



SAPO SHOWCASES FRUIT  
VARIETIES AT 13 FIELD DAYS

During the 2024/2025 season, SAPO successfully hosted 13 field days to showcase some of its most promising fruit varieties. Featured were one plum variety (John W) one pear variety (Delwilmor) and eight apple varieties: Gorgeous Gala, Bigbucks, Viljee Gala, Royal Beaut, Maribelle, Fuji Royal, Shortie, and Magic Star.

These events provided producers with the opportunity to observe the fruit on the trees firsthand and give them technical advice on how to produce these varieties.

Approximately 250 attendees, including producers, technical advisors, fruit packers, and journalists, participated in the field days. SAPO extends its sincere gratitude to Dian Craven and Keith Bradley from Fruitways, Leon Crous from Core, Hammies Hamman from CFG, and Willie Kotze from Du Toit Agri for their invaluable assistance in organizing these events and contributing to their success.



REPORT: JOHN W STORAGE  
TRIALS (AFRIKAANS)



Variety	Date	Area	Farm	Attendees	Organized
Gorgeous Gala	30 Jan	Grabouw	Fine Farms	10	SAPO
Delwilmor	31 Jan	Witzenberg	Rosendalfontein	3	SAPO
Bigbucks	3 Feb	Garbouw	Glen Elgin	15	Dian Craven
		Vyeboom	Graymead		
Gorgeous Gala	6 Feb	Grabouw	Fine Farms	8	SAPO
Viljee Gala		Vyeboom	Lecino		CSN
Bigbucks	7 Feb	Witzenberg	Paardekloof	50	SAPO, CFG,
			Wakkerstroom		Du Toit
Royal Beaut	7 Feb	Witzenberg	Paardekloof	50	SAPO, CFG
			Wakkerstroom		Du Toit
John W	17 Feb	Breeriver	Skoonsuitsig	10	SAPO
John W	4 Mar	Robertson	Klipboschlaagte	8	SAPO
Maribelle	12 Mar	Bo Swaarmoed	Laastedrif	7	SAPO
					Fresh Forward
Fuji Royal	25 Mar	Grabouw	Fine Farms	26	Keith Bradley
Fuji Shortie			Applegarth	26	
Magic Star	2 Apr	Langkloof	Vryheid Farm	12	SAPO
					Core



## INNOVATION IN FOCUS: SAPO APPLE EXHIBITION

On 11 April 2025, the SAPO Apple Exhibition brought together 15 guests for an exclusive showcase of 18 diverse apple varieties, highlighting the latest developments in apple breeding and selection.

Standout varieties included the crisp and flavourful Magic Star, the striking RGB 248 (Capegreen), and the ever-reliable Fuji Royal. Guests were also introduced to Parys Granny, Regal'You – a scab-resistant innovation – and the popular Maribelle, known for its white, non-oxidising flesh. A promising new Early Red One selection also captured attention, hinting at exciting commercial potential.

It was a morning of insightful conversation, varietal exploration, and a shared vision for the future of South African apple production.



**VIDEO: FLASH GALA™**  
KEY TECHNICAL AND BRAND  
REQUIREMENTS



## AUTUMN BUDWOOD COLLECTION SEASON 2025



The recent autumn season marked a successful period for SAPO's budwood collection efforts. The collection team commenced their selection process for RYB Select in Week 3, with a focused approach on identifying genetically superior red apple and pear cultivars, particularly RYB Select and Roselyn.



This season showed notably improved growth in Gala cultivars like RYB Select compared to previous years. The SAPO Budwood Collection Team capitalised on this opportunity, harvesting the maximum available budwood to meet ongoing demand—while remaining fully compliant with the cultivar's strict selection protocols. Fruit colour in RYB Select was also excellent this season, contributing significantly to the successful selection volume.

Other apple and pear cultivars also performed exceptionally well, showing strong vegetative growth. These included Forelle, Packham's Triumph, Early Bon Chrétien, Cape Blush, Roselyn, Abate Fetel, Granny Smith, Fuji Royal, Golden Delicious Reinders, Golden Delicious NIVV, Early Red One, and Shortie.

The team is now awaiting full dormancy of the deciduous fruit trees before commencing the cutting of well-hardened winter budwood. Preparations are underway, and the team is energized and optimistic about the season ahead.





**Leafroll testing** was conducted in May. Several early positive results required retesting; these have since been completed and submitted to the lab, and we are currently awaiting the results.

The process has been smooth and well-managed, with no major complications. Final sampling will focus on Dovine and Sundowner varieties.

## SEASONAL FIELD & NURSERY UPDATE



**Nursery inspections** kicked off in January at Caledon Valley, where all SAPO-controlled varieties were evaluated. So far, all inspected trees meet the PLANTSA Nursery Scheme requirements.

Key trends noted:

- Shortie is increasingly propagated on CG778, despite being a spur-bearing variety.
- Propagation on Geneva rootstocks is growing across all pomefruit nursery trees.

Inspections for pome and stone fruit nurseries are still underway and will be completed by end of May 2025.

We are establishing new foundation and mother blocks to meet rising demand for grape varieties like Sundowner, Dovine, Selma Pete and Flame.

Positive feedback from Caledon Valley on Nicored is encouraging increased interest and propagation.

Interest in RYB Select budwood is also on the rise, reflecting a strong season ahead.



### MEET THE TEAM: Khaya Ngoshe

Khaya Ngoshe is a valued member of the SAPO team with deep experience in deciduous fruit variety development and plant improvement. Starting out in variety evaluation, he now leads the collection and supply of pome and stonefruit plant material.

Khaya is passionate about delivering clean, cost-effective material and building trusted client relationships. He holds a Postgraduate Diploma in Sustainable Agriculture from the University of the Free State and continues to play a key role in SAPO's success.

You can reach Khaya at [khaya@saplant.co.za](mailto:khaya@saplant.co.za).

## ORDER PLANT MATERIAL

- **Winter plant material:** Orders are open. These trees are intended for planting in 2026.
- **Stone fruit summer plant material:** Orders can be placed from October.



**Elsa Muller**

Variety Development Manager and Grower Support  
[elsa@saplant.co.za](mailto:elsa@saplant.co.za)



**Marthinus Gresse**

Production Manager Tree Fruit  
[gressem@saplant.co.za](mailto:gressem@saplant.co.za)



**Nadine Steenkamp**

Grapevine Sales Coordinator  
[nadine@saplant.co.za](mailto:nadine@saplant.co.za)



**Annamarie van As**

Pome & Stone Fruit Sales Coordinator  
[annamarie@saplant.co.za](mailto:annamarie@saplant.co.za)

