The DoA officials held a quarterly meeting in Tzaneen on June 2nd, and set a day aside for interacting with the citrus and subtropical fruit sector. After a brief presentation from Justin Chadwick (citrus), Claus Lippert and Derek Donkin (subtropicals) the group were taken to Westfalia Estates where they were given a tour of facilities and briefing on activities. This was followed by a lunch and musical entertainment by Westfalia’s musicians.

The group then proceeded to Du Roi Nursery for a tour of the facility and presentation on activities. There was an opportunity for role players in the fruit industry and DoA to discuss issues the industry faces and strategies for the way forward.

The final stop was Mariveni Citrus Co-operative, a black owned citrus estate consisting of 26 farmers farming on 147 hectares of citrus and 110 hectares of bananas. The co-operative is facing challenging times, returns achieved in 2005 did not cover production costs, while water shortages meant that the crop in 2006 cannot be exported. The DG and his officials were briefed on these difficulties, and joint solutions were discussed.

The visit provided an ideal opportunity for exposure of DoA officials to the citrus and subtropical industries’ challenges and opportunities and has led to closer interaction and assistance with many issues.