

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (08/16)

Justin Chadwick 11 March 2016

"Sentimentality is the emotional promiscuity of those who have no sentiment" Norman Mailer

PATRIOTISM

A popular host show in the US had as a guest a politician who spoke about what it is to be patriotic – and Americans are as patriotic as the best. He mentioned that a patriot **loves** his country (no rocket science there), and to love your country you must love all who live in your country – not just respect or tolerate your fellow countrymen, but love them. If you tolerate somebody or some group of fellow countrymen then you are saying that you do not mind if they are there or if they are not there, while if you love them then you want them to be part of your country. The problem with tolerance is that it can easily change to intolerance; especially when others disrespect what you believe are your rights. However, if you love them then you try and make it work; no matter how inciteful or disrespectful others may be. At the moment South Africa is not in a good place – poor leadership and the impending municipal elections means that groups that do not love South Africa are using every opportunity to destabilize the country. We all know that the so called farm worker strikes in 2012 in the Western Cape had nothing to do with farm workers – it was activists who decided to exploit dissatisfaction with municipalities to destabilize the agricultural sector for their own gains. Similarly so called student protests have little to do with students – real students (i.e. those who attend institutions of higher learning with the goal of furthering their education) have little time for the destruction at Universities. It is time for all those who love this country to expose this attack on beautiful South Africa and make leaders accountable in sorting out the mess. Students themselves have formed prayer rings and other peaceful protests against those who are disrespecting their rights to education – we need to support these initiatives and show our love for this country.

A recent example of how destruction cannot be a solution was reported in newspapers last week – those living in a dysfunctional municipality (take your pick) were upset with a R73 million corruption charge against certain municipal officials; they burnt down some municipal buildings. Ironically they managed to burn all the incriminating evidence and the officials got off scott free. Use the mechanisms available to combat the scourge of corruption and we can get rid of it; turning to violence and destruction is not a solution; love your fellow South African.

GROWER UNITY

If one of the goals of growers in the formation of CGA back in 1997 was to unify growers then the roadshows show they can tick that box. At all roadshows growers recognised what the CGA Chairman terms the "greater good" – big ticket issues that CGA must address for all in the industry. Although each region does stress their important regional challenges they also see the importance of addressing other regions priorities as being beneficial to all. In the early years of the CGA there was even disunity WITHIN regions, this has also disappeared. In terms of issues that CGA deals with the competition is not fellow southern African growers – but those who they compete with from other sources. An example of CGA work that is for the greater good is the focus on transformation, although this is not a pressing issue on individual farms, it is an industry imperative to stabilise rural economies, be inclusive and improve government relations.

NOTICE OF VARIETY FOCUS GROUP AND CITRUS MARKETING FORUM (CMF) MEETINGS

The Variety Focus Groups will meet on Wednesday 16th March at 14h00, followed by the CMF meeting scheduled for Thursday 17 March 2016 at Birchwood Hotel at 10h00. For more information contact John Edmonds johne@cga.co.za

ASIATIC GREENING (HLB) IN FLORIDA

To help the Floridian citrus industry in its fight against citrus greening, Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam issued a crisis declaration to the Environmental Protection Agency on Friday 4 March- *"We have issued a crisis declaration, which allows for temporary use of three promising treatments that researchers have identified as having beneficial effects on controlling citrus greening. The temporary allowance of these treatments coincides with this spring's flush, as the Environmental Protection Agency finalizes its consideration of the Special Use Exemption. The citrus industry has experienced a 71% decline in citrus production since the 1997-98 season. Citrus growers cannot suffer any further delay for the approval of these products, the only new treatment options, to help fight citrus greening."* Bruce McEvoy; CGA representative in the US paints a gloomy picture of the situation in Florida:

As I drive around the Florida Citrus Industry you can't help observing the consequences of Citrus Greening: abandoned groves; idle processing plants; closed packing facilities; and empty seats at the baseball stadium that once hosted citrus agents from Japan and Asia. Over the past two weeks we see another outcome from greening, the growers can no longer support a sophisticated infrastructure that has been built over a century; The University of Florida citrus programs; the Lake Alfred research facility; field support stations; testing promotion and advertising effectiveness; overseas representatives and on and on. The growers in Florida have made it clear, they no longer can support these activities and drastic measures must be taken. The Florida Department of Citrus had promotion budgets 10 years ago in the range of \$75 million, and now we are down to a small Public Relations budget and a few staff members. Florida Citrus Packers is down to about 20 packing house, a few years ago that number was 75. They have slashed budgets and they will focus on a few priority issues and procedures. I would say that every penny goes to research on greening.



