



Fresh Notes feedback of a recent Packhouse Action Group (PAG) meeting

Revisit PAG Principles

The PAG has decided that it was necessary to revisit the purpose, priorities and representation of the PAG at a special PAG meeting held on 4 October.

Review Past Achievements

The outputs of the PAG since 2009 were linked to the various disciplines as indicated below:

- Update CA Manual (electronically) – Engineering
- Packhouse energy benchmarking – Engineering
- Future energy efficiency / Energy efficiency conference 21/10/2010 –Engineering
- Containers – Logistics
 - Scheduling
 - Checklist
 - Overweight containers
- Defect database template – Postharvest, Packhouse
- Postharvest disease management conference 28/09/2010 – Postharvest
- Container loading workshop – Logistics
- Pallet specifications and pallet testing machine – Engineering
- Packhouse productivity benchmarking – Packhouse
- PAG brainstorm – optimise container volume – PHI project – Logistics
- Assessment of CA research capacity – Postharvest
- Load-shedding workgroup – Logistics
- Cold steri work group – Logistics + Postharvest
- Postharvest seminar 22/01/2015 – Postharvest
- Revive CA and Postharvest group – Postharvest
- SOLAS container weight verification – Logistics
- Packhouse energy management systems training – Engineering
- Motivate container optimisation research projects – Logistics



Revisit Original Objectives

Revised as follows:

- Stimulate innovation/ testing and introduction of new technologies/ adoption of proven technologies
- Identify issues to make industry more competitive – world leaders
- Identify priorities /address industry needs through research
- Address availability of capacity/skills/ education/information dissemination
- Serve as an industry communication forum for packhouses and stakeholders, including Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), PPECB and FPEF
- A source of packhouse intelligence
- Ensure sustainable resource management (energy/water/waste)

Representation

The following principles were re-affirmed:

- Focus on expertise per discipline (rather than representation)
- For a steering committee to be effective it should not be too large

The PAG representatives are listed at the bottom of the Fresh Notes. There is a vacancy for a small packhouse representative.

Contact: K Bouwer

CA Research Facilities

The process to acquire CA research cabinets is underway at Stellenbosch University. They will be placed in the Lombardi building. The plan is to have them operational by end February 2018.

Contact: R Hurndall



New Pome Work Groups

Fruit Eating Quality (Prof Wiehann Steyn – wiehann@hortgro.co.za)

This group will focus on addressing eating quality concerns and identifying eating quality research gaps. A project on establishing a dry matter content database of the major cultivars by Hortec will commence in the 2018 season. There is a direct correlation between dry matter content and quality, and this measure is being used successfully in other industries. It will also be incorporated in all quality related research projects.

Fruit External Quality (Prof Karen Theron – kit@sun.ac.za)

This group will primarily focus on defects such as lenticel spot, concentric cracks (mainly Fuji), as well as problems related with short stems.

Industry Packhouse Technical Group (Jaco Moelich – jaco.moelich@fruitways.co.za)

This group, which held its inaugural meeting recently, is modelled on the Fieldsmen Association. It is not linked to any formal industry structure, and membership, by invitation, is for people directly involved in postharvest physiology. The idea is that packhouses share information on their problems. Researchers are included.

Packhouse Benchmarking

Some packing operations are already using the benchmarks as a reporting tool. If additional packhouses wish to participate, please contact dawid@tad.co.za.

Packhouse skills training

The lack of suitably qualified packhouse personnel has been raised with the PAG. This shortcoming has been referred to training groups such as Koue Bokkeveld Training Centre, FPEF, Fruit SA in conjunction with the Citrus Academy, and other groups for consideration in the AgriSETA Horticulture Research Subsector Skills Plan.

Transport Booking Service

The PAG has been approached by a transport booking service. Members likened the service to a transporters “Uber”. Savings could be made on backhaul cargo trips, but the vehicle specifications and conformance may not be adequate.

Contact: Andy Connell



Market Access

Taiwan

DAFF has submitted a report to the Taiwanese government. Packhouses are requested to put pressure on their importers. Parties were working on a rapid response process

Mexico

A review panel is monitoring the processes.

India

The in transit pear pilot trial had been completed, and currently 4 apple shipments were in transit.

DPA

Additional information generated by the Experico cross-contamination project and Industry MRL results collected by DAFF were submitted to the EU standing committee. Lab data had shown that there is general compliance for untreated fruit, with maximum readings in the vicinity or just exceeding 0,05 ppm, bearing in mind that some packhouses were using DPA for non-EU markets. Considering the EU processes, the date for an EU decision to lower the DPA MRL to 0,05 ppm would not be before 2019.

In addition, additional lab ring tests, including an overseas lab, were being planned.



PAG Disciplines and Coordinators

Please contact the relevant person if you have any queries regarding the PAG.

Chairman – Koos Bouwer (bouweb@orangenet.co.za)

Engineering – Henk Ryke (henk@tad.co.za), **Koos Bouwer** (bouweb@orangenet.co.za)

Packaging – Dr Malcolm Dodd (malcolm@alaceraer.co.za), **Bryce MacIntyre**
(bryce.macintyre@kaapagri.co.za)

Environmental Footprint – Eddie Vienings (eddie@bluenorth.co.za) / **Hugh Campbell**
(hugh@hortgro.co.za)

Packhouse Large – Dawid Malan (dawid@tad.co.za) / **Francois Malan**
(francois.malan@cfg.co.za) / **Willem Coetzee** (willemc@kromco.co.za)

Packhouse Small – Hendrik Claassen (hendrik@bellafrutta.co.za), Vacancy

Post Harvest Quality – Dr Elke Crouch (elke@sun.ac.za), **Henk Griessel** (henkg@tru-cape.co.za), **Jaco Moelich** (jaco.moelich@fruitways.co.za)

Logistics – Johan Strydom (pslog@mweb.co.za) / **Andy Connell** (andy@abarc.co.za)

Communication Strategy – Richard Hurndall (richard@hortgro.co.za) / **Koos Bouwer**
(bouweb@orangenet.co.za) / **Elise-Marie Steenkamp** (elise-marie@hortgro.co.za)

PPECB – Bernardus Henning (bernardush@ppecb.com)

FPEF – Werner van Rooyen (werner@fpef.co.za)

DAFF – Director: Food Safety and Quality Assurance, Billy Makhafola,
(BillyM@daff.gov.za)

DAFF – Regional Manager: NPPPIIS WC Directorate: Inspection Services, Gcobani Tsako
(GcobaniT@daff.gov.za)

Hortgro – Jacques du Preez (jacques@hortgro.co.za), **Lindi Benic** (lindi@hortgro.co.za)

