



Boomsensus: Die Ruggraat van die Sagtevrugtebedryf

Elke jaar, wanneer produsente 'n versoek van Hortgro ontvang om hul inligting vir die boomsensus te deel, is daar dié wat mor. Min besef egter hoe krities hierdie inligting werklik vir die ekonomiese voortbestaan van die bedryf is. **Mariette Kotzé**, algemene bestuurder van bedryfsondersteunende dienste by Hortgro, vertel dat inligtingsopnames reeds sedert 2000 bestaan — lank voor die eerste statutêre maatreëls in 2002 in werking getree het. “Die bedryf en produsente het destyds reeds besef dat 'n bedryf nie in 'n gedereguleerde omgewing kan funksioneer sonder 'n behoorlike inligtingstelsel nie.”

Onderskrif: Die Hortgro boomsensus-span van links is Anelma Grobler, Jan-Hendrik Nelson, Vionne van Greunen, Mariette Kotzé en Pieter-Steyn de Wet

[Lees hier>>](#)



Launchpad Lifts Off: Growing the Next Generation of Leaders for SA's Deciduous Fruit Industry

Earlier this month, a new cohort of young professionals from across South Africa's deciduous fruit industry gathered at Bernheim, outside Paarl, for the launch of the 2026 Hortgro Launchpad Programme.

[Read here>>](#)



Risk without Reward

Plant improvement is to orchard establishment what eating broccoli is to your health: boring but effective. But many growers probably don't incorporate enough of either. Whereas we don't have data on growers' diets, we do know that most deciduous-fruit orchards are established with uncertified trees.

[Read here>>](#)



All about stone fruit rootstocks

Rootstocks can make or break a commercial orchard, according to Chad van Wyk, a stone-fruit rootstock evaluator at Provar. "We have seen from trials that the rootstock can change tree vigour by 62% and fruit size by 32%, depending on the scion cultivar," he said. "The rootstock can have a yield impact of 98%, essentially doubling the cumulative yield."

[Read here>>](#)



Hortgro Technical Symposium podcasts

Media platform, Lucentlands, recently attended the Hortgro Technical Symposium. They spoke to Dr Wiehann Steyn about how Hortgro Science chooses research that matters. Watch the interview with Wiehann here.

[Watch here>>](#)



HORTGRO SPONSORS YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AT SU

18 schools. Six provinces. One urgent question: how do we feed the future?

The inaugural South Africa Youth Institute at Stellenbosch University, in partnership with the World Food Prize Foundation, brought nearly 40 high school learners together to confront global food security.

They researched real-world challenges, wrote academic papers, and presented to scientists, academics and industry leaders. They then moved into labs and orchards, exploring aquaponics, climate stress and food systems innovation. Hortgro was one of the proud sponsors of the event.





EU Plastics Webinar

Hortgro recently hosted a Footprint Webinar exploring the European Union's new Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulations (EU PPWR), which come into effect from 12 August 2026 and will be implemented in phases through to 2040.

[EU PPWR Compliance Template>>](#)

[Watch the Webinar here>>](#)



Invasive PSHB Running Amok

Polyphagous shot hole borer (PSHB) is causing distress everywhere. Read more about this pest [Here](#) and read the article [Here](#).



New Roots – July 2026

Explore the latest stories shaping South Africa's deciduous fruit industry, from leadership transitions and transformation to innovation, sustainability and technical excellence.

[Read here>>](#)

R200 000 Sponsorship from Electech for Footprint Award



Electech Power Solutions™
empowering technology

Hortgro is proud to welcome Electech Power Solutions (EPS) as the inaugural sponsor of the Hortgro Footprint Award, with a sponsorship valued at R200 000. As a leading provider of integrated

electrical, energy and technology solutions, EPS is committed to helping industries improve efficiency, reliability, and sustainability. Through its support of the Footprint Award, EPS demonstrates its commitment to sustainable agriculture and recognising the producers who are making a positive environmental impact in South Africa's deciduous fruit industry. The partnership reflects a shared vision of innovation, responsible resource management and building a more sustainable future for agriculture.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2026: HORTGRO Awards & Agri's Got Talent



Hortgro Awards 2026 | 11 September 2026



Prophyta Pome and Stone Fruit Industry Short Course.
[Click here for more.](#)



[Agri's Got Talent 2026](#)

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Anton Rabe on Transformation and Economic Development

The word transformation means different things to different people. There are many opportunists out there to coin as much as they can, often at the cost of others. It is not so easily definable, but to me transformation must bring meaningful, impactful and economically sustainable change in people's lives. If not it is just window dressing and fronting. For me it's about change and adaptation, also on a personal level and it is critical that it must be sustainable to be meaningful.

Transformation should happen within a value chain context that contains economic development and ownership (BEE) as well as training and the development of skills. In fact, everybody does not necessarily want to farm as such, but everyone wants a decent job and place to live. In 1999, two years after the deregulation of the Deciduous Fruit Board Peter Dall (then the chairperson of the DFPT) and I formulated a "Declaration of Intent" to give the deciduous fruit industry's commitment some direction and focus. It basically provided the roadmap of how we foresaw the route towards transforming the value chain.

The first projects within the policy of Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) of the early days was nothing other than a rent-a-crowd exercise to pool money, mostly grouped in trusts and used to buy bankrupt farms, giving the owners a handy exit and retirement. Another big challenge is the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS) farms where the government buys land for redistribution but remains the owner, getting a long-term

tenant (up to 30 years) to farm the land. Those tenants cannot use the land as surety for improvements.

I therefore have comprehension for the fact that there are still parties out there sceptical about the broader agricultural industry's intentions regarding transformation and economic development in general. However, over the past 25 years Hortgro made a significant and successful contribution towards the image of the industry. In a certain sense it is therefore unfair that the faults and perceptions regarding empowerment of other people and institutions still drive the narrative. We attempted to lay a good foundation by developing a detailed strategic framework which included the Boompie project.

The initial aim was to establish 1 000 hectares with new-era producers. Today this project still forms the basis of our economical development programme and after additional Jobs Fund projects we've gone past 1 500 hectares as well as making big investments in other production infrastructure like dams, pipelines, pack houses, cold rooms and equipment such as trucks, pick-ups, tractors and more were financed and donated to emerging producers.

The booklet, ***Deciduous Fruit Industry Changing Times*** was produced in 2021 and here is an excerpt from the Foreword that I wrote: *As an industry, we have built a proud and proven record of pro-active actions in the transformation and economic development arena since the inception of the programme. These interventions are by no means perfect, but we have a high percentage of success – 90%+ over the last 20+ years – which are both meaningful and impactful. Apart from the human capital development and social impact on worker and community level, the value of the land reform projects over the life span of the orchards established since 2009, is more than R16 billion.*

We need to build on this base by growing ownership and participation both at primary level and throughout the value chain.

Financing remains a big challenge. In my opinion, the era of so-called grants is over. We must build on the success of Hortfin who, arguably, put the first blended finance model on the table. Access to more funds like this is a high priority. There is still a long way to go, but we've had a good start. There are no quick fixes or silver bullets. Economic development must stretch over generations.

May the road ahead be even better than the road already travelled.

Until next time,
Anton

→ HORTGRO PUBLICATIONS

Timely Hints

- [August 2026](#)
- [July 2026](#)
- [June 2026](#)
- [February 2026](#)

Fresh Notes

- [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](#)

Hortgro News

- [All previous issues](#)

Fruit South Africa

- [Transformation Summary](#).

Fresh Quarterly

- [June 2026 Issue 33](#)
- [March 2026 Issue 32](#)
- [December 2025 Issue 31](#)
- [September 2025 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](#).

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- 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](#)



EDITORIAL TEAM

Elise-Marie Steenkamp - elise-marie@hortgro.co.za

Sylvester Moatshe - sylvester@hortgro.co.za

Alisa Farr - alisa@hortgro.co.za

CONTACT US

021 870 2900

www.hortgro.co.za

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Hortgro
258 Main St, Buitenverwagting

Paarl Western Cape 7646
South Africa

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