

New image for South African citrus

South Africa's summer citrus campaign continues to gain momentum in the US with the launch of a new brand identity

South African citrus suppliers met with US importers and retailers recently for its annual planning meeting, during which they unveiled a new brand name and image. From this season, the Western Cape Citrus Producers Forum will be known as Summer Citrus from South Africa (SCSA).

SCSA grower Gerrit van der Merwe confirmed that crop has increased from 2015, and the expectation is that all citrus will continue to increase over the next five years. Navels will continue to lead in volume, accounting for 60 per cent of the group's citrus, while Midknights account for 20 per cent, followed by easy peelers at 14 per cent, and Star Ruby Grapefruit and Cara-Cara at 3 per cent.

Among those who attended the meeting were key players from the brand's four select importers – Seald Sweet, DNE, Capespan, and AMC – as well as retail partners Walmart and AWG.

Leo Holt, CEO of Holt Logistics, opened the planning sessions along with Yntze Buitenwerf from Seatrade to discuss logistics improvements and quality standards for this year's transportation of the summer citrus crop. It was also confirmed that the first easy peeler crop will arrive in May, while the first conventional vessel of SCSA will arrive at the Port of Philadelphia the third week of June, which is consistent with years past.

"We're pleased to see the demand of our products grow year after year with the support of our importers," said SCSA CEO Suhanra Conradie. ""We have gained a lot of momentum with our collaborative approach and we intend to keep it going."

Dan'l Mackey Almy, CEO of DMA Solutions and account director Marci Allen unveiled the new SCSA brand name, logo, and identity, along with the 2016 marketing strategy. Part of the brand's marketing efforts will include the launch of a new website in June, its first-ever digital consumer promotion in July, and elevated social media presence and blogger partnerships throughout the season.

Bryan Silbermann of PMA, Mike Hulett of Walmart, and Jennifer Campuzano and Sarah Schmansky of Nielsen Perishables Group, presented consumer trends and industry data that support the rise of citrus as a go-to snack – up 8 per cent in sales from 2015.

Additional key metrics from Nielsen data showed the value proposition of citrus as a more affordable snack, based on price per serving in comparison to other peak season produce items in the summer.

