

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2016

VOORSITTERSVERSLAG

SAAGA is vanjaar 50 jaar oud en het gegroei van 'n nederige begin tot myns insiens die beste bedryfsorganisasie in die wêreld in 50 jaar.

SAAGA started and grew because of the passion of people for avocado trees and fruit and later for the industry itself.

SAAGA has developed over the past 50 years to a mature organisation that serves its members' needs. Many people have given of their time and knowledge without any compensation due to the passion that they have for the avocado industry. The avocado industry is blessed with wonderful people, passionate about their industry. They are people that work together in good faith and good spirit to reach a common goal.

Selfs al verskil ons onderling van mekaar werk ons mooi saam om gesamentlike doelwitte te bereik. Groot ondernemings en kleinboere dra vrywillig persentasiegewys dieselfde by deur hulle heffings te betaal. Die uitvoermaatskappye en ander rolspelers dra ook daartoe by dat die avokadobedryf positief groei.

This will be my last opportunity to thank everyone for contributing to SAAGA's success. Thank you to the leaders in the industry producing the bulk of our volumes and to every farmer for paying levies willingly. SAAGA needs every one of you and would not be successful without you. Thank you to our exporters – you are playing a major role in developing the market for avocados.

Thank you to suppliers and financial institutions for supporting our industry and to our researchers developing our knowledge.

At the SAAGA strategic think tank held on 22 October 2013, key focus areas were defined (Table 1). I would like to use this table to explain what SAAGA did in the past year.

PRODUCTION SUPPORT

- Benchmarking is taking place comparing waste factors at pack houses.
- Best practices constantly being sought by the technical people in the different areas.
- Where possible and on request the extension officers visit farms.
- Study groups are a very important part of the service to members and are very well attended in some of the regions.

- Research is ongoing and is currently very relevant. The stink bug research is a very good example of achieving something that seemed impossible.
- Technical people sometimes leave SAAGA, but skills stay in the industry.

LIAISON AND COMMUNICATION

- Improve communication with members: Newsletters and the Subtrop Journal as well as verbal communication at study groups are the most important. In my opinion we can improve our communication with members.
- Gathering of information is an ongoing process that assists the growers.
- Lobbying for market access is taking place.
- The increase of competitiveness: The World Avocado Organisation is one example. Joining Fruit SA and taking part in those activities is another.
- Liaison with government: In this area SAAGA has improved – through Fruit SA and Bonnie Buthelezi's skills and hard work together with the marketing committee.
- Feed off individual success: The transformation summit.

MARKET ACCESS AND DEVELOPMENT

- Everyone is aware of market access efforts and that we will see success soon.
- Market growth is very important to grow our industry and the World Avocado Organisation will contribute to growth in Europe.
- The SA market is growing due to the hard work and success of the marketing team under the guidance of Bonnie Buthelezi. It is good and exciting to see what they are doing to promote avocado consumption in SA.
- Good stories were told at the transformation summit, but more could be done.

I believe that SAAGA is successful in achieving these goals, but there is always scope to improve and to give better service to our members. The exit of SAMAC from Subtrop is a setback but also a challenge. The Board held a strategic planning session and a brain storm to evaluate SAAGA's structure, to retain our staff and to give a better service to members.

Table 1. SAAGA's key focus areas.

Production support	Liaison & communication	Market access & development (Gain, Retain, Optimise)
1. Increase yield Maintain / improve quality Control costs Benchmarking Best practices Extension officers Study groups Technical research (production & post harvest) 2. Develop skills pipeline for industry	1. Improve communication with members. 2. Gather and disseminate information (local and international). 3. Lobby for market access. 4. Coordinate and facilitate role players around relevant industry affairs to increase competitiveness of industry. 5. Connect avocado industry to government's objectives (National Development Plan). Improve government support of the industry. 6. Feed off individual successes for the good of the industry. Highlight successes.	1. Identify and prioritise new markets that should be accessed e.g. USA, China, Japan. Develop and implement a market access strategy. 2. Ensure sustainable growth in current markets. Grow SA market. Maintain EU market through technical compliance and reliability in terms of quality and supply. 3. Tell the good stories in the avocado industry.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all members paying their levies and for your loyalty.

Thank you to the Subtrop staff:

- Derek Donkin – for your knowledge and hard work to drive our industry;
- Gerhard Nortjé and the technical team;
- Bonnie Buthelezi and the marketing committee;
- Johan Benade and financial team;
- Lizette de Wet and all the other staff.

On a personal note I want to thank the staff for the loyalty and respect that I received from every one.

To the Board members that serve the industry at their own cost; for your wisdom and support and the good spirit during Board meetings.

Alles word bepaal deur tyd en geleentheid. Iemand is maar net op die regte plek en tyd en kry dan 'n taak waarvoor hy nie noodwendig opgelei is nie. As ek kyk na almal wat voor my voorsitter van SAAGA was – mense vir wie ek hoë agting het en wat almal diep spore in ons bedryf getrap het – dan besef ek dat ek eintlik in 'n laer liga speel.

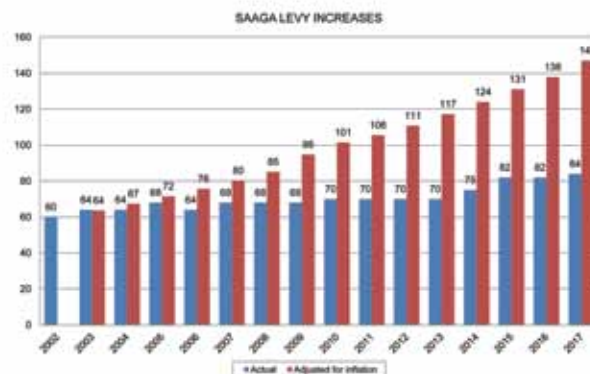


Figure 1. SAAGA's levy increases.

I came from the bench of the second team and had to run on the field to play for the first team. I thank you for the opportunity and apologise for the mistakes that I made.

May the Lord bless you all and our season that lies ahead.

Kosie Elloff

