

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S FOREWORD



**LUCIEN JANSEN**  
Chief Executive Officer

I am pleased to present the PPECB's annual report for the 2021/22 fiscal year. It is no secret that the year was extremely challenging while being somewhat rewarding. The impact of COVID-19 continued to create a great deal of uncertainty, exacerbated by the logistical challenges experienced by the export industry and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

## SUSTAINED GROWTH

Notwithstanding the challenges faced, the perishable produce industry exceeded expectations and moved over 3.5 million tonnes. This represents an 8.8% increase in volumes compared to 2020/2021. Significant growth was recorded again for citrus fruit exports, which reported a 13% increase over the previous year. Europe continues to be South Africa's major trading partner, with 36% of our produce exported to this region. Exports to Asia remained consistent at 19%, with the Middle East at 15% and the United Kingdom taking 12% of South African produce.

Whilst the increase in exports was welcomed, it put further strain on struggling port infrastructure. In response, the PPECB availed additional resources and introduced a 24-hour service delivery model to alleviate the pressure on the logistical chain. In addition, regular reports were provided to ensure stakeholders could make informed decisions based on the information at hand.

## DIGITALISATION

The PPECB continued with its drive toward a digitised environment and made significant strides toward a fully-fledged Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. During the period under review, the PPECB appointed an implementation partner, procured the relevant software, and documented most revised business processes. The ERP is well on track to being delivered toward the latter part of 2022 and will form the backbone of the PPECB's future digitalisation initiatives. We remain confident that the ERP system, when introduced, will improve the PPECB's engagement with stakeholders and create further efficiencies throughout the organisation.

Now a household name in the South African export industry, TITAN 2.0<sup>®</sup> made further strides, with 85% of the main product volumes having been inspected using the platform. Grape inspections were reported at 99%, with 88% of citrus fruit inspected using TITAN 2.0<sup>®</sup>. However, this achievement was not without its challenges, and we remain grateful for the support of industry stakeholders and the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD). The next phase will focus on developing Cold Chain modules and further integrating with stakeholder systems. The focus of the PPECB remains on reducing manual interventions and the drive toward a paperless business.

The provision of timeous and relevant industry information remains one of the organisation's strategic deliverables. Therefore, the PPECB has introduced an electronic, self-service information portal called Intellex to assist stakeholders in getting the latest inspection and export information. Intellex is, however, only the beginning of the PPECB's quest to supply relevant statistics to our valued stakeholders. With the move towards a digital environment, the PPECB has further invested in securing its systems and information from cyber incidents. To this end, the PPECB has expanded its cyber security team and procured additional tools to mitigate the risk of cyber breaches. The organisation also had to invest in uninterrupted power supplies (UPS) at its major offices to minimise downtime because of continued loadshedding.

## RESPONSIBLE CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP

As an organisation determined to make a difference, the PPECB once again contributed to those less fortunate. After a year of absence, the "Chip in for Charity" golf day was held in November 2021. The day was very well supported, with R50 000 given to the nominated charity. Furthermore, we trained 302 smallholder farmers and certified 89 farmers for export readiness. This programme is conducted in collaboration with DALRRD and the nine provinces.

The PPECB also assisted six entities (schools and old age homes) with the establishment of sustainable gardens to serve as sources of income and food and collaborated with the Office of the Minister of DALRRD to donate food parcels to the needy. The PPECB, with strategic partners, will continue to invest in similar programmes and make a positive contribution to those in need.

## THANK YOU

Lastly, I am pleased to report that the PPECB obtained a 90% satisfaction rating for our customer satisfaction survey conducted in January 2022. This represents a 6% improvement on the previous year's rating.

As an entity, we are also very fortunate to remain financially sound, which positions us well to deliver a service to our valued clients. I, therefore, wish to thank all stakeholders for their continued support and collaboration. I also want to thank the PPECB Board and DALRRD for their guidance and my colleagues for their commitment during a very challenging year. Enjoy the read!