

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (26/21)

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“It is easy to break down and destroy. The heroes are those who make peace and build” Nelson Mandela

IMPACT OF CIVIL UNREST ON CITRUS INDUSTRY AND RECOVERY PLAN

This is indeed a dark period in the history of our beloved South Africa. This newsletter will not go into the grim details or make assessments of the situation – it will concentrate on what we are doing, what we need to do to ensure we salvage as much of the 2021 season as possible.

What we are doing: Every morning at 10h00 we have a meeting with all role players in the industry to understand what the situation on the ground actually is – we have had two such meetings (yesterday and today). On those meetings (Chaired by Mitchell Brooke) we have received input from Transnet, cold stores, container depots, transport carriers, shipping lines, PPECB, DALRRD, growers and other role-players. The situation in KZN is both fluid (things change quickly) and volatile (there is still a lot of tension in the province). Meetings will continue over the weekend and into next week, until the situation is normalised.

The results from the meetings are summarised in a Situation Report and circulated as widely as possible. The best way to get the situation report hot off the press is to monitor the CGA website www.cga.co.za – the CGA Comms Tool takes some time to deliver the report and hence could be outdated. PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE

What we need to be doing: Recent reports indicate that the N3 is now open and that some port operations have started up, under strict safety conditions. However, caution is advised. There are reports that many growers / shippers / transporters have now despatched their vehicles to Durban. Please read the Situation Report – the situation in KZN has not normalised! We need to open up the citrus trade lanes sequentially: there is still fruit in the cold stores that needs to be cleared, there are many vessels outside Durban Port that still need to discharge and load. This is going to take time and all available resources to clear. Human lives are the priority and whilst we applaud the urgency with which all role players in the chain want to return to full productivity, no port terminal, cold store, container depot or harbour carrier is going to put their staff at risk. Let me be clear – the KZN security situation is not resolved.

Some advice to Growers: Firstly, we need to clear all fruit already being staged on trucks, as well as what is on the packhouse floor and in urgent need of going under cooling – but please don't add further pressure to an already severely compromised port precinct. It is essential that you make sure that your receiving facility in KZN has space to receive your vehicle on arrival. Otherwise you are going to move the problem from packhouse to port – your vehicle is far safer where it is now than in KZN (let me assure you). Secondly, where possible stop harvesting for a period (maybe a week); or at the very least slow down your packing tempo until the situation is normalised. We need to work as an industry in this regard – otherwise the port will be completely gridlocked and it will be our fault.

General: The impact of this unrest has many consequences, and many unseen at this point. We do know that a chemical depot was burnt to the ground – so please check with your supplier and ensure you have the necessary material to prepare the 2022 crop. There may be disruptions in the carton manufacturing side, please check with your supplier. We are working with DALRRD and PPECB to ascertain alternative ports for fruit from the north – in particular Maputo and Cape Town (although we need to be careful we do not transfer the problem to CT). There are also meetings with DALRRD regarding re-inspections to minimise disruptions while still complying with phytosanitary regulations. Please stay safe – this too will pass.

PACKED AND SHIPPED

End of Week 27 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed
SOURCE: PPECB/AgriHUB	2019	2020	2021	2020	2021	2021	2021	2020
Grapefruit (17kg)			13.3 m		11.2 m			
Grapefruit	14.3 m	12.9 m	15.1 m	11 m	12.7 m	18 m	17.4 m	15.5 m
Soft Citrus	10.4 m	13.4 m	21.9 m	11.1 m	12.8 m	30.5 m	29.7 m	23.6 m
Lemons	15 m	21.2 m	22.1 m	18.4 m	18.5 m	30.2 m	27.9 m	29.6 m
Navels	15.5 m	17.5 m	17.6 m	13.3 m	13.1 m	26.3 m	24.7 m	26.2 m
Valencia	5.7 m	8.2 m	9.3 m	3.9 m	5.6 m	58 m	56.4 m	55.1 m
Total	60.9 m	73.2 m	86 m	57.7 m	62.7 m	163 m	156.1 m	150 m

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