During the first week of February 2009, two workshops were held which focused on rind condition of citrus fruit and the postharvest factors involved. Two Spanish researchers from Valencia, Dr Fernando Alférez (IATA-CSIC) and Dr Lluis Palou (IVIA) were invited to present their research findings at both meetings. The first meeting was a 2-day workshop held at CRI in Nelspruit, which allowed for an in-depth look at all aspects involved in rind condition, viz. preharvest development, postharvest handling, shipment, as well as decay. All the researchers working on these aspects of citrus in South Africa were invited (UKZN, UP, US, ARC and CRI), along with technical representatives from the various citrus producing areas. Dr Alférez presented his work on the influence of relative humidity fluctuations on rind pitting and staining. Dr Palou shared his experience on methods to prevent decay development during postharvest handling. Both these researchers also presented grower-focused talks on their work at the Limpopo/Mpumalanga packhouse study group workshop in Hoedspruit. At both these meetings ample time was allowed for interaction between the invited researchers and the local participants. Valuable networks have now been established and research collaboration is being discussed. Funding for the workshops was provided by the Post-Harvest Innovation Programme.

RECENT LONG SERVICE AWARDS AT CRI

Between December 2008 and June 2009, a total of 17 CRI employees received recognition for long service to the citrus industry in South Africa. Five years’ service was achieved by Elma Carstens at Stellenbosch and Gerhard Pietersen at Pretoria and fifteen years’ service was completed by Jean de Gasperi in Nelspruit and the following staff from the Citrus Foundation Block near Uitenhage: Linda Geduld, Ease Kam-Kam, Happiness Masingili, Mavis Mona and Monica Jonas. The twenty-year milestone was passed by Bella Thulare, MC Pretorius and Tian Schutte of Nelspruit, Hannes Bester of Port Elizabeth and Michael Zamsaka of Uitenhage, while Patrick Kam-Kam of Uitenhage and Hennie le Roux of Nelspruit both completed 25 years of service.

At the top end of the scale, Hendrik Hofmeyr achieved a remarkable 40 years of service by working beyond his normal retirement date. Most of his work focused on the management of false codling moth in citrus and at the launch of XSIT (Pty) Ltd, a company utilising the techniques that he developed, his recent contributions were recognised.

Hendrik Hofmeyr at the XSIT launch, has served the citrus industry for 40 years.