SEASON’S GREETINGS

Management and personnel of SAPO Trust would like to convey their gratitude to each and every producer, nursery, supplier, client and friend for their continued patronage and business. The past year was full of challenges. We had a record-breaking year with a demand for plant material of several fruit types. Despite the drought and other issues, SAPO is doing well and for that we are thankful.

We would like to wish you a blessed Festive Season. Those fortunate to enjoy a vacation, enjoy your rest. Working in the fruit industry, most of you will probably be in mid-season, harvesting. However, we wish you an enjoyable time spent with loved ones and friends.

SANTA SHOEBOX

The Santa Shoebox Project collects and distributes gifts at Christmas time to underprivileged children throughout South Africa and Namibia. SAPO personnel again took part in this project by putting a smile on 13 children’s faces.

SELECTION AND UPGRADEING OF VARIETIES

SAPO Trust takes great pride in supplying the best virus-free plant material to the South African stone and pome fruit industry. During harvest season, the team is in the orchards looking for mutations and upgrading existing varieties. With the new season ahead, we are looking forward to what Mother Nature brings to the table.

SHORTAGES FOR 2018 PLANTING SEASON

Nurseries are currently experiencing shortages of stone fruit rootstocks to fill orders for the 2018 planting season. Shortages are due to a poor take of cuttings, mainly GF677, Viking and Flordaguard varieties. The past dry and warm winter, plus current weather conditions have had an influence on this poor take. A shortage of peach seedlings is due to the poor germination of Kakamas seeds from one of SAPO’s mother block sources.

The germination protocol, before supplying seeds to nurseries, is currently under revision. Expansion of mother blocks, in order to increase the supply, are planned. Foundation rootstock blocks will be expanded, to supply more mother plants and cuttings to nurseries to fulfil future demand. The importation and multiplication of tissue culture rootstocks is being investigated in order to supply more rootstock trees of your choice.
TABLE GRAPE SYMPOSIUM, ITALY

Divan Venter and Burgert attended the 8th International Table Grape Symposium in Apulia and Sicily. New technologies, varieties and management techniques were among the main topics discussed at the symposium. Technical tours included visits to producers, packers and exporters.

UPOV (TWF), CANADA

Burgert attended the UPOV Technical Working Party for Fruit Crops in Canada during September. Test guideline revision of blueberry, Japanese plum and several nut species were addressed during the session. Some topics discussed were the number of growing cycles of DUS tests in the fruit sector and minimum distances between varieties. Minimum distances are important in deciding if a variety is new and distinct.

VIRUS TESTING

The dedicated personnel of SAPO Lab are currently in the testing season for stone and pome fruit and grapevine viruses as prescribed by the Deciduous Fruit Plant Certification Scheme. Viruses have a small window period for testing. Testing the virus takes place when the virus concentrations are optimal for detection and are specific to this time of the year.

The current testing season will run until Friday 15 December 2017. For any queries related to virus testing of these fruit types please send an email to emcee@saplant.co.za.

NEW APPOINTMENT

Roleen Carstens has joined the Innovation and Support team as Plant Pathologist during November. She is well known in the industry, and SAPO is fortunate to have such an accomplished addition to their work force.

Roleen is looking forward to meeting SAPO clients in the near future. Feel free to contact her for planting material issues.