



GOEIE BUURMANSKAP IN 'n KLEIN WÊRELD

Die impak van die oorlog in die Midde-Ooste bring verskeie onsekerhede vir Suid-Afrikaanse vrugteprodusente wat dit ten spyte, steeds op volhoubare en etiese produksiepraktyke moet fokus. Die Suid-Afrikaanse vrugtebedryf word al sedert 1910 gereguleer. Vanaf die aanvanklike fokus op kwaliteit was die volgende regulatoriese stap die afdek van twee risiko's wat direk met die vrugte verband hou: chemiese residu's en fitosanitêre plae. Biosekuriteitsrisiko's is deel van internasionale handel. Lees meer oor die uitdagings van hedendaagse vrugteproduksie.

[Lees hier vir meer inligting>>](#)

THE WAR IN IRAN: A WORLD RESHAPED, AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Three weeks into the war in Iran, the world is grappling with a conflict that is far more complex — and potentially far more enduring — than most anticipated. Speaking at the Hortforum meeting in March 2026, political economist and self-described "corporate sangoma" **Ronak Gopaldas** offered a sobering analysis of the war's dimensions, its key

actors, and its real-world consequences for economies far beyond the Middle East, including South Africa.

[Read it here.](#)



KOOLSTOFBOEKHOUDING

Finansiële rekords is onontbeerlik vir alle besighede. Akkurate en geloofwaardige syfers vir inkomstes en uitgawes is nodig vir belastingopgawes en om ander regulatoriese vereistes na te kom. Maar hierdie syfers is ook die grondslag vir bestuursbesluite.

Op dieselfde manier is koolstofboekhouding vinnig besig om noodsaaklik vir besighede se volhoubaarheid te word.

[Read here >>](#)

STILLE KRISIS: VERGIFTIGING VAN BYE EN DIE PAD VORENTOE

Die toenemende vergiftiging van bye in Suid-Afrika, veral in die Wes-Kaap, het die afgelope paar jaar 'n ernstige krisis geword wat nie net byeboere raak nie, maar ook die hele landboubedryf bedreig. CropLife SA se **dr. Gerhard Verdoorn** werk tans aan 'n nuwe beleidsraamwerk en standaardbedryfsprosedure (SOP) om byeboere beter te beskerm.

[Read here >>](#)



NO SPRAYING IN ORCHARDS WHILE BEES ARE ACTIVE

PROTECT AGRICULTURE BY PROTECTING OUR POLLINATORS



FRUIT LOGISTICA 2026: SUSTAINABILITY IS NOT JUST A BUZZWORD

Despite experiencing Berlin's coldest winter on record, it was heartening to see sustainability at the centre of the event. South Africa's Blue North featured their Confronting Climate Change and the Carbon Heroes programmes. **Nitasha Baijnath-Pillay** reflects on the event, natural resource management and the way forward.

[Read here >>](#)

CERES FRUIT GROWERS NAMED BRCGS CERTIFIED SITE OF THE YEAR 2026

BRCGS certification is regarded worldwide as a benchmark for product safety, legality, authenticity, and quality. Being named Certificated Site of the Year signifies consistent excellence in maintaining these standards, demonstrating a deeply embedded food safety culture, and using certification to strengthen operations.

[Read here >>](#)



GIVE YOUR CREATIVITY WINGS AND SNAP OUR INDUSTRY

If you can capture the essence of our deciduous fruit industry, especially pome and stone fruit, we'd love to hear from you! Grab your camera or phone and showcase your unique perspective. Whether it's shots of the fruit itself, the orchards, the trees, or the people working with them—picking, pruning, packing, selling, eating, cooking, preserving, drying, or decorating... as long as it features locally produced peaches, pears, apples, nectarines, apricots, plums, prunes, cherries, or dried pome and stone fruits. [Read here >>](#)

LOST IN TRANSFORMATION

In the (not so) new South Africa, the word “transformation” has become a buzzword, a politically correct term, and one often misused. However, when it comes to describing farmers who have become, are becoming, or will, in due time, be successful agricultural producers, in other words, those who have been or are being transformed, what is the right term to describe them?

[Read here >>](#)



WHAT IS THE DECIDUOUS FRUIT PRODUCTION SCHEME?

Transformation in agriculture is often described in terms of targets, timelines, and percentages. Yet on the ground, it is experienced very differently. For producers, workers, and value-chain partners, transformation is about whether a business can survive, grow, and meaningfully participate in the economy over time.

[Read here >>](#)

INTO THE FAST LANE WITH HORTGRO'S SKILLS ACCELERATOR PROJECT

The name Hortgro Skills Accelerator Project (HSAP) was created when Hortgro approached the Jobs Fund to collaborate and help previously disadvantaged farmers acquire farming business skills quickly and efficiently. Hortgro has been supporting new and emerging farmers for years on technical, economic, and institutional levels, but it was time to formalise the programme.

[Read here >>](#)





FRESH QUARTERLY | MARCH 2026 | SUCKING INSECTS

This issue focuses on sucking insects, a group that sometimes flies (or crawls) under the radar, even though some are considered important pests. Find out how to debug pome fruit and learn about the insect whisperers.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Upcoming events

HORTGRO footprint

Moderator:
Nitasha Baijnath-Pillay



Manager: Resource Management and sustainability (HORTGRO)

webinar: sustainable water use
in the pome and stone fruit industry

8 April
Wednesday
12:00 - 12:45

Jody Wentzel  Sub-Programme Manager: Disaster Risk Reduction Western Cape Department of Agriculture	Anton Reinecke  Managing Director Ceres Fruit Processors (Pty) Ltd	Steven Versfeld  Owner, Production Manager Achterhuis & Chairperson Titus River Water User Association
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Hortgro Technical Symposium
25 MONDAY - 29 FRIDAY May 2026

Business/Strategy & Technical Days
25, 26, 27 May (Lord Charles Hotel, Somerset West)

Pome Field Day
28 May (EGVV)

Stone Fruit Seminar & Orchard Walk
29 May (Simondium)

Growing Forward in a Changing World

HORTGRO
Growing Fruit IQ

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Hortgro Tegnesse Symposium \(25 - 29 Mei 2026\), Lord Charles, Somerset-Wes. Registrasies open binnekort!](#)

AGRI'S GOT TALENT

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1 March - 31 July

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AGT is a platform empowering agricultural workers in the fruit and wine industries to showcase their singing talents, develop skills, and make a lasting impact on their communities.



[Agri's Got Talent 2026](#)

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Operation Vulindlela

A lot has been said about private sector participation within various key service delivery spheres, which have been – and mostly still are – within a policy to be provided via public entities within a centralisation mind-set. Political rhetoric to centralise and control all such services in government is outdated and should be challenged as vociferously as we can, as private-sector involvement and participation in operational services are allowed in the White Paper and some Acts (e.g., the National Ports Act) and are encapsulated in Operation Vulindlela.

Vulindlela^[1] is a joint initiative between the Presidency and National Treasury and is designed to accelerate structural reforms and focus on tackling bottlenecks in crucial sectors such as energy, freight/logistics, water infrastructure and digital communications, as well as local government.

I won't go into the reasons for the failures, as Hortgro is an apolitical body and is commented on virtually daily in newspapers and on radio/TV. Vulindlela's aim is to drive higher economic growth and to reduce unemployment, targeting a 3,5% growth rate by 2029. It should be supported wholeheartedly and enthusiastically, as failed policies and outdated political rhetoric continue to fail us big time.

We have already seen that load shedding has disappeared from our lives, thanks to the dedicated focus on finding solutions in partnership with the private sector. There is still a way to go in implementing reforms to transmission and to more independent electricity generation, which are vital for investment and economic growth.

In my view, private sector involvement in logistics is overdue to improve rail and port efficiencies. We have seen a huge appetite from the private sector to invest in key rail corridors and at the Port of Durban, with the Pier 2 concession involving the Philippines-based International Container Terminal Services Incorporated (ICTSI). A 25-year, R11-billion investment agreement has been signed after a court challenge by a multinational shipping entity, which had its own interests in mind rather than those of RSA at large.

This agreement commenced on 1 January 2026 as a PSP, granting ICTSI a 49% stake in the venture. We are eagerly anticipating a huge improvement in productivity in the Durban port, which will have a positive knock-on effect on the other SA ports.

Thus far, however, we have run into a brick wall regarding a similar PSP arrangement at the port of Cape Town. I can see no reason why this should not be an option, as such an arrangement is available in legislation and is the very focus of Vulindlela.

As an industry with like-minded groupings within the policy and port-user value chain space, we will continue to challenge this. There is no other alternative but to turn dysfunctional into functional and it is long overdue.

We just cannot afford another 5 years of failures and empty promises, which led to the horrific 2025/26 export season we are experiencing. The scale of direct and indirect losses in the industry is devastating to our farming community and risks jobs and rural livelihoods. We need to urgently re-establish investor confidence throughout the value chain and in trade.

Until next time.

Anton

If you do not change direction, you might end up where you are heading - Lao Tzu

Change always seems impossible until it's inevitable - Sarah McBride

[1] A copy of the Hortgro presentation on Vulindlela is available on request

→ HORTGRO UPCOMING EVENTS

- [Hortgro Tegiese Simposium met Kern- en Steenvrug-Velddae, 25 - 29 Mei 2026](#)

→ HORTGRO PUBLICATIONS

Timely Hints

- [April 2026](#)
- [March 2026](#)
- [February 2026](#)

Fresh Notes

- [230 | feedback of a Packhouse Action Group \(PAG\) meeting held in March 2026](#)
- [229 | Critical water shortages Irrigation Guidelines for Deciduous Fruit Trees](#)
- [228 | Restrictions on the Use of Plant Protection Products on Deciduous fruit for 2025/26](#)
- [227 | Feedback of a Packhouse Action Group \(PAG\) meeting held in November 2025](#)
- [226 | Restrictions on PPP \(October 2025\)](#)

Hortgro News

- [All previous issues](#)

Fruit South Africa

- [Transformation Summary](#)

Fresh Quarterly

- [March 2026 Issue 32](#)
- [December Issue 31](#)
- [September Issue 30](#)

New Roots

- [New-Roots Volume 11 March 2026](#)

→ HORTGRO SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER PLATFORMS

- **Hortgro Science Research Library.** Find it [here](#).
- **Hortgro Science Climate Change App.** Find it [here](#).
- **Post-harvest Website.** Find it [here](#).
- **Phyto Application.** Find it [here](#).
- **PSHB.** Find it [here](#).
- **Fresh Quarterly.** Find it [here](#).

→ INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

- All of Hortgro's online platforms in one place, [click here](#)
- E-mail info@hortgro.co.za for more information

→ HORTGRO YOUTUBE

- Vind ons videobiblioteek vol bedryfsinligting [hier](#).
- PLUS: 36 Boordopleiding video's nou beskikbaar in [AFRIKAANS](#), [XHOSA](#) en [ENGELS](#)



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