

## *The Netherlands aims to increase market access to apples in South Africa* **South Africa: ALG Citrus Estate receives Eco-label certification**

Last week during the South African trade mission State Secretary Van Dam awarded ALG Citrus Estate with the Eco-label certification. This family company grows tangerines, oranges and lemons for the Dutch retail market, as well as other markets. Over the past two years they have worked on becoming a more sustainable company; they have done this by (including, but not limited to) reducing their use of pesticides. The company also complies with the Eco-label requirements for fertilization and soil protection, water management and working conditions.



The Dutch trade mission to South Africa has accomplished the following things: exchanging knowledge and expertise between South Africa and the Netherlands; open dialogue between the two governments about strengthening both cooperation and mutual trade; innovation in agro-logistics, including reducing food loss and a business model for small farmers. From Tuesday, November 17th to Thursday, November 19th the trade mission's goals were to strengthen the ties between the two countries and enhance collaboration.

### **Shared future**

State Secretary Van Dam: "The Netherlands and South Africa share a long history together, and we have taken new steps towards a common future. There are many opportunities to work together. The Netherlands has a great deal of knowledge about food production and collaborative models, and South Africa offers tremendous opportunities."

### **Exchanging knowledge**

During the trade mission State Secretary Van Dam and his South African colleagues agreed to strengthen the exchange of knowledge, expertise and mutual trade in the future. Open dialogue between both governments must ensure smooth market access for agricultural products. E-certification (paperless export certificates) will greatly accelerate mutual trade. This is a great benefit, especially in the case of fresh goods. The Netherlands aims to increase South Africa's access to apples, and the Netherlands will support South Africa in their citrus export to the EU.

### **Training program for cooperatives**

Dutch agriculture has grown from cooperation in the form of cooperatives. In South Africa it is difficult for unorganized small-scale farmers (60%) to invest or to reach larger markets. In South Africa there is a new form of cooperatives that increase productivity and make export possible. State Secretary Van Dam supports this development with a training program for the participants of the New Generation Cooperatives. A major food producer is involved that works together with smaller producers and shares knowledge and expertise in order to increase the productivity of small producers.

### **Refrigerated storage for fruit**

Because fruit is still transported unrefrigerated in trucks, some of the harvest is lost during the long journey. This is why a consortium of Dutch and South African companies have developed a regional refrigerated facility that both large and small-scale farmers can bring their harvests to. From there the goods are transported (refrigerated) by high speed train to the port. This system is great for the farmers because it means there is more harvest for them to sell.

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