

"It's the simple things in life that are extraordinary; only wise men are able to understand them."

Paul Coelho

CGA CITRUS LEGEND LOUIS VON BROEMBSSEN

We all know that this industry is built on the bedrock of research and the intellectual capital of many individuals. Louis von Broembsen is one of those who put together that research bedrock. Earlier this year, at the Citrus Summit, he was honoured as one of the industry's three new Citrus Legends.

The former CEO of the CGA, Justin Chadwick, gave attendees an overview of Louis' remarkable career.

As everyone knows, the origins of a great orchard are the saplings that are planted on day one – growers in southern Africa are assured of disease-free and true to type trees through the workings of the Citrus Improvement Scheme (CIS). Louis played a leading role in the establishment of the CIS and the introduction of the shoot tip grafting technique as a standard CIS procedure. He travelled extensively in the US, learning about world-class systems and procedures, and helped put into place the CIS – an institution that all growers take for granted nowadays.

Louis attended the University of Natal where he obtained a Master of Science in Horticulture. He has a long history of employment appointments in the citrus industry:

- South African Cooperative Citrus Exchange (SACCE) extension officer in 1970
- Research Horticulturist in 1973
- Assistant Manager: Production Research in 1981
- Divisional Manager: Research and Technical in 1988.
- Then in Outspan International, Executive Divisional Manager: Research and Technical in 1993.
- In Capespan, Group General Manager: Research and Development in 1999
- Private consultant from 2004 onwards

He has also played a huge role in the development of Citrus Research International (CRI) when many were grappling with the positioning of research post deregulation, and served fifteen active years on the CRI Board. He has led more strategic planning sessions in the citrus industry than most can recall. But those who attended the sessions will remember his workshops for the particular way he always placed the paper cards on a sheet on the wall – most delegates trying to figure out how this paper stayed in place and didn't fall off, rather than concentrating on the questions posed...

He managed the research and extension services in SACCE, Outspan and Capespan in a legendarily diplomatic style. He was always willing to assist in helping younger scientists to develop their career. The list of people that Louis attracted to the citrus industry is like a Who's Who of citrus research excellence in Southern Africa – Andy Lee and Thys DuToit; young scientists at the time, such as Hennie Leroux, Etienne Rabe, Graham Barry, Steve Burdette, Andy Krajewski and many others who were all students and post-grads during this time. Louis and these scientists were instrumental in putting into place the processes to eradicate the soil-borne pathogens both in nurseries and orchards, increasing productivity exponentially during the years of the installing of the CIS. All while at the same time also leading an excellent extension service for farmers.

PACKED AND SHIPPED

End of Week 19 Million 15 kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed	Vision 260
SOURCE: PPECB/AGRIHUB	2023	2024	2025	2024	2025	2025	2025	2024	2025
Grapefruit	6.4 m	6.5 m	6.5 m	4.0 m	5.7 m	15.3 m	15.3 m	14.4 m	16.8 m
Lemons	13.2 m	11.6 m	11.7 m	8.0 m	11.4 m	32.9 m	33.2 m	34.7 m	41.5 m
Mandarins	5.2 m	6.1 m	4.4 m	3.4 m	4.2 m	44.9 m	44.9 m	41.6 m	43.9 m
Navels	1.1 m	1.3 m	0.5 m	0.2 m	0.4 m	26.1 m	26.1 m	25.1 m	21.7 m
Valencia	-	-	-	-	-	52.0 m	52.0 m	48.8 m	58.0 m
Total	25.9 m	25.5 m	23.1 m	15.6 m	21.7 m	171.1m	171.5m	164.6 m	181.9 m