

# SUBTROP BULLETIN

VOLUME 1  
JULY 2020



Dear SAAGA, SAMGA and SALGA members

The unusual circumstances of recent months have made face-to-face meetings impossible. Symposia, farmer visits and about dozen study groups have been sacrificed in the national effort to contain the Covid-19 pandemic. We sorely miss each and every interaction. However, as the old saying goes "Necessity is the mother of invention." Therefore, we wish to present you our latest communication: the monthly Subtrop Bulletin. This newsletter will be used as a platform to keep members informed on industry and market developments, board meeting proceedings and general production and grower news. We hope you will find this brief means of communication insightful and of use.

- Sincerely, the Subtrop team

## GLOBAL NEWS



- Overview: Global avocado market - [Freshplaza](#)
- Message from WAO regarding the COVID-19 pandemic - [PR Newswire](#)
- South African avocado export forecast revised downwards, but demand is strong - [Freshfruitportal](#)

## PROMOTIONS

### SABC 3 Expresso

- 4 inserts in June for **World Avocado Month**
  - 5, 12, 19 & [26 June](#)
- For previous inserts click below:
  - 22 May - [Dark & Green skin](#)
  - 23 April - [#Guacdown](#) - competition
  - 23 April - [#Guacdown winner & avo tree](#)
  - 26 March - [Media launch](#)



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## ASSOCIATION NEWS

### SAAGA Board Meeting held 13 May 2020

- **Voluntary false codling moth (FCM) management system**
  - A voluntary FCM management system requiring growers to submit monitoring and control data would not be implemented across the industry, as FCM was not problematic in many orchards. However, grower should be encouraged to do the necessary monitoring in their orchards and apply control measures where necessary.
- **Tree Census**
  - Information has been received from 43% of SAAGA's grower members, accounting for 10212 ha. However this information is of very little value if a greater proportion of growers do not submit their census information. The board recommended that packhouses be approached to request permission from their growers to provide orchard information to SAAGA. It was stressed that individual growers' information will be kept confidential and only aggregated data will be made public.
- **Lecturing position at Stellenbosch University**
  - SAAGA, in partnership with SAMAC, will fund a lecturing position at Stellenbosch University to lecture a course on Subtropical crops and lead appropriate research. This is part of SAAGA's long term strategy to invest in research capacity and to produce graduates to be future leaders in the industry.
- **Immature fruit on the market**
  - Following a successful campaign in early 2020 to curb the placement of immature fruit on the market, work has already started for the 2021 season. Subtrop's Transformation Coordinator, Stephen Matsho, will be working with SAAGA growers in Venda to ensure that their fruit is tested and that packhouses and market agents know who the SAAGA member growers are. Andries Bester is liaising with Prokon to ensure that inspections become even more efficient at the start of the 2021 season.
- **SAAGA representation**
  - SAAGA's Vice Chairman, Clive Garrett, has been elected as PPECB's chairman for a 3-year term. He has also taken over from Trevor Dukes as one of South Africa's representatives on the World Avocado Organisation (WAO) Board. Zac Bard is the other SA representative and the current WAO chairman.



### SALGA Board Meeting held 27 May 2020

- **SALGA constitution**
  - The SALGA board is reviewing the SALGA constitution ensure that is relevant to take the association into the coming years. Proposed amendments will be provided to members for adoption at the SALGA AGM in October 2020.
- **Cold treatment for USA market**
  - SALGA has submitted a proposal via the SA Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Reform (DALRRD) to the USA government for the use of cold treatment as an alternative to irradiation treatment which is required when exporting in litchis to the USA. The process is moving forward and comments have been made by both the USA and South Africa on the proposal. However, due to the current political relationship between the USA and SA, adoption of the proposed cold treatment is not expected to take place before the 2020/2021 season. Until such, exports to the USA will continue using irradiation as a phytosanitary treatment.
- **Cultivar trials**
  - Renewed focus to ensure that cultivar trials carried out by the ARC-TSC bear fruit. Greater emphasis on testing cultivars imported by SALGA on commercial farms. New early and late cultivars as well as cultivars with acceptable taste profiles for new markets such as China and India are required.



## SAMGA Board Meeting held 28 May 2020



- **Cultivar evaluation**
  - Evaluation of promising selections remains a high priority. Evaluation orchards are on commercial farms in Hoedspruit, Malelane, Tzaneen and Clanwilliam. SAMGA is working to finalise agreement with the ARC for further testing and commercialisation of promising cultivars.
- **SAMGA Mango Day & AGM**
  - Due to COVID-19, the SAMGA Mango Day, which was scheduled for 17 July 2020, has been postponed. The AGM, however will be held by Zoom in July and a short Webinar will be held to present results of research currently being funded by SAMGA.

## SUBTROP chemical workshop



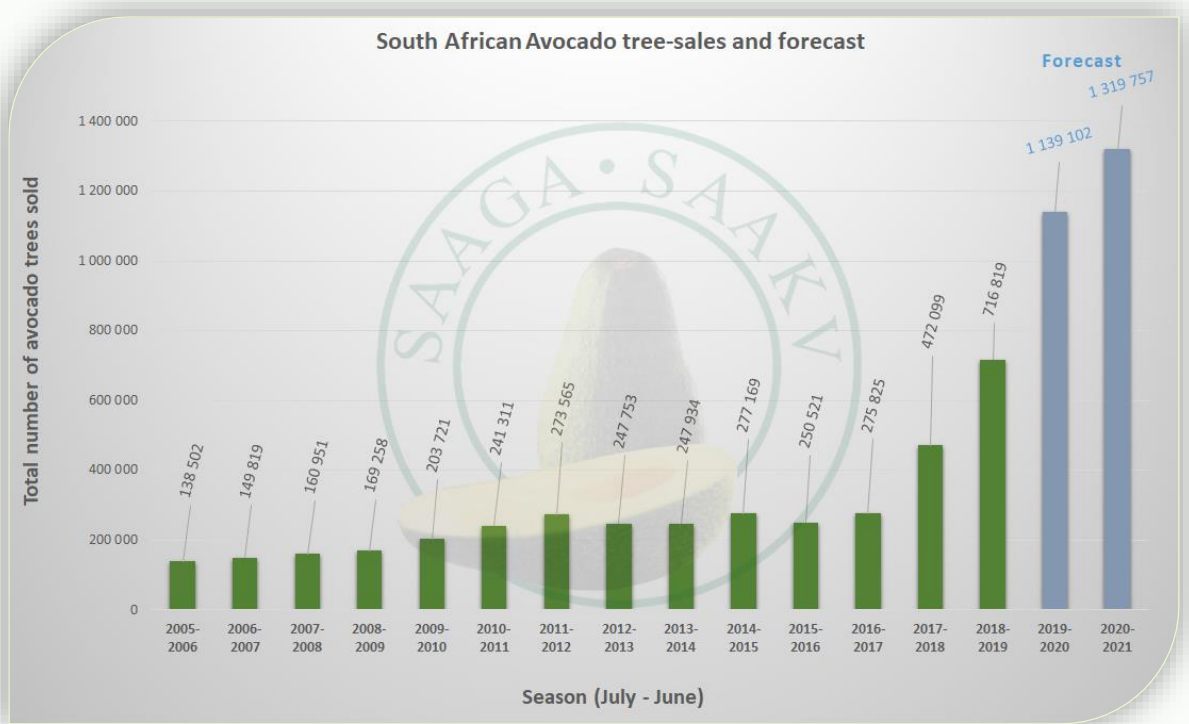
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Subtrop Plant Protection Products (Chemicals) virtual workshop** was held on the 4th of June 2020
- 50 Organisations represented
  - Local & multinational chemical companies, ARC, DALRRD & Subtrop
- Focus
  - Call for **new & alternative chemical registrations** and avocado, mango & litchi
  - Restrictions/limitation of use
  - MRL reductions
  - Residue issues

## Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer trapping research project



In June 2020 Subtrop, in partnership with the Hans Merensky Avocado Research Programme (ARP) at the University of Pretoria and Cropwatch Africa, will begin visiting selected avocado production farms and engaging with farmers and their scouting teams to hang traps and begin monitoring for the Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer (PSHB). The two types of traps will capture bark beetles and PSHB individuals, if present, and aim to determine whether the pest is a threat to the industry as well as clarify its distribution in several avocado production regions. The traps and accompanying mobile software are provided by Cropwatch Africa, and identification services of samples collected and management of the project are overseen by personnel and students within the ARP.

## Avocado tree-sales & forecast



## New season approaching fast



**Avocado** orchards in the Levubu and Letaba regions will have an early flowering season. **Litchis** in Malelane is also nearing full bloom. Apply your foliar sprays in time to provide the nutrients needed for flowering and fruit set (Boron, Zinc, etc).

**Remember:** Boron uptake is limited if application does not correspond with foliar flushes. Foliar applications will improve flowering and fruit set, but soil applications are essential to address major deficiencies. More information on avo nutrition is available on the SAAGA website under "[Technical info](#)" or the **Avocado Production Guide** app on your mobile device: [avoproductionguide.co.za/nutrition](https://avoproductionguide.co.za/nutrition)

Dear **Mango farmers** 🍌

The new season is upon us and the trees are starting to flower. Now is time for the flower and fruit complex spray programme as well as pest and disease control, please refer to the updated MRL lists on the SAMGA website: [www.mango.co.za/technical-info](http://www.mango.co.za/technical-info)

## Registration of solar panels



- Good news; Eskom is now permitted to connect low voltage customers to the grid (240 Volt and 400 Volt).
- **Please take special note:** if your system is less than 1000 kVA, you need only Register it. If you generate 1000 kVA or more, you need a generation license from NERSA (a completely different process).
- **Remember:** If you already have a grid tied generator like solar, you need to Register it. Registration is different to Licensing.
- To start the process, first contact Eskom or your local Municipality.
- For Eskom customers, phone 08600 37566 for the Grid Access Department (remember to keep your reference number).

### **Why must you register your solar system?**

- 1) For the safety of the people working on the grid. You do not want to be liable if a worker is electrocuted because of an unknown SSEG.
- 2) Eskom will soon kick start a process to identify and audit all unregistered SSEGs'. At first it will be a soft approach asking customers to comply. Later, Eskom might take a harder line.

Remember: Eskom gives a free energy advisory service, contact us at your convenience. For more information, contact Roger Stones (015 306 7839; 083 302 1851; [StonesRD@Eskom.co.za](mailto:StonesRD@Eskom.co.za)).



SALGA SAMGA