HORTGRO
Growing Fruit IQ

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## No Listeria on South African apples

A false report is currently in circulation about Listeria linked to South African apples. The deciduous fruit industry body, Hortgro, said in a statement that according to their knowledge no Listeria has ever been found on fresh South African apples. "The report is false and irresponsible," said Anton Rabe, Hortgro's Executive Director.

"A report is currently being circulated on certain WhatsApp groups which refer to an incident dating back to 2015 in California in the USA when Listeria was found on caramelised apples. To link this to the current situation and in any manner or form with the fruit industry as such is misleading and sensation-seeking."

The fruit industry subscribes to the highest international food safety standards. All South African pack houses are accredited and follow strict guidelines. Without these protocols and auditing systems, the export of fruit to discerning international markets would not be possible. Fruits from the same orchards are available for local market consumption.

As an industry, we take note and are concerned about the Listeria outbreak in South Africa, said Rabe. "However, there is no direct link between the outbreak and our industry. Hortgro will continue to monitor the situation and engage with health professionals when and where required." For over a hundred years SA has had an excellent reputation as a credible and reliable source of excellent quality and safe fresh fruit.

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## Geen Listeria op SA appels

'n Vals berig oor die voorkoms van Listeria op Suid-Afrikaanse appels doen tans die rondte op sosiale media groepe, ondermeer op WhatsApp. Volgens HORTGRO, die Suid-Afrikaanse sagtevrugtebedryforganisasie, is daar nog nooit Listeria op Suid-Afrikaanse vars appels gevind nie. "Die berig is vals en onverantwoordelik," sê Anton Rabe, Hortgro se Uitvoerende Direkteur.

"Die berig wat op WhatsApp versprei word verwys na 'n voorval in 2015 in die VSA toe Listeria op gekarameliseerde appels in Kalifornië gevind is. Om dié voorval met die vrugtebedryf in enige hoedanigheid te verbind is misleidend en sensasiesoekend."

Directors: NDV Dicey (Chairman) - JM Mashaba - B Njobe - A Rabe (Executive Director) - AJ Smit
Co-opted: P Sekhoto

Hortgro ondersteun die hoogste internasionale voedselveiligheidstandaarde. Die bedryf verwag dat alle Suid-Afrikaanse pakhuise geakkrediteer moet wees en streng hanteringsriglyne moet volg. Sonder hierdie protokolle en ouditstelsels sou die uitvoer van vrugte onmoontlik wees. Vrugte van dieselfde boorde word op die plaaslike en internasionale markte verkoop.

Die sagtevrugtebedryf neem kennis van en is bekommerd oor die Listeria-uitbreking in Suid-Afrika. “Daar is tans geen direkte verband tussen die Listeria-uitbreking en ons bedryf nie. Hortgro sal voortgaan om die situasie fyn dop te hou en indien nodig met die betrokke gesondheidsowerhede saamwerk,” sê Rabe. Suid-Afrika het al vir meer as ’n honderd jaar ’n uitstekende reputasie as ’n geloofwaardige en betroubare bron van veilige, vars vrugte van uitstekende kwaliteit.