



LANDBOUSKRYWERS  
AGRICULTURAL WRITERS SA

# AGR pen

January / February 2019

## Agbiz establishes desk for the fruit industry

Stephanie van der Walt has been appointed as general manager of the Fruit Desk at Agbiz as of January 2019. The Fruit Desk is an initiative of Fruit South Africa, and specifically the Citrus Growers Association, Hortgro, SATI and the Fresh Produce Exporters Forum, in collaboration with Agbiz.

The Fruit Desk is the third industry desk to be instituted at Agbiz. The purpose of the desk is to ensure that the South African fruit sector is represented in matters of policy, regulation and market access.

Stephanie is an admitted attorney by profession, holding an LLM degree in international trade and investment, awarded jointly by the University of Pretoria and the Washington School of Law in the US. She is currently enrolled for an MPhil in development practice at the Department of Economic and Management Science of the University of Pretoria.

She joins the Agbiz team from the National Agricultural Marketing Council, where she served since 2010, first in the capacity of senior analyst: legal, markets and trade within the Markets and Economics Research Centre and later as manager: legal services in the office of the CEO. While at the NAMC, Stephanie's work focused on legal developments affecting agricultural markets and competitiveness at both the local and international level as well as advising on corporate governance, contracts and project management.



Stephanie van der Walt

Stephanie gained international experience while stationed at the Institute for Training and Technical Cooperation at the World Trade Organization in Geneva, Switzerland.



**Enquiries:**

Karen Grobler  
Marketing and  
Communications  
Manager

karen@agbiz.co.za  
082 774 7008

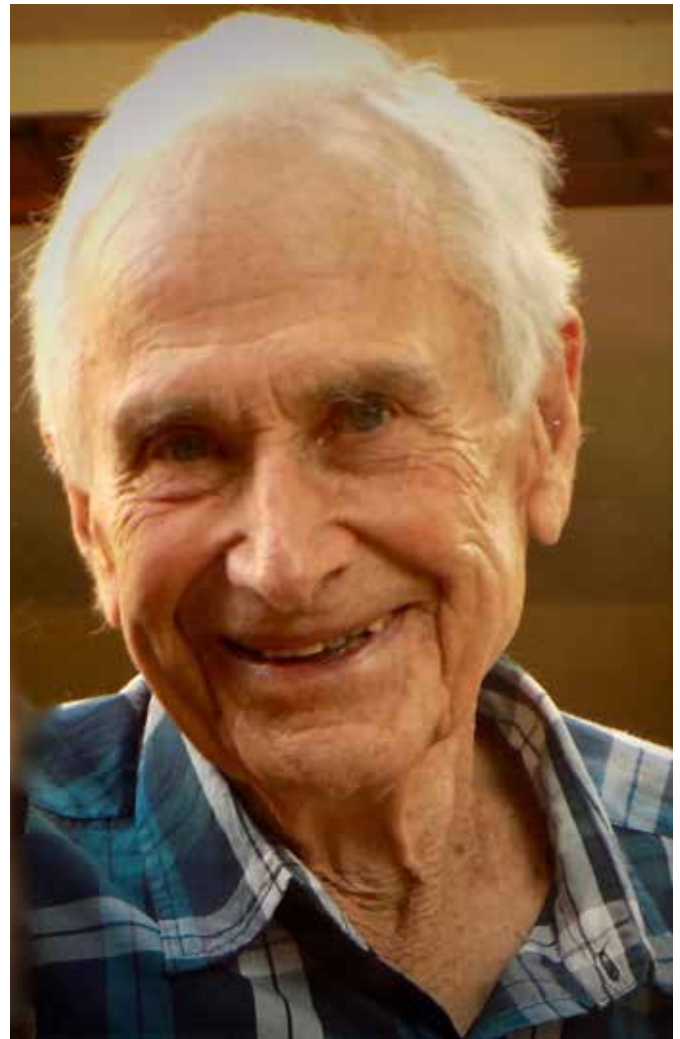
# Obituary:

## Barend (*Ben*) Wilhelm Strydom (1932 – 2018)

Barend Wilhelm (*Ben*) Strydom was born in Rietbron in the Karoo on 7 October 1932 and passed away on 24 August 2018. As a child, he attended seven different schools since his father, a NG Church minister, served rural communities in the Eastern and Western Cape. He matriculated from Hoërskool Punt, Mosselbaai in 1950, where he was headboy. He graduated from the University of Stellenbosch with a BSc Agriculture (*Microbiology*) degree in 1954, the second person to graduate in this specialist field at the University. He completed a MSc Agriculture (*Microbiology*) (*cum laude*) in 1958 at the University of Pretoria, and a PhD in Microbiology at the University of Wisconsin Madison, USA in 1963. He was employed by the Department of Agriculture from 1955 to 1989, holding leadership positions from 1966 at the Plant Protection Research Institute, where he became Assistant Director. On creation of the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), he moved to Rustenburg as Director of the Tobacco and Cotton Research Institute from 1989 until his retirement in 1994. He also served as an Honorary and Extra-ordinary Professor of the University of Pretoria.

Dr Ben Strydom was a highly respected scientist in his specialist field of biological nitrogen fixation, and thereby made a significant contribution to Agriculture in South Africa. His PhD at the University of Madison on the growth requirements of Rhizobacteria that nodulate alfalfa, clover and pea plants was advised by the renowned leaders in the field, Professor's Owen Allen and Ira Baldwin. On his return to South Africa, he set up the Biological Nitrogen Fixation research unit at the Rietondale campus of the Plant Protection Research Institute, Department of Agriculture.

Dr Strydom has been credited with establishing the legume crop inoculant industry in South Africa.



Barend (*Ben*) Wilhelm Strydom

He promoted quality control standards for bacterial inoculants through the Department of Agriculture, and set the example through his rigorous research on the taxonomy and host specificity of rhizobacteria. Biological nitrogen fixation enriches the soil and reduces the requirement for inorganic fertilizers for legume crop production such as soybean, french bean and lucerne. Soybeans alone are grown on approximately 750 000 ha in South Africa (*GrainSA, 2017*) with biological nitrogen fixation reducing the dependence on inorganic nitrogen fertilizer. Biological nitrogen fixation therefore makes an important contribution to the gross production value of soybean production estimated at R5 billion annually (*DAFF, 2017*).

Dr Strydom's contribution to Agriculture in South Africa was recognised by several awards, namely the Havenga Agricultural Researcher of the Year in 1981 from the South African Academy for Science and Art, and the Agriculturalist of the Year Award in

1994 from the SA Agricultural Writers Association, including that same year's award from the then Transvaal section. In 1980, Dr Strydom was awarded a commemorative medal together with other notable alumni from the University of the Pretoria.

He served the local Agricultural science community, often in leadership roles. He was President of the combined South African Society for Plant Pathology and Microbiology from 1973-1976, having been a member since 1964, and he was elected a Fellow in 1986. He was passionate about quality standards in scientific publication and the importance of scientific peer review. To this end, he was President of the Joint Council for Natural Science Societies for two years (1985-1986), and was liason committee member for the molecular sciences as well as agricultural sciences from 1980-1982. He was on the Executive Committee (1987-1991) of the South African Council of Natural Scientists, now SACNASP (*South African Council of Natural Scientific Professions*), serving on the Board for a total of nine years.

Dr Strydom recognised the potential of biotechnology, leading workgroups on its implementation in the Department of Agriculture and the ARC (1984-1988). As a member of the SA Committee for Genetic Experimentation (*SAGENE*) (1987-1991), he contributed to the judicious introduction of genetically modified crops to South Africa, which was later formalized by the GMO Law. He served on advisory boards at the CSIR, the FRD (now the NRF), and the Laboratory of Molecular and Cell Biology at the University of Witwatersrand (1985-1987).

Dr Strydom published 83 peer-reviewed publications under the name BW Strijdom, including eight book chapters. He was invited speaker at international nitrogen fixation conferences in USA, Australia, Germany, Scotland and Ethiopia. He served as Board Member of the Bacteriology Division of the International Committee for Microbiology for several years (1974-1981), and was a member of the American Society for Microbiology from 1974-1991. Significantly, as an alumnus of the University of Wisconsin, he was presented in 1974 with a unique award of a signed original copy of the 1932 classic monograph on nitrogen fixation by Fred, Baldwin and McCoy.

In addition to his scientific contributions, Dr Strydom commanded great respect amongst his colleagues and co researchers due to his scientific insight, excellence and rare ability to establish the crux of a problem. He was a mentor for young scientists, and supervised and examined several PhD and MSc studies. His leadership, charisma, sense of humour, and open heartedness made him a role model for many.

He leaves behind his wife Elsa, four daughters, and ten grandchildren.

Prepared by Prof Dave Berger, Prof Gerhard Pietersen & Dr Santie de Villiers



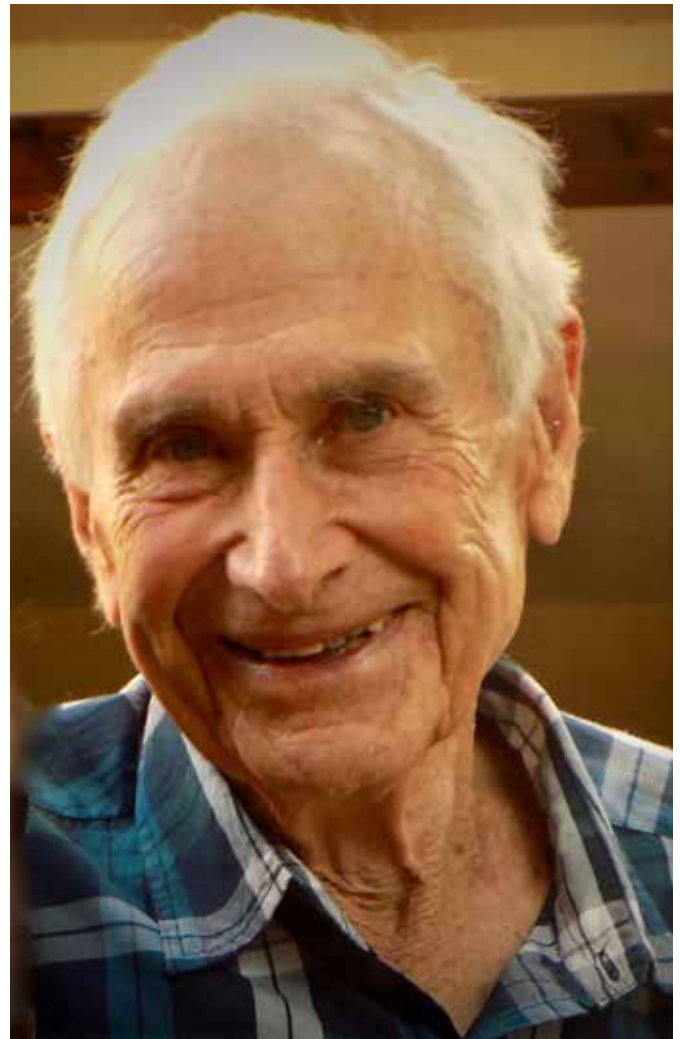
# Huldeblyk:

## Barend (*Ben*) Wilhelm Strydom (1932 – 2018)

Barend (Ben) Wilhelm Strydom is op 7 Oktober 1932 in Rietbron in die Karoo gebore en op 24 Augustus 2018 oorlede. As kind was hy in sewe verskillende skole, aangesien sy pa, as predikant, landelike gemeenskappe in die Oos- en Wes-Kaap bedien het. Hy het in 1950 uit die Hoërskool Punt, Mosselbaai gematrikuleer, waar hy hoofseun was. In 1954 was hy slegs die tweede student wat 'n graad in BSc Landbou (Mikrobiologie), van die Universiteit van Stellenbosch verwerf het. Hy het 'n MSc Landbou (Mikrobiologie) (met lof) in 1958 aan die Universiteit van Pretoria voltooi en 'n PhD in Mikrobiologie aan die Universiteit van Wisconsin Madison, VSA in 1963 verwerf. Hy was in diens van die Departement van Landbou vanaf 1955 tot 1989. Hy het leierskap posisies vanaf 1966 by die Navorsingsinstituut vir Plantbeskerming beklee, waar hy later tot Assistent-direkteur bevorder is. Met die skepping van die Landbounavorsingsraad (LNR) het hy verhuis na Rustenburg waar hy vanaf 1989 tot sy aftrede in 1994 Direkteur van die Tabak- en Katoenavorsingsinstituut was. Hy was ook 'n Ere- en Buitengewone Professor aan die Universiteit van Pretoria.

Dr Ben Strydom was 'n hoogs gerespekteerde wetenskaplike in sy spesialisveld - biologiese stikstofbinding - en het daardeur 'n beduidende bydrae tot Landbou in Suid-Afrika gemaak. Sy doktorsgraad van die Universiteit van Madison oor die groei-behoefte van Rhizobakterieë, wat soja-, klawer- en ertjieplante noduleer, was gelei deur die welbekende leiers in die veld, professore Owen Allen en Ira Baldwin. Met sy terugkeer na Suid-Afrika het hy die Navorsingseenheid vir Biologiese Stikstofbinding op die Rietondal-kampus van die Navorsingsinstituut vir Plantbeskerming, van die Departement Landbou, gestig.

Dr Strydom word gekrediteer met die vestiging van die peulgewas-inokulantbedryf in Suid-Afrika.



Barend (Ben) Wilhelm Strydom

Sy streng gedissiplineerde navorsingsaanslag oor die taksonomie en gasheerspesifisiteit van rhizobakterieë, lei tot gehaltebeheerstandaarde vir bakteriese entostowwe deur die Departement van Landbou. Biologiese stikstofbinding verryk die grond en verlaag die afhanklikheid van anorganiese bemestingstowwe vir die produksie van peulgewasse soos sojabone, groenboontjies en lusern. Sojabone alleen word op ongeveer 750 000 ha in Suid-Afrika geplant (*GraanSA, 2017*) en agv biologiese stikstofbinding word baie minder bemesting benodig. Biologiese stikstofbinding maak dus 'n belangrike bydrae tot die bruto produksie waarde van sojabone wat jaarliks op R5 miljard geraam word (*DAFF, 2017*).

Dr Strydom se bydrae tot die landboubedryf in Suid-Afrika is erken deur verskeie toekennings, naamlik die Havenga Landbounavorser van die Jaar in 1981 van die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns, Die Landboukundige

van die Jaar-toekenning in 1994 van die Suid-Afrikaanse Landboukrywersvereniging, asook dieselfde toekenning daardie jaar van die destydse Transvaalse afdeling. In 1980 ontvang Dr Strydom ook 'n herdenkingsmedalje van die Universiteit van Pretoria.

Hy het ook die plaaslike landbou-wetenskaplike gemeenskap bedien, dikwels in leierskapsrolle. Hy was president van die gekombineerde Suid-Afrikaanse Vereniging vir Plantpatologie en Mikrobiologie vanaf 1973-1976, waar hy sedert 1964 'n lid was, en in 1986 is hy ook tot genoot van die vereniging verkies. Hy was 'n voorstander van hoë kwaliteitstandaarde vir wetenskaplike publikasies en die belangrikheid van wetenskaplike portuuroorsig. Met hierdie visie as doel het hy vir twee jaar (1985-1986) die Gesamentlike Raad vir Natuurwetenskaplike Verenigings gelei as president, en was ook lid van die skakelkomitees vir molekulêre en landbouwetenskappe vanaf 1980-1982. Hy was ook van 1987 tot 1991 'n lid van die uitvoerende komitee van die Suid-Afrikaanse Raad vir Natuurwetenskappe (tans die SACNASP), en het vir nege jaar op hulle raad gedien.

Dr Strydom het die potensiaal van biotegnologie raakgesien en het werksgroepe vir die implimentering daarvan gelei in die Departement van Landbou en die LNR (1984-1988). As lid van die SA Komitee vir Genetiese Eksperimentering (SAGENE) (1987 – 1991) het hy insette gelewer vir opstel van riglyne vir die verantwoordelike goedkeuring en verbouing van geneties gemanipuleerde gewasse in Suid-Afrika, wat daarna geformaliseer is in die GMO Wet. Hy het op verskeie adviesrade by die WNNR, SNO en die Laboratorium vir Molekulêre- en Selbiologie by die Universiteit van die Witwatersrand gedien (1985-1987).

Dr Strydom het 83 artikels gepubliseer as BW Strydom, waarvan agt boekhoofstukke is. Hy is uitgenooi as gasspreker na verskeie internasionale stikstofbindingskongresse in die VSA, Australië, Duitsland, Skotland en Ethiopië. Hy was vir verskeie jare lid van die Bakteriologie afdeling van die Internasionale Komitee vir Mikrobiologie (1974-1981) en 'n lid van die Amerikaanse Vereniging vir Mikrobiologie (1974-1991). As 'n alumnus van die Universiteit van Wisconsin, is hy in 1974 vereer met 'n unieke toekenning van 'n oorspronklik getekende kopie van die 1932 klassieke monografie oor stikstofbinding wat saamgestel is deur Fred, Baldwin en McCoy.

Benewens sy wetenskaplike bydraes is Dr Strydom grootliks gerespekteer deur sy kollegas en mede-navorsers weens sy wetenskaplike insig, -uitnemendheid, en unieke vermoë om die kernbegrip van kwessies vas te vat. Hy was 'n mentor vir vele jong wetenskaplikes en was promotor vir verskeie PhD- en MSc-studente. Sy leierskap, charisma, sin vir humor en openhartigheid, het hom 'n rolmodel vir baie gemaak.

Hy word oorleef deur sy vrou Elsa, vier dogters, en tien kleinkinders.

Vorberei deur Prof. Dave Berger, Prof. Gerhard Pietersen en Dr Santie de Villiers.





## MPO stel nuwe hoof-ekonoom aan met ingang 1 Januarie 2019.

Dr Koos Coetzee het na 'n roemryke loopbaan in die melkbedryf van 23 jaar einde 2018 afgetree. Koos het in vele opsigte baanbrekers werk in die Melk Produsente Organisasie gedoen en sal daarvoor onthou word en word bedank vir sy bydraes en toegewydheid.

Bertus van Heerden is vanaf 1 Januarie 2019 aangestel as hoof-ekonoom van die MPO. Bertus het 'n meestersgraad in Landbou-ekonomie (UP) en het meer as 30 jaar ervaring in verskillende rolle in die landbousektor wat insluit verskeie seniorbestuursposte, die interpretering van statistiek en industrie navorsing. Die hoofdoel van die pos is om landbou- en ekonomiese beleid in die breë te beïnvloed en beleid te genereer om 'n omgewing te help skep van Volhoubare Melkboerderye vir Almal in die melkbedryf. Die pos funksioneer ook as die projekbestuurder van MelkSA se Markte en Ekonomie Projek.

Hy het n passie vir die ekonomie, die wisselwerking daarvan met die bestuur en toekoms van 'n land en beskou die boer as die episentrum van entrepreneurskap.

Alle sukses word hom toegewens en ons sien uit na sy bydrae.

**Dr Chris van Dijk**

*Uitvoerende Hoof: MPO*



# Chemuniqué's new premises

On 15 January, representatives from Chemuniqué (Pty) Ltd and Bantry Construction Services gathered at Lanseria Corporate Estate to celebrate the official ground-breaking for Chemuniqué's new premises. Chemuniqué started a little over 20 years ago and has grown significantly since then in its customer-service offerings through partnerships with leading, scientifically innovative, international organisations, including Zinpro Corporation, DuPont, and CJ Bio. "The next 20 years will be all about focusing on ways to improve production and feed efficiency into the future, specifically capitalising on the food production potential of sub-Saharan Africa," says managing director Terry Wiggill. "Chemuniqué provides proven, measurable economic benefits through leading nutritional solutions in feed additives, and we aspire to lead in the implementation of technology to provide cost-effective and nutritious animal protein for a healthier future."

## Hier is 'n paar datums van belang 2019

Datum	Plek	Inligting
<b>21-24 Januarie</b>	Bloemfontein, VS	Gesamentlike kongres van die Grondkondevereniging van Suid-Afrika, SA Vereniging vir Gewasproduksie, Suider-Afrikaanse Vereniging vir Onkruidwetenskap en Suider-Afrikaanse Vereniging vir Tuinbouwetenskappe. Tema: 'n Dinamiese omgewing vorm die toekoms. Navrae: <a href="http://www.soils.org.za">www.soils.org.za</a>
<b>29-30 Januarie</b>	Bothaville	Senwes se 110 jaar integrasie-ekspo op Nampopark.
<b>30 Januarie - 2 Februarie</b>	Bredasdorp	Overbergse landbouskou. Navrae: <a href="mailto:lienkie.marais10@gmail.com">lienkie.marais10@gmail.com</a> of 084 515 4261
<b>1 Februarie</b>	Murraysburg	Murraysburg-landbouskou. Navrae: <a href="mailto:pdk.karoo@gmail.com">pdk.karoo@gmail.com</a> of 072 868 6299
<b>28 February - 1 March</b>	Ceres	Visit to the Farmer of the Year, Pieter Graaff
<b>1-10 Maart</b>	Stellenbosch	Landbouweekblad se Eeufees-voorbladuitstalling by die Woordfees. Navrae: <a href="mailto:Jacolette.kloppers@landbou.com">Jacolette.kloppers@landbou.com</a>
<b>1-10 Maart</b>	Stellenbosch	Landboureeks by die Woordfees. Navrae: <a href="mailto:isabeau@agriexpo.co.za">isabeau@agriexpo.co.za</a>
<b>11-12 Maart</b>	Reitz	Herlewingslandboukonferensie aangebied deur Landbouweekblad, die Riemland-studiegroep en Graan SA. Navrae: <a href="mailto:Jacolette.kloppers@landbou.com">Jacolette.kloppers@landbou.com</a>
<b>12-14 Maart:</b>	Port Elizabeth	Sitruskwekersvereniging van Suider-Afrika se Sitrusberaad. Navrae: <a href="http://www.cga.co.za">www.cga.co.za</a> of <a href="mailto:info@cga.co.za">info@cga.co.za</a>
<b>13-14 Maart</b>	Ottosdal	Herlewingslandboukonferensie aangebied deur Landbouweekblad, die Ottosdal-geenbepoelingsklub en Graan SA. Navrae: <a href="mailto:Jacolette.kloppers@landbou.com">Jacolette.kloppers@landbou.com</a>
<b>10 Julie 2019,</b>	Johannesburg	13 <sup>th</sup> Agribusiness Africa conference PREMIER HOTEL, OR Tambo airport. Navrae: Marianna du Plessis, 063 076 9135 <a href="mailto:Africa@caxton.co.za">Africa@caxton.co.za</a> • <a href="http://www.farmersweekly.co.za">www.farmersweekly.co.za</a>
<b>26-31 July</b>		2019 International IFAJ congress
<b>15 November</b>	Pretoria	Agricultural Writers SA National Awards Evening
<b>16 November</b>	Pretoria	Agricultural Writers SA Annual General Meeting.





**agribusiness  
africa  
conference**



**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**

**10 JULY 2019**

**PREMIER HOTEL O.R. TAMBO  
KEMPTON PARK**

**MARKET ACCESS:  
FROM FARM GATE  
TO NEW FRONTIERS**

**SPONSORSHIP OPTIONS:**  
Marianna du Plessis  
africa@caxton.co.za +27 (0) 63 076 9135  
farmersweekly.co.za Africa Conference

brought to you by  
**farmer's weekly**



## South African citrus producer bumps up production by 40% in one year

**A top South African citrus producer not only managed to bump up its production by 40% through new acquisitions this year but also bolstered its successful black workers' economic empowerment programme in the process.**

"Good market foresight which ensured a constant growth in demand for our products with established retailers world-wide is key to our success.

This enabled us to make a big move and acquire four new farms in the upper Olifants River Valley, the prime production area of Citrusdal oranges, in the Western Cape Province of South Africa.

This will increase our output from 22,000 tonnes in 2018 to over 30,000 tonnes this year," says Gerrit Jnr van der Merwe, MD of ALG Estates. "We are especially proud of the fact that our black worker's successful agricultural empowerment project benefitted from this move as one of the new farms purchased actually belongs to them now. This will effectively increase their own production by 100% over the previous season. Their produce is marketed by us as part of the ALG Estates total citrus offering to the market.

"We recognized the importance of doing the difficult things first and do it well and, therefore, over the years, consistently worked on increasing the range of our citrus basket which now boasts 41 different varieties. At the same time we realised we had to

The estate employs 120 full time workers and up to 800 part-time workers during the peak packing season. - Pic: John Ross McGregor



stretch our production season as far as possible and also systematically established orchards in different climate zones.

“Our different production units are now as far as 200 km (120 miles) apart covering mountainous areas, temperate sea climate zones and the traditional hot regions in the Upper Olifants River Valley near Citrusdal. All in all it means that we have stretched our bulk production season from May to October yearly but can effectively supply citrus for the full 12 months of the year,” says Gerrit Jnr.

His optimism is shared by the Estate’s Marketing Manager Hendrik Warnich, who on the eve of his annual visit to Fruit Logistica the world’s largest Fresh Produce Expo in Berlin in February says: “For the last few years we have seen a good increase in specific retailer shelf space turnover where ALG has been trusted with the majority of the supply. The main reason for this is that we have the different climatic production areas as well an

extensive variety split to always supply fresh citrus such as Easy Peelers, Lemons, Limes and various types of oranges. This enables us to supply citrus at their optimum ripeness with consistent good eating quality on a daily basis to the leading retailers of the world.”

The Estate’s Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) agriculture program is one of the best performing projects of its kind in South Africa and the envy of many farmers country-wide. Founded as a separate company Cedar Citrus (Pty) Ltd in 1999 with 32 farm workers as partners a total of 36 hectares of citrus were established with a start-up loan from the South African Industrial Development Corporation (IDC). This unit is managed by a Board consisting mainly of the farm workers and farmed by the Estate exactly as any other of their production units which sees that their produce get exported world-wide. The project started making a profit in 2010 and paid off its start-up loan to the IDC in 2012.



Board members of Cedar Citrus the Estate's the black empowerment company are from left Leon Wesley Mogapi, Lena September, Jossie Catherine Frazer and Dirk Dirks. *Pic: John Ross McGregor*



ALG Estates Marketing Manager Hendrik Warnich with Lena September a Director of the Board and Gerrit Jnr. van der Merwe Managing Director of the Company. *Pic: John Ross McGregor*



The ALG Estate’s citrus basket now boasts 41 different varieties which enables it to supply citrus for the full 12 months of the year.  
*Pic: John Ross McGregor*

Last year the Cedar Citrus partners jointly decided to plough back their profits and extended their operations by purchasing additional farmland to plant more citrus for the export market. An additional 56 hectares of adjacent farmland has therefore been purchased on which 20 hectares of new citrus orchards were established. These orchards will come into production by 2022 and add additional impetus to their growth.

ALG Estates has been an accredited member of Fair Trade for the past eight years. Fair Trade subsidies earned through this relationship are ploughed back into upliftment projects for its farm workers such as school education and sport projects. The Estate also qualifies for the Dutch *Milieukeurmerk*, the South African Woolworths Group’s Farming for the Future and adhere to the United Nations’ International Food Safety (IFS) standards.

**The Estate won the title National Farmer of the Year in 2010, South Africa’s most coveted agricultural award.**

**Contact Details**

- **Gerrit van der Merwe** | +27 (0) 82 777 0984  
 gvandermerwe@algestates.com  
 www.algestates.com
- **Hendrik Warnich** | +27 (0) 73 229 4687  
 hendrik@algestates.com  
 www.algestates.com
- **Anthony Penderis** | +27 (0) 84 306 0331  
 admin@anthonypenderis.com  
 www.anthonypenderis.com



Gerrit van der Merwe Jnr the MD of ALG Estates

In memoriam

Gerrit vd Merwe sr, founder member of ALG Estates, one of South Africa’s best-known citrus farmers died in December 2018 after a fatal accident in Malawi. Our deepest condolences with the family in these times. ALG Estates was The Agricultural Writers SA’s National Farmer of the Year in 2010.

# Photo of the month



Photo: Brand Republic

## HOOI LYK MOOI UIT DIE LUG

Die Balfour-hooidag, een van die grootste boeredae in die land, is het Woensdag 16 Januarie 2019 vir die agtste keer aangebied en het nagenoeg 1 000 besoekers gelok. Daar was tien werktuigmaatskappye wat demonstrasies van onder meer balers, misstrooiers, snymasjiene en harke gehou het, en 14 ander uitstallers wat verskillende beesrasse ingesluit het.