

HORTGRO NEWS

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HEIN PUNT: THE ADVANTAGES OF PRODUCING APPLES IN SUMMER RAINFALL AREAS

In the early 1990s, Kobus van der Merwe of Drakensberg-Koöperasie convinced a handful of Eastern Free State farmers to invest in apple production. With arable land and water readily available they did, and although the Free State still today only produces 2% of the country's apples (in comparison to the Langkloof's 20%), they have a serious advantage over the bigger, more traditional apple areas...Read **Hein Punt's** story [here](#).



THE ORIGIN OF MANY PRIME APPLE TREES

The Free State apple pioneers of the '90s had to get all their young trees from far-away nurseries. **Chris Berend** heard opportunity knock. At the time, he only thought of supplying trees for a new generation of local apple farmers, but he was about to start a revolution. Read the story of **Caledon Valley Nursery** [here](#).



SEND SICK PLANTS TO SPECIALISTS

We are all familiar with specialists in human medicine — everything from neurologists to urologists. But did you know of the specialists that offer diagnostics for your sick plants? Meet the team from the **Plant Disease Clinic** [here](#).

From left to right: Doré de Villiers, Lonette Smit, Sonja Coertze, Brenda de Wee.



C-19: SECONDARY MENTAL HEALTH PANDEMIC

"We are all in the same storm, but not in the same boat. And we have to be aware that everyone's boat is different and changing all the time." Mental health workers across the globe warn about a secondary pandemic parallel to the Covid pandemic, namely a mental health pandemic. Read story [here](#).

Also read: [ROLE OF BUSINESS IN DRIVING VACCINATIONS AND VACCINE CONFIDENCE](#)



HORTGRO SCIENCE STUDENT: BUHLE NGIDI

'Agri sciences' was only her third choice, but the day Buhle joined a student group's farm visit, was the day she knew what she wanted to do for the rest of her life.

Read more [here](#).



PROKON EN PLAASLIKE MARKINSPEKSIEFOOIE

Teenstrydige interpretasies van die regsgeldigheid oor die terugbetaling van marksinspeksiefooie vir gelewerde dienste deur Prokon (appèlhof uitspraak, 14 Julie 2021) skep tans verwarring. Vind Hortgro se standpunt [hier](#).



EUROPEAN POME FRUIT CROP FORECAST

The World Apple and Pear Association (WAPA) released the 2021 European apple and pear crop estimate. Overall, this year's crop is estimated to be only 1% higher than the 3-year average. Find report [here](#).

BEDRYF GROET PIET STASSEN EN TIPPIE MALGAS

Die sagtevrugtebedryf het in Augustus twee besondere individue verloor. **Dr. Piet Stassen** (foto links) het diep spore getrap as onderstamkenner en navorser. Stassen het twee doktorsgrade in landbou verwerf en het meer as 150 navorsingsartikels die lig laat sien. **Mnr. Tippië Malgas** van SAPO Trust was jarelank verantwoordelik vir onderhoud van die navorsingstonnels. Oom Tippië was veral geliefd en beroemd vir sy demonstrasies oor hoe om 'n boom te ent. Hortgro wens hulle onderskeie families, kollegas en vriende sterkte toe.



AGRI'S GOT TALENT: TOP TEN ANNOUNCED

Meet the 2021 Top Ten finalists that were recently announced [here](#).

The final will be live-streamed via Facebook on 1 October 2021. Prior to this, the ten finalists will come together for intensive voice & stage training and attend life skills, finance management, and marketing workshops. Visit the [AGT website](#) and join the AGT community on Facebook for all the action.



Pictured here is finalist **Simone Abrahams** from **Dutoit Agri Eastern Cape, Koukamma Fruit Packers, Joubertina.**



FRESH QUARTERLY #14 Sept 2021

- All about carbon
- Soil health
- Diversity and cover crops
- Plant-parasitic nematodes
- Organics?

Download your free copy [here](#).

WEBINAR: Dried Tree Fruit and Canning Producer Information Day

Download the presentations [here](#).

Find the zoom video [here](#).

→ INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

D6/Hortgro24 Information app.

[Stone fruit app](#).

E-mail thomas@hortgro.co.za for more information.

→ HORTGRO PUBLICATIONS

[Key Deciduous Fruit Statistics](#)

Hortgro Stone: [Timely Hints/Tydige Wenke: September 2021](#)

Fresh Quarterly: [Issue 14](#)

Transformation Times: [August Issue](#)

→ HORTGRO YOUTUBE KANAAL

Vind ons videobiblioteek vol bedryfsinligting [hier](#).

PLUS: 36 Boordopleiding video's nou beskikbaar in [AFRIKAANS](#), [XHOSA](#) en [ENGELS](#)

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Mental Health

Some time ago, Hortgro facilitated interventions in some of our production regions during the height of the recent drought. The response and reaction to those sessions and support were heart-warming and great to experience. Individuals, families, and communities were revitalised in the knowledge that they were not alone. That there were people with even bigger challenges. That there were people that cared and that they could get help to cope with unprecedented times.

In recent weeks we have seen a number of articles in the media on the anxiety and real danger to our mental health associated with the prolonged disruptions of Covid-19 in all spheres of our lives. In this newsletter, there is also an article by Elise-Marie Steenkamp after she participated in a webinar on this topic. A must read and I encourage all our stakeholders to do so.

Within our Hortgro staff we have had two very tough months with employees contracting Covid, some very seriously, but thankfully no fatalities. Also, our families and friends suffered badly. Sadly, some of us have lost grandparents, parents, siblings and other family members, and of course friends. Covid has become very close and personal for our Hortgro family with the resultant anxieties and stresses associated with the experiences.

We somehow dodged the bullet in the 1st and 2nd waves with very few positive cases. But this 3rd wave driven by the Delta variant was devastating. We still don't see a real decline to lower daily infection figures (which remain high with a prolonged tail) even whilst talks of a 4th wave are starting. This, linked to the ongoing uncertainties, false news, and conspiracy theories associated with vaccines is certainly enough to drive people nuts and feel vulnerable and uncertain.

I am not going to venture into the "vaccination debate", merely to state that my family and I, had ourselves vaccinated. So too, my mother, all my brothers and sister, and their families, and many of our friends. Also, all of Hortgro's senior management and most of our industry leaders. None of us were forced. We did so voluntarily and enthusiastically because it makes sense.

The science is clear – extremely high benefits for the collective versus extremely low risk for the individual. AND, having been vaccinated, reduces some of the life and death concerns with much less risk of ending up in ICU. Clear evidence that the vaccines work.

Back to mental health - the proverbial bottom-line is that we live in unprecedented times. None of us are alone in this. If any of us need help, we can get help in order to cope better and deal with anxiety.

You, me – none of us - have to battle with this in isolation. It is nothing to be ashamed of or feel guilty about. It just IS! Don't hide your fears and anxiety. Share, ask, and get help.

Until next time.

Anton

Nothing is permanent in this wicked world – not even our troubles. - Charlie Chaplin

Go easy on yourself. Whatever you do today, let it be enough. - Anon.

Worrying doesn't empty tomorrow of its sorrows; It empties today of its strengths. - Corrie ten Boom



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