

Provar's driving goal is to provide an **independent evaluation service** to the deciduous fruit industry of South Africa through application of standardised protocols based on international best practice. Data collection is objective, credible and transparent to minimise risks when planting new cultivars.

Progress

Support for the evaluation programme of new cultivars and rootstocks started well this season through buy-in from various private IP owners.

- In total, 129 stone fruit cultivars and 64 pome fruit cultivars are under screening and advanced phase evaluation, to provide tree and fruit data to clients.
- Data is currently collected at 17 pome fruit and 17 stone fruit evaluation sites situated in

Nature and Reach of Service We see our clients as "Evaluation Partners", complimenting their in-house evaluation through a thorough screening and advanced evaluation that verifies the commercial potential of new cultivars and minimises planting risk for specific sites.



The Provar Team: Iwan Labuschagne (Provar Manager and Evaluator), Carl Hörstmann (Evaluator), Human Steenkamp (Evaluator), Chantel Adams (Admin and Data management), Christiaan Lombard (IT Manager).

all the major growing areas in the winter and summer rainfall areas.

Tree Evaluation

Provar performs Tree evaluation by monitoring and distinguishing horticultural characteristics at every stage during the season, providing the client with a full phenological sequence from bud break to harvest. Optimal harvest time, yield potential and all possible disorders and inherent limitations that may affect adaptability to the specific planting area are qualified.

Fruit evaluation

When it comes to the harvested product, Provar performs Visual and Sensory Fruit evaluation at four different stages. They evaluate Storage potential of cultivars and selections, assesses shelf life performance and identifies fruit disorders with great attention to detail. They characterise fruit according to size distribution and total weight to quantify commercial yield potential.

Evaluation mainly occurs on IP owners' evaluation plots during the first season, but for the following years Provar calls for early tree allocation to their own evaluation sites where cultivars and selections can be planted, ensuring representative planting in different areas. It is recommended that planting be performed as soon as material is released from quarantine, to reduce time before independent evaluation starts and to lower the costs of in-house tree management and evaluation.

Other services include identification of cross pollinators, testing of cultivar authenticity and determining chilling requirements. The Provar team also manages rootstock evaluation.

Technology

To support an effective evaluation process, in-house software applications ("Apps") are being developed by Provar. Adding value to the Provar offer, clients will be able to use these applications in their own initial evalu-

Science Gratitude

About 90 people attended the annual HORTGRO Science Researcher Thank You Breakfast in Stellenbosch. This popular event was held for the third time at the picturesque Mont Marie venue, just outside Stellenbosch.

According to Hugh Campbell, General Manager at HORTGRO Science, the event is important as a lot of researchers, peer work group members and technical advisory committee members put a lot of time and effort into making the fruit industry great. "This is our way of saying thank you."

This year the award for Best Popular Article went to **Caro Kapp, Antoinette Malan** and **Sheila Storey** for their article: *Nematode indicators for soil health monitoring of the Orchard of the Future at Oak Valley*.

The award for Best Science Communication effort, went to **Jorisna Bonthuys** and **Caren Jarman** for their *FruitLook* series.

The Best Final Report for Crop Production went to **Laura Alderman**.

Best Final Report Crop Protection went to **Noma Stokwe**, and the Best Final Report for Post-harvest went to **Mariana Jooste**.

- ation process to encourage delivery of favourable cultivars for next step evaluation by Provar. These applications will be used for tree characterisation, along with visual and sensory fruit evaluation in the laboratory and for industry tasting opportunities.

Clients design their own Evaluation Package

Provar is flexible in their approach and offers a tailor made "package" where the client can select evaluation sites (more than one site preferred), the period for evaluation (three years recommended) and the number of cultivars. A Screening evaluation will identify the front-runner from a selection of cultivars, and this is followed by a full evaluation trial. In the full trial, at least 10-20 full bearing trees per area will be planted to quantify adaptability and commercial potential. A stamped Provar certificate will verify the authenticity of data collected in the full trial.

"For our first-in-line clients, we offer **free** access to our **EVALUATION APP**, enabling them to standardise evaluation protocol and to become an evaluation partner to Provar. For long-term clients, we offer a planting plan for early evaluation - from quarantine to evaluation plot, reducing their own evaluation overheads and scaling down on internal evaluation expenses." says Iwan Labuschagne, Provar Manager.

PROVAR OPERATES FROM THEIR LABORATORY IN ZANDWYK PARK (OFF THE R101), PAARL.
FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT DR. IWAN LABUSCHAGNE 071 685 8857, OR IWAN@PROVAR.CO.ZA



1. Grant Smuts (HORTGRO Science Advisory Council), Antoinette Malan, Sheila Storey, Caro Kapp and Hugh Campbell, HORTGRO Science General Manager. 2. Grant Smuts, Noma Stokwe, Laura Alderman and Hugh Campbell. 3. Grant Smuts, Jorisna Bonthuys, Caren Jarman and Hugh Campbell.

