**Project Title:**
Revision of FEMA release standards when fruit do not meet FEMA firmness or sugar criteria.

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**Objectives and Rationale**
Apart from the outstanding success of the FEMA Programme, there is still pressure from producers to release orchards as early as possible. One of the major challenges with this cultivar is that in many instances the two major release parameters, flesh firmness and sugar levels may remain constant and do not change over 2 or 3 weeks. In other instances one of these parameters may move while the other remains constant.

This study will therefore determine whether fruit harvested with TSS values below 14%, or flesh firmness values above 6 kg will be of acceptable eating quality after a storage period of 5 to 6 weeks.

**Methods**
Fifteen Forelle orchards were selected from maturity data obtained from Hortec. Orchards were selected using the following firmness and TSS levels: firmness 6.0 – 6.5 kg and TSS > 14.0%, firmness > 6.5 kg and TSS > 14.0%, firmness < 6.0 kg and TSS 13.0 - 14.0%, firmness < 6.0 kg and TSS 11.0 - 13.0%, and firmness < 6.0 kg and TSS > 14.0% (Normal FEMA release). Fruit were subjected to a FEMA rate SmartFresh™ within 7 days after harvest and cold stored for 5 weeks in RA. Fruit were evaluated after end of cold storage and after a 7 day shelf life. Fruit were subjected to a taste assessment after shelf life.

**Key Results**
All milestones and all laboratory work were successfully met and are now complete. Interpretation of the data obtained from the taste panel will be discussed with staff from the Department of Food Science at the University of Stellenbosch as the data sets are quite complex.

**Conclusion and Discussion**
This interim report is to inform the workgroup of the status of the project. Feedback and discussion of this project will address possible amendments for the following season.