



mild aroma. Baobab oil is an excellent moisturizer and ideal for numerous cosmetic applications. It is one of the few oils which is added in its raw state in cosmetic products.

Southern African Baobab oil is made from baobab seeds of the *Adansonia digitata* tree. The seeds are found in large capsule-like fruit which grow on baobab trees. Baobab fruit grow on trees throughout the savannas of Africa. The fruit matures during the dry season and drops off the trees when ready to harvest. People living in rural area collect the fruit from under the trees. The fruit are then transported to a processing facility.

The seeds are extracted from the baobab fruit by cracking the hard, outer capsule. The extracted seeds are then washed to remove a powder coating and then air dried in the hot sun. These seeds can be stored for many months before pressing. Baobab oil is made by a cold pressing process. A press, or expeller, 'squeezes' the oil from the baobab seed. The newly pressed oil is immediately filtered to help clarify the oil which is then bottled.

Healing therapeutic properties of baobab oil.

Emollient – It is an excellent moisturizer for the skin.

Insulator – It protects the skin from excessive high and low temperatures.

Rejuvenator – It promotes rejuvenation of skin cells.

Non-siccative – It does not dry for a long time.

Cicatrisant – promotes wound healing.

Antioxidant – It prevents the skin from free radical damage.

Anti-Inflammatory – because of the presence of omega fatty acids

Baobab oil is the natural choice for healthy skin as it is an excellent skin moisturizer - it absorbs quickly into the skin without clogging pores and leaves the skin feeling soft and moisturized. Baobab oil contains Omega 3, 6 and 9 fatty acids which contribute towards maintaining a healthy skin.

Apart from the great contribution to skin care, Baobab oil can also relieve the itching of skin ailments like Eczema, Dry psoriasis, Skin Cancer, Acne, Sun burn, Bed sores, Scaly Skin Disorder and Actinic keratosis.

THE LAST WORD

MARTLI SLABBER is a citrus producer from Citrusdal in the Western Cape. She is optimistic about the citrus industry and during her career as a citrus producer, she has dealt with different aspects of the industry.

Martli has recently been appointed to the board of PPECB (Perishable Products Export Control Board).

LOUISE BRODIE REPORTS

Martli, what is your background and how did you become involved in the Citrus Industry?

I joined our family business, Hexrivier Sitrus, in the late eighties, wanting to gain experience in business administration. Being of a boots and all kind of person, farming grew on me, and found myself as often in the orchards as in the office. I got hooked by the multifaceted aspect of it and of course the sheer joy of being there. There was space and opportunity to try to do things differently, to help initiate changes for a sustainable agricultural future.

What has prompted you to become involved in organised agriculture? Has the time spent on your involvement with organised agriculture in turn been beneficial to your own business?

To build and maintain competitive advantage in the global marketplace, we need to communicate a coherent and consistent message of quality and reliability.

The industry became extremely fragmented shortly after deregulation. There were lots of competition and little cooperation. Everything was changing, with fragmented packing, logistics, marketing, and marketing intelligence.



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I got involved with discussions to found SitrusSA, at about the same time that we also started talking about coordination of the USA market in the Western Cape.

We needed to instil the discipline needed to maintain a South African quality reputation and regain, for the industry, market intelligence. The precursors of the current variety focus groups were forums where minimum standards for varieties were established by exporters as well as grower representatives. I was tasked with Soft Citrus Forum, and thus had the pleasure of working with representatives of the Southern and Eastern Cape as well as from the North. It made for raucous and vigorous discussions.

Accurate, up-to-date information was a critical need, not only for the USA Alliance, but also for the industry as a whole. Through organised lobbying of exporters, larger packhouses and IT service providers, we began the tentative data-collation which now informs decision-making of the variety focus groups. Industry information remains a priority and should be a strategic concern for us all.

I became a director of Goede Hoop Citrus after my father, Dirk Visser, retired, but left shortly afterward. It was an educational experience, which will stand me in good stead in future. Hexrivier Sitrus group unbundled in 2010, and we got a rather sudden appreciation of the challenges of being a smaller grower. I withdrew from industry to assess our own position and redefine our strategy as a business.

What led to your appointment as PPECB board member and what does your board membership appointment position require from you?

In setting quality standards and requiring information, we liaised quite frequently with PPECB, which helped to develop my understanding of its functions, and challenges.

The boards of public entities have come under scrutiny recently. It highlighted the responsibility of board members to ensure good governance and their accountability for decisions. Board membership demands unquestionable integrity as well as the ability to interrogate business processes and systems.

The credibility and reputation of PPECB's cold chain and inspection services are unblemished. We need to maintain this, and address the contribution of the entity to transformation of export agriculture, management of costs and optimisation of information systems.

Do you have any specific message to growers and other stakeholders in the citrus industry?

Meticulous cold chain management, quality inspections and CBS inspections, done by PPECB this year, remain a bulwark protecting our market access and our reputation as industry. I would like to acknowledge the work done by the PPECB inspectors who are often at the coalface of difficult decisions.

In the face of a recession and investment downgrades, the South African fiscus is under immense pressure, as is the agricultural industry with the drought. We are dependent on each other, to ensure a resilient and inclusive industry. With limited resources and growing impatience about transformation, we need to coordinate our efforts, to nurture green shoots across various agricultural industries and entities. We need to keep talking.