labour says the new minimum wages for employees in the farm and forestry sectors are set to increase by 5.6%. The new minimum wages will come into effect from 1 March 2018.

The minimum wage will increase to R3,169.19 per month, up from the R3,001.13 in 2017/18. The weekly minimum wage will be R731.41.

The daily minimum wage for these employees will be R146.28 and the hourly minimum wage will be R16.25 an increase from R15.39 in 2017/18. Download the table [here](#).



NEXT GENERATION SERIES:

Smuts Brothers

Juan-Ivan and Sean Smuts grew up with the privilege of farmland as their playground. With a mixture of finance, agricultural economics and years of experience passed down by generations, these two are bound to succeed. Read Gerrit Breytenbach's story, Brothers in Farms, [here](#).



Project Rebirth

The revitalisation of Buffalo City Fresh Produce Market in East London, is one of the Project Rebirth successes. Infrastructure upgrades with the focus on hygiene, cleanliness, and food safety standards form part of this project. Read Richard Hurdall's report [here](#).

FWDT: Personal Growth for Agri Workers

Personal growth of agricultural workers is one of the focus areas of the Fruit Workers' Development Trust (FWDT). Apols and Sofia Kamfer from Bronaars in the Koue Bokkeveld recently completed the Philani training courses: Adult Man and Complete Woman, respectively. Read their story [here](#).



Cherry Exchange

In December a combined group from Hortgro and the Western Cape Department of Agriculture (WCDoA) visited the cherry orchards at Nooitgedacht in the Koue Bokkeveld. According to Dr Ilse Trautmann, WCDoA head of research, the aim of the site visit was to see the hands-on impact of alternative crops funding

on the cherry industry and to explore further win-win scenarios. Funding for alternative crops forms part of the Department's Smart Agri plan that was launched in 2016 to address agricultural challenges and climate change. Hortgro wishes to thank Arno Marais and Gys du Toit from Dutoit Agri, for their hospitality. More photographs in our gallery [here](#).



Top UK chef visits Freshness First

Jordon Powell, winner of the 2017 South African cuisine young chef of the year competition that was held in the UK, recently visited Freshness First in Franschhoek. The day kicked-off with a farm tour on Keerweder situated at the foot of the beautiful Franschhoek mountains where Jordon feasted on freshly-picked plums in the orchard. Justus Siebrits played tour-guide and showed Jordon the packhouse and other operations. All in all the experience was insightful for the young, upcoming British chef. Pictured below FLTR: Hortgro's Thea van Zyl, Jordon Powell and Justus Siebrits.





German Students Learn More about SA Fruit Industry

A group of agricultural students from Esteburg Fruit Growing Centre in Jork, Germany recently visited Hortgro Science to learn more about the South African fruit industry's agricultural and research practices. Students from this agricultural college, under the leadership of Prof Hinrich Feindt, visit SA every two years. This year they also visited FruitFly Africa, ExperiCo, and stone and pome fruit farms in the Ceres region. Pictured here are the students after listening to a presentation by Prof Karen Theron (pictured far left) and Hugh Campbell (pictured far right).

Technical Updates - Keeping You Informed

Over the past few months, Hortgro Science distributed Fresh Notes on how to deal with pests like *Bactrocera dorsalis*, Grain chinch bug, and mites. These publications are available on our website here:

- Andrew Jessup on dealing with the *Bactrocera* species. Click [here](#).
- Aanbeveelde protokol vir die risiko bestuur van graanstinkluis. Klik [hier](#)
- How to deal with mites in a hot and dry weather. Click [here](#).

Hortgro Science is also cognisant of the pressure the current drought is placing on our growers and would like to remind industry stakeholders of our **Irrigation Seminar Summary Report**, which contains useful tips and information during this water-scarce period. Download it [here](#).

Timely Hints for stone fruit — focus on the monitoring and control of false codling moth (FCM), particularly on the late stone fruit varieties. Also available in Afrikaans as Tydige Wenke. [Read it here](#).

Langkloof Seminaar 2017

Meer as 70 Langklowers het die jaarlikse Langkloof seminaar en boordstap op Maandag, 4 Desember 2017 bygewoon. Dié produsente en belanghebbendes was in 'n aansienlik meer opgewekte luim as tydens die droogte seminaar in September 2017. Lees meer [hier](#).



Upcoming Events

2 February 2018: Orchard of The Future: Orchard Walk - EGVV - contact.thea@hortgro.co.za

15 February 2018: Agri's got Talent entries open. [Click here for more info.](#)

12 April 2018: Orchard of the Future: Orchard Walk - Ceres

28 May - 1 June 2018: Hortgro Science Technical Symposium

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Optimism with Realism

As somewhat of a rational idealist it can be said that the recent political developments in the country — some state organs being re-capacitated with competent and honest people, and even parliament seemingly to have found some sense of responsibility in their activities fighting fraud and corruption — are really great developments. The reason for optimism and a renewal of hope is thus clear — the values and ethos of the rainbow nation are still alive and well.

Maar, gegewe die vlak en omvang van die gruwelike vergrype wat feitlik daagliks aan die lig kom (ook in die privaat sektor), is dit duidelik dat dit gaan tyd neem om dit wat ons as 'n land verloor het, te herwin en te herbou. Nie net die fisiese kapasiteit en finansiële dimensies nie, maar ook op 'n persoonlike- en gemeenskapsvlak. Dit gaan tyd vat om die Mandela-era se "vibe" en verhoudinge tussen Suid-Afrikaners te hervestig — soos met die 1995 Wêreldbeker-rugbytoernooi en die 2010 Fifa-wêreldbeker-sokkertoernooi. Wat 'n wonderlike tyd... maar ook stof tot realisme.

We are not out of the woods yet, and no magic bullet will correct wrongs overnight. Although it is a heartening start having new brooms sweep the corridors of power and commerce, we have only started this new journey toward the South Africa we dream about. We still have a long way to go.

In this regard, our industry service structures (and the industry at large), can and will play a meaningful role in the implementation of the strategic goals we developed last year. I am optimistic that 2018 will be a year of action in all spheres of our lives, but don't expect miracles overnight.

Optimisties, maar inderdaad ook realisites. Hef aan lê (weereens!) voor.

And hopefully in the end, there will be MAGIC!

Anton Rabe

Reading the morning newspaper is the realist's morning prayer. George WH Hegel

I don't want realism, I want magic! Tennessee Williams, from *A Streetcar Named Desire*



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