



THE independent evaluation of new cultivars and rootstocks for the South African deciduous fruit industry is critically important to minimize risks for producers and ensure a 'healthy and competitive' industry.

Recognising the need for an independent evaluation process at 'arms-length' of other organized industry groupings (thereby ensuring complete independence and facilitating buy-in of potential clients), **Provar**, was established in 2013 as a 100% independent evaluation unit. Industry organizations SAAPPA, SASPA, CFPA and DFTS have engaged in supporting **Provar** to act as the cultivar and rootstock evaluation service provider to the industry. (Previously this independent evaluation unit was envisioned to be known as Evaluco.)

Private IP owners (including breeders of cultivars, cultivar managers, license holders, exporters and/or associated stakeholders) are positive and optimistic about an institution like **Provar** - where their selections, cultivars and rootstocks can now be independently evaluated. Industry will contribute and facilitate the initial phasing in of cultivar and rootstock evaluation at **Provar** over a three-year period while clients will be serviced on a voluntary 'user pay' basis.

With planting costs estimated at roughly R300-400 k/ha, growers need to know that they will get *bang for their buck*. Therefore, **Provar** has as driving goal the provision of a service to the deciduous fruit industry of South Africa that will be:

- Objective,
- credible,
- independent,
- transparent and
- standardized information.

Information on cultivars and rootstocks is based on rigorous data collection and assessment from representative evaluation sites in industry or plots where IP owners planted their cultivars. Data collection will be based on sound scientific principles and evaluation protocols that were approved by specialists and on international best practice systems adapted for local conditions. Such information will validate the potential of the new cultivar and/or rootstocks in relation to the standard planted commercial cultivars and rootstocks.

Independent evaluation, for all cultivars marketed to producers, should be strived for and it is envisioned that all new cultivars and rootstocks will go through this evaluation process prior to release. This will enable and empower producers to ask the “right questions” of cultivar owners and license holders relating to claims on the attributes of such cultivars and will prevent expensive mistakes and thereby reduce the risk that growers face when planting new cultivars and rootstocks. “Our service to clients and to the South African fruit industry at large will be built on integrity, open and credible relationships and on pure, clear-cut data that will be collected through a distinguished association with each genotype under evaluation” says Dr Iwan Labuschagne, **Provar** Manager.

The client and producer will be empowered to make informed planting decisions based on the data and thereby provide the ability to minimize risk and maintain solid growth in new cultivar development.

Provar will operate from an office and laboratory with cold storage facilities situated in Zandwyk Park (off the R101) outside Paarl and is currently busy strengthening its services and capacity in anticipation of an expanded business in the new season.

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Customer Value Proposition by Provar (5 offerings)	For whom (the beneficiaries)	
	Producers / Producer Groups ("A")	IP Owners, Breeders & Exporters ("B")
Independence	No conflict of interest with any other industry body or player and no direct association with breeding and own cultivars	No conflict of interest with any other industry body or player and no direct association with breeding and own cultivars
Best in Class Evaluation Methodologies (international evaluation protocol)	Complete and independently verified decision making information to reduce /avoid planting risks of new Products (cultivars)	Improved reliability in the Quality of services/data/information being supplied to clients
Competitive Pricing / Cost Effective	Increased choice of properly (independantly) evaluated site specific cultivars to reduce costly planting mistakes	Reduction in Overheads, i.e. the improved ability to scale down internal evaluation cost centers, with enhanced credibility of information to producers
Guarantees / Stamp of approval	Peace of mind, i.e. that the proposed cultivars will most probably deliver the required financial return	Improved Customer Value Proposition (per evaluated cultivar) that provide / offer the opportunity to: i) increase per cultivar prices (for licences or royalties), and ii) increase the units of a specific cultivar sold
Risk Mitigation	Peace of mind, i.e. that the proposed cultivar will most probably deliver the required financial return	Improved Reputability & Credibility in new cultivars, i.e. better ability to sell the newly developed cultivars to Group A