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Ross



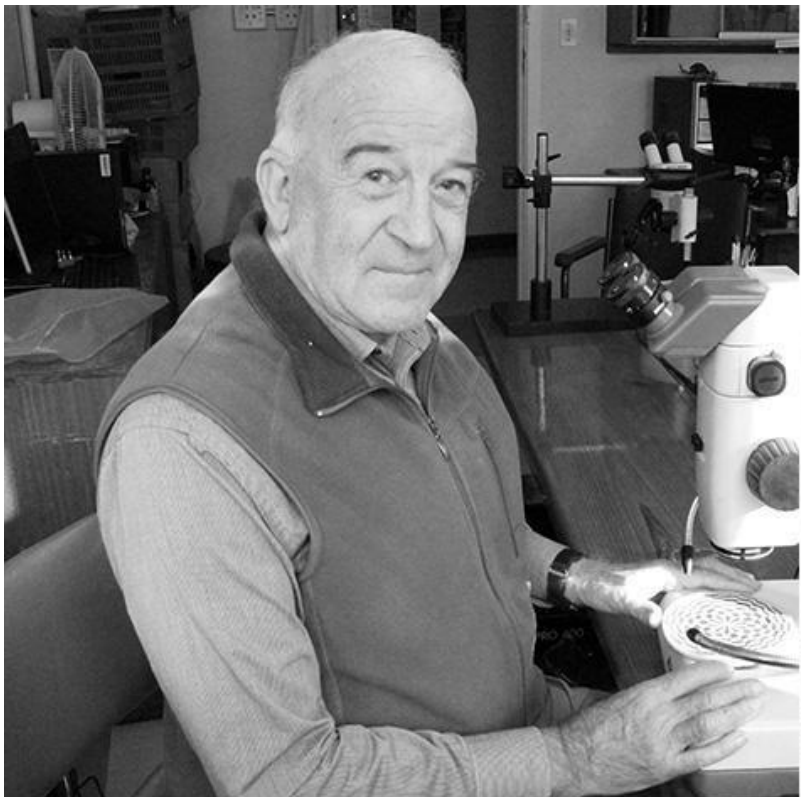
Marno



Dibesho

Young guns growing fruit IQ

Meet the last three young leaders in our series focussing on the first cohort of the Hortgro Young Leaders Programme. [Dibesho Serage](#), [Marno van der Westhuizen](#) and [Ross Heyns](#) shared their agricultural journeys.



Industry stalwarts pass away | Dr Ken Pringle | Prof. Eckart Kassier

January 2025 started on a sombre note with the passing of two industry legends: trailblazing entomologist Dr

Ken Pringle and Prof. Eckart Kassier, architect of the deregulation of South African agriculture. We pay tribute to Dr Pringle [here](#) and Prof. Kassier [here](#).



Apple exports end on a high note

The 2024 apple export season ended at a high of 48.6 million equivalent cartons (12.5kg); an increase of 12% compared to the 2023 season. The initial estimate for the 2025 export season indicates a 5% increase in the 2024 volumes. Read the press release [here](#).



Perishable products export regulations

PPECB released a framework for regulating the export of perishable products in South Africa under the Perishable Products Export Control Act. It establishes standards and procedures to ensure the safety, hygiene, and quality of perishable goods during export, focusing on compliance with international trade requirements. Read more about the regulations [here](#).



Best practice guidelines for summer pears

Summer pears” are grouped for their specific characteristics of high respiration rates, sensitivity to breaks in the cold chain and consumer preference for sweet, soft and juicy products. Our experts compiled this guideline. Download your free copy [here](#).



Protect your fruit against summer heat

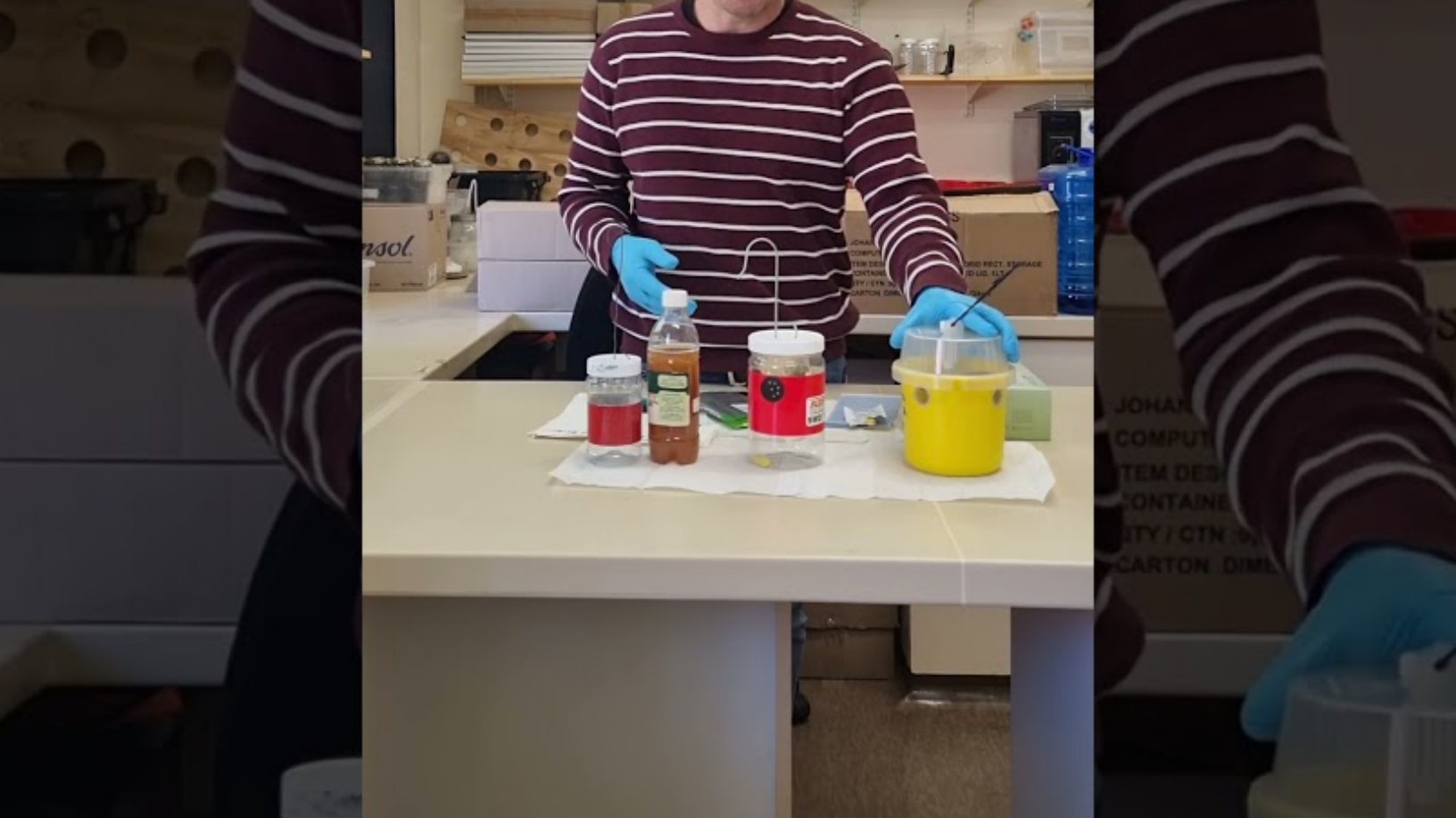
The primary fruit quality aspects to be managed during heat waves are sunburn, internal heat damage, gel breakdown, over-ripeness and shrivelling. Download [Fresh Notes 211](#).



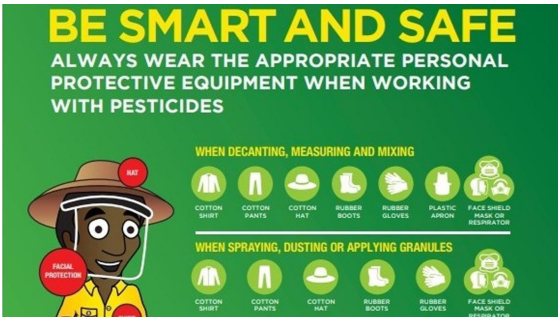
Attract and surveil | PSHB and SWD

Hortgro’s entomology experts have curated a guide about two invasive pests terrorising our producers: polyphagous shot hole borer (PSHB) and spotted wing drosophila (SWD). In this package are nifty maps indicating trap locations and positive catches. Find the info [here](#).





WATCH: Here's an SWD playlist with informative videos about homemade and commercial traps and other interesting facts about monitoring. Find it [here](#).



Restricted use of agricultural remedies

CropLife’s guide on what restricted use of agricultural remedies means for farm owners and agricultural workers. Read more [here](#).



SIZA and appelando join forces to manage supply chain grievances

We are pleased to announce that The Sustainability Initiative of South Africa (SIZA) has entered into a new partnership agreement with appellando to strengthen the protection of human rights and the environment across global supply chains. Read more [here](#).



Fruit SA Annual Report | 10 Year Anniversary

Fruit SA, the umbrella organisation for SA fresh produce, plays a pivotal role in promoting the industry to international markets. Ably led by **Fhumulani Ratshitanga (pictured here)** the 2023/24 annual review marks the organisation's 10th anniversary and highlights key achievements in the sector. Read more [here](#).

Upcoming Events

- Hortgro Footprint Webinar | Green Financing Part 2, **12 February 2025**. To join, contact Lindy for the zoom link | [Lindy Sigonyela](#).
 - SAVE THE DATE: Hortgro Science Research Showcase, Lord Charles Hotel, Somerset West (3 and 4 June 2025)
 - SAVE THE DATE: Hortgro Post-harvest Symposium, Lord Charles Hotel, Somerset West (5 June 2025)
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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Global (and local!) risks

I believe the latter half of 2024 brought new hope with the formation of the GNU and the active entry of the private sector partnering government in key national challenges such as energy, logistics, safety and security. We already experienced the early results of this approach.

No doubt the challenges will not be less during 2025, and not only from the political opportunists and shady characters in our public discourse with no interest other than to enrich themselves at the expense of us all. Despite the current noise on various policy matters and legislative issues, I remain quietly hopeful that the GNU will remain intact for long enough to make a meaningful and tangible difference in our lives. The proverbial bottom line is that the main parties in the GNU just cannot let it fail given the alternative which is just “too ghastly to contemplate”.

Another sobering reality flows from the most recent Global Risk Report which summarises the top global risks over the short term (2 years) and long term (10 years). It is an eye-opener that 5 of the top 10 risks in 10 years are environmentally related. The top 4 risks are environmentally related, including: *Extreme weather events*; *Biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse*; *Critical change in earth systems*; and *Natural resources* – in that order. The 5th environmental risk is *Pollution*, currently in 6th place but over the 10-year term in 10th place.

The highest current risk is *misinformation and disinformation*. I suppose one can add the risks of AI misuse of social media, and political opportunism into this mix. Not to even mention the rise of social media tycoons and their impact on the various platforms, the recent developments in international politics, relations and human rights. This, linked to the huge impact of *Trumpism* on global trade with a move away from free trade towards renewed tariff protectionism, and Trump's total rejection of environmental realities with a backwards move towards fossil fuels, the context of and impact on our daily lives on basic "bread and butter" matters will certainly remain complex, volatile and interesting.

Given these realities, I am comforted by the fact that Hortgro is focussing on the "right" issues to ensure an enabling business environment for our members with our 10 industry programmes. This is not only true relating to R&D and technical issues, as well as our Trade, Market Access and Business Intelligence, and Transformation focus, but also addressing the environmental risks.

It is highly doubtful that we will be able to completely mitigate all risks and tick all the boxes, but we should be able to soften the impact by doing the right things as a strong and cohesive collective. Hopefully, our proactive approach will mitigate some risks and reduce direct losses and damage to key production, packing/cold storage and processing infrastructure.

In a certain sense, we are on our own and we need to look after ourselves. Producers and other stakeholders in our value chain, must therefore get involved and empower themselves with knowledge of the risk space elaborated on above. Every one of us has some role to play and to accept responsibility in our communities for the future of generations to come.

Until next time.

Anton

The best way to get a project done faster is to start sooner - Jim Highsmith

It doesn't matter how good you are today; If you are not better next month, you're no longer agile – Mike Cohn

- **Timely Hints**
 - [February/ Februarie 2025](#)
 - **Fresh Notes**
 - [214 Presence of spotted wing Drosophila & 215 MRL Notification](#)
 - **Hortgro News**
 - [All previous issues](#)
 - **Fruit South Africa** [Transformation Summary](#)
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