



Chairman's Report for the 2000/01 fiscal year

Vir almal wat in die mangobedryf betrokke is – veral die Kwekersvereniging se lede – was die afgelope finansiële jaar 'n baie moeilike een. Henri Finnemore het in November 2000 bedank en ons moes die seisoen sonder 'n Algemene Bestuurder begin. Met die goeie samewerking van almal binne en dié buite die kantoor, het alles tog goed verloop.

Met sy wye kennis en ondervinding is dr Lindsey Milne toe tydelik in diens geneem om die Vereniging te help bestuur. Lindsey was involved in a terrible accident in Tzaneen in the early hours of one rainy February morning. He was discharged from Duiwelskloof Hospital and was doing well when he suddenly took a turn for the worse and, due to the injuries to his lungs as well as pneumonia, tragically passed away.

By this time we had already started the process of finding a General Manager. At the beginning of April, Stephan Crafford, who has his background in the forestry industry, was appointed. He deserves applause for the sterling work he has already done and for taking on the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

I would also like to specially mention other staff members who continue to put in more than their fair share to make this Association the success it is. They are:

- Sonja van Zyl in the front office;
- Christa Scholtz in the back office on Subtrop and Exports;
- Ally Loughor-Clarke on Promotions, Accreditation and Food Safety; and
- Harry Grové in the field as Technical Officer.

Last season saw many records being broken:

- Total production went from 60 000 tons to 80 000 tons.
- Dried mango went from 3 000 tons to 4 500 tons.
- Achar went from 20 000 tons to 40 000 tons.
- Juice went from 8 000 tons to 9 500 tons.
- Local Market went down from 18 000 tons to 15 000 tons.
- Exports went up from 10 500 tons to 13 000 tons.

Unfortunately there were no record prices to follow the record production in the various sections of our industry. One of the less pleasant

issues is the one of immature fruit, which some unscrupulous producers and agents insist on offering for sale on the National Fresh Produce Markets and in chain stores. This fruit again did immense harm to the local market pricing of mangoes to the degree that many producers decided not to even bother with trying to pack any fruit.

At this point I would like to put it on record that this Association has no problem with artificially ripened fruit as long as the internal maturity is of such a degree that the fruit will ripen up properly and be a good buy for the consumer. Your Association views the problem of immature fruit being offered for sale on the markets and through the chains in such a serious light that we are currently looking to legislate against it. Work has already been done in the past and will continue to be done to determine the correct maturity indices so that the producers cannot flood the markets with fruit that is not ready for packing and consumption. Hopefully legislation will be in place before the 2002/03 season.

The collection of levies still poses a huge headache to the Association. Dr. Milne calculated that during the 1999/2000 season an amount of R260 000 was not collected in levies actually due to the Association. Again, unfortunately, it would appear as if the only path left is to legislate the collection of levies. The method of levy collection by the other fruit and vegetable industries is being studied in order to find the best solution to our problem. The processors still remain the worst at collecting levies on behalf of the Association.

I was my privilege to be invited as guest speaker at the Australian Mango Industry Association's (AMIA) annual conference that was held in Cairns, Queensland during August. I was asked to give their growers a perspective of our industry and to inform them on, mainly, our exports to the Middle and Far East. Before my departure I was mandated by our Association to try to form an alliance with the Australian growers in order to share market information on mangoes sent to the East. This I did and I do believe, as long as both sides play fair and give accurate information, this new alliance will be of benefit to both industries and many different



aspects, from Research and Development to Price Setting, could have a positively outcome for all.

The Zimbabwe growers continue to be members of our Association. For the past four or five seasons our officers have traveled to their growing areas and have disseminated all the latest information to them. Our thoughts are with them all as they go through some very trying times.

Next year (2002) there will be another International Mango Symposium. This time the venue is in Brazil. I urge as many of the Southern African growers as possible to attend this symposium seeing as Brazil is our biggest competitor. The Australians have also shown willingness to extend the South African/Australian al-

liance to include as many of the South American countries, especially Brazil, as possible so that we can all share information to our benefit.

I would like to thank all the Management Committee members for their dedication to this Association, for the many hours spent on mango business and the many hours on the road. I would also like to extend a special word of thanks to the Executive Committee members who put in many hours, days and kilometres to make this Association run so smoothly.

All that remains for me to say is that the forthcoming season looks promising and I wish you all a prosperous and fruitful crop.

Richard Elphick
Chairman - SAMGA

