

FRESH NOTES

A TECHNICAL UPDATE PUBLISHED BY HORTGRO SCIENCE



Fresh Notes feedback of a Packhouse Action Group (PAG) meeting held in March 2026

Contact details are listed at the bottom of the Fresh Notes.

Hortgro Website (Packhouse Action Group and Pome/Stone Protocols):
Contact Elise-Marie Steenkamp

DOWNLOADS (22 October 2025 – 16 February 2026 both pages)

• CA Manual revised	2 798
• Johan Strydom – Container Checklist	1 494
• PAG Water Project Benchmark Result – Phase 5	1 399
• ‘Quo Vadis’ – Long-Term CA storage regimes of Cripps’ Pink apples and fruit quality	1 133
• Fresh Noted 194 – PAG Feedback (March 3)	1 025
• PAG Water Project phase 4	1 109
• Jaco Visagie – Trends in Container Technology and Supply	1 103

Update on Logistics Chain Efficiencies

Contact: Jacques du Preez

Fruit volumes of all fruit kinds increased by 18% to date. Corresponding volumes at Cape Town port had increased by 7%. A large volume of fruit had been diverted, at considerable cost (R38 000/container), to PE. Cape Town port operations were affected by record high winds and poor productivity.

Rubber Tyre Gantries (RTG’s) were not performing optimally in terms of gross container moves per hour (GCH). Ten RTG’s are expected shortly.

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The stone fruit industry had suffered major losses through out of spec fruit arriving in the markets. Legal opinion is being obtained for a possible claim against the Minister of Transport.

Weather delays (wind and fog)

	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
Nov	162	84	79	265	414
Dec	143	160	215	127	349
Jan	135	248	167	167	214
Feb	139	190	248	245	132
Mar	196	254	105	214	
Total	775	936	814	1018	1109

Packhouse ESG and Sustainability Workgroup

Contact: Nitasha Baithnath Pillay

- 1. ESG Packhouse WG** met in December 2025, where Blue North provided a detailed presentation on the Confronting Climate Change (CCC) project and the Carbon Calculator for the Fruit & Wine industry in SA. SIZA provided an update on the performance of P&S from the SiZA360 platform. There was a request for more information on Carbon Credit systems and how this works. This will be addressed in the next meeting, along with renewable and sustainable energy sources/options.
- 2. The Footprint Webinar On Sustainable Water Resource Management** has been moved from February to April.
- 3. EU PPWR (Paper and Packaging Waste Regulations)** – the EU has acknowledged that 3rd parties as well as EU members are concerned about:
 - a. Additional costs for reporting, testing and shift in packaging
 - b. Local supply and testing capabilities (substance of concern and recycled content)
 - c. Administrative burden and
 - d. Technical details and specifications that are still a work in progress.

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Packhouse Water and Energy Benchmarking Projects Contact: Hugo Kriel

The reports can be viewed at the following links:

<https://postharvest.hortgro.co.za/pag/2024-water-usage-report-phase-8/>

<https://postharvest.hortgro.co.za/pag/pag-energy-project-phase-5-report-final/>

Overall Packhouse Water Use Intensity

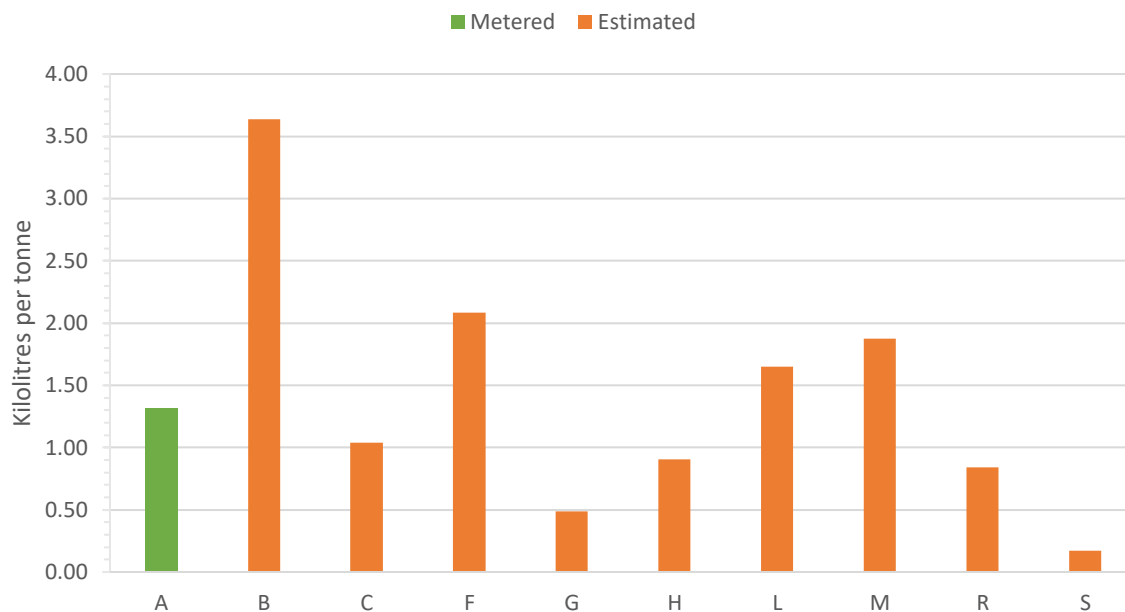


Figure 1: Total water use intensity results [Total litres per tonne packed] for phase 8's participants.



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Overall Packhouse Electricity Use Intensity

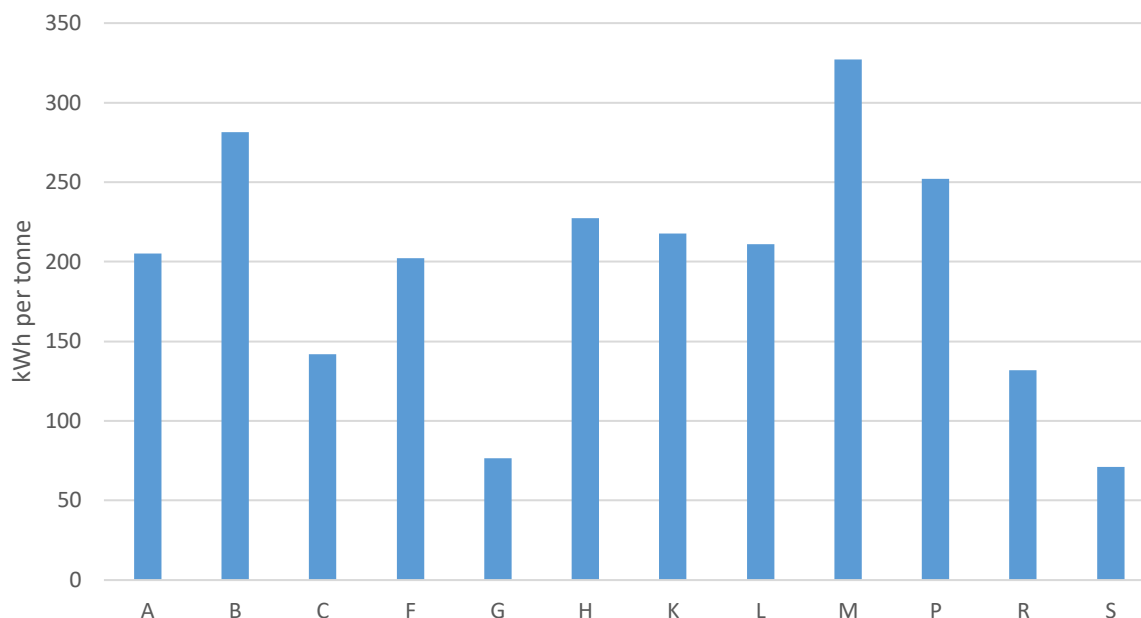


Figure 2: Total Electricity Use Intensity[Cv41.1][DY41.2][DY41.3] [EUI kWh per tonne pome fruit packed] for phase 5's participants.

Colour Charts

Contact: Dr Mariana Jooste

New colour charts are being developed for reprinting.

The Golden Delicious sunburn chart is no longer relevant, given the stricter standards that packhouses are applying.

Packhouses are requested to provide the following old DFB pear colour charts that could be used for developing new colour charts for reprinting:

- P.23 (Rosemarie pears Blush)
- P.16 (Forelle pears Blush)
- P.15 (Bon Chretien pears Blush)
- P.9 (Packham's Triumph pears Retiform Russet)
- P.8 (Packham's Triumph pears Solid Russetting)

Market Access Feedback

Contact: Jacques du Preez / Lindi Benic

Mexico: Feedback received from Mexico confirming approval of the presence of a Mexican inspector from 13 April 2026 to 2 June 2026, to conduct inspections at the origin for the apple export programme from South Africa to Mexico during the 2026 season, with the financial plan provided required to cover the costs of the visit.



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Taiwan: The Taiwan apple export market remains suspended. Information requested by Taiwan provided to Taiwan by DoA together with the invitation letter, with a response still pending from Taiwan.

Philippines: On 20 February 2026, Philippines BPI requested postponement of the apple and pear onsite verification visit due to start from 22 February to 1 March 2026, initially requesting postponement to end of March and thereafter proposing rescheduled dates from 14 to 23 March. DoA responded to BPI requesting BPI's confirmation for the onsite visit from 14 to 23 March, with a response pending from Philippines BPI.

Brazil: On 23 December 2025, DoA provided a response received from Brazil on export of fresh apples from South Africa, with Brazil MAPA informing regarding the pests of concern associated with apples from South Africa, further requesting the preparation and submission of a workplan, with a view to the establishment of risk mitigation measures for the pests of concern to Brazil and requesting proposed dates for a onsite visit during harvest. Following industry's response to DoA, DoA confirmed the DoA response was communicated to Brazil on 27 February 2026, with a response pending from Brazil.

Reunion and Mayotte: DoA provided an email relating to Mayotte and Réunion import requirements to be implemented from 31 March 2026, indicating that regarding import permits, under their latest decree (Decree No. 2025-DAAF-0230 dated 22 May 2025), absence of "Tephritidae" and compliance with at least one of the listed requirements will be required. In the case of South Africa, the only conditions which can be met would be fruit undergoing an effective post-harvest treatment against Tephritidae (as in the case of requirements for Mauritius/other).

PAG Disciplines and Coordinators

Please get in touch with the relevant person below if you have any queries regarding the PAG.

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