

SA FRUIT & VEGETABLE CANNERS' ASSOCIATION

SAFVCA Newsletter: April 2008 (Issue 1 of 2008)



IMPLEMENTATION OF EFTA Great News for Processed Agri-Products!!!

The SACU-EFTA Free Trade Agreement, which was concluded and signed in 2006 between the SACU region (South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland) and the EFTA states (Switzerland, Iceland, Norway and Lichtenstein) will finally be implemented on 01 May 2008. This has been confirmed by EFTA after all parties have now ratified and deposited the requisite legal instruments.

This provides for a formal trading relationship between the SACU and EFTA states and provides for tariff concessions on processed agricultural products. More detailed information relating to these concessions are covered in an Annex to the main Agreement. In short, this offers an asymmetrical tariff phase-down in SACU's favour and, needless to say, great benefits to our industry.

We are pleased that SAFVCA's continuous approach with Government in this regard has finally borne fruit. We are extremely happy with the outcome as we are convinced that SAFVCA's efforts played an integral part of this success.

Visit of EU Ambassador

On 11 February 2008, the EU Ambassador to SA, Lodewijk Briet visited the "PPP" Fruit Canning Initiative Project.



This afforded the industry with an opportunity to provide the Ambassador with an update in respect of the "PPP". The reason for this is that the SWEEEP fund, administered by the DTI is funded by the EU and it is from this fund that the "PPP" has sourced 50% of the required funding.

This event was well attended by a cross-cut of industry stakeholders and we were especially pleased that the DTI's Director-General, Matona, availed the time to represent and speak on behalf of the DTI at this special occasion.



In this picture:
(Left) DTI's
DG Matona;
(Right) EU
Ambassador
Briet

FURTHER UPDATES

EU MID TERM REVIEW As you are aware, an interim EC-SADC EPA Agreement was initiated by the EC and some member states of the SADC (EPA configuration) at the end of December 2007 and this will be implemented on 01 July 2008. However, SA is not yet a signatory to the agreement as a result of certain unresolved legal/technical issues between the parties.

We remain hopeful that the parties will return to the table in order for the full EPA to be concluded by 31 December 2008. SAFVCA will continue with its support programme in both the EU and SA to ensure that the canning industry's interests remain top of mind.

AGRI BEE CHARTER The AgriBEE Sector Charter was launched on 04 April 2008. This charter determines the rules and guidelines on BEE status for all agri-related businesses with a turnover of more than R5-million per annum. The full text is contained in Government Gazette No 30886 Vol. 513 of 20 March 2008.

SIAL 2008 The deadline for applications for SIAL 2008 has been extended to 16 April 2008 – although applications from the industry have already been lodged with the DTI. The fair will take place from 19 to 23 October 2008 in Paris.

SA-CHINA 10 YEAR CELEBRATION SA will be participating in major international expo events in China during October 2008 to celebrate their Partnership for Growth & Development.

For any further information, kindly contact SAFVCA's office on Tel: 021-871 1308 or email info@safvca.co.za