

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2021 ISSUE

HORTICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Official Newsletter



**"GROWTH AND
TRANSFORMATION -
SHAPING THE FUTURE OF ZIM
HORTICULTURE"**

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For further information contact HDC on :
linda.nielsenzw@gmail.com



Executive Update

Happy 2021 to all our readers! New Year, new look – we hope you'll enjoy the new look Newsletter format and content. Well, 2021 certainly has started off with a bang and I'm sure a few of us were ready to cancel our subscriptions after the 7 day free trial! At HDC we opened our doors in the New Year to the news of COVID lockdown and exemption letter applications kept us on our toes during the first couple of days with the usual ambiguity on process. With thanks to Zimtrade we finally did manage to get those all processed and distributed for our members, thank you for your patience!

Membership fees are now due and we encourage our members to please ensure that these are paid up timeously to enable us to continue providing services to you. Please get in touch if you'd like further information. Through our partnerships with COLEACP and ITC our members have been able to access **digital trainings** on COVID19, BREXIT and Virtual Trade Fairs – read more on this on Page 5. HDC will be hosting the first in a series of regular **webinars on Wednesday 10th March at 10am**. Please diarise this and be sure to join us for an update on HDC, our activities and information from the sectors that we represent. This will be a chance to interact with members directly and its open to all our members (producer and trade), stakeholders, donors and anyone interested in hearing more about the Horticulture sector in Zimbabwe. We'll send out a reminder and further details on this closer to the time.

This month sees the first step in the implementation of the **Horticulture Recovery and Growth Plan 2020 – 2025**. Together with industry stakeholders and the Government of Zimbabwe, HDC will co-ordinate the implementation of the Horticulture Recovery and Growth Plan (HRGP) 2020 – 2025. The HRGP has two broad focus areas:

- (1) - Private Sector-driven recovery of the conventional horticulture sub-sector; coordinated by the Horticulture Development Council, and
- (2) - a robust, inclusive, sustainable and transformative rural horticulture subsector, anchored on the Presidential Horticulture Scheme, which will be coordinated by an inter-ministerial Taskforce, both are aligned to the Horticulture Working Group, made up of industry stakeholders.

Thematic working groups have been established under the 7 pillars, being:

- i. Enabling Policy and Regulatory Environment
- ii. Strengthened and Sustainable Horticulture Production Group
- iii. Improved Financing and Investment
- iv. Development of Infrastructure and Logistics
- v. Sustainable Export Market Access and Competitiveness
- vi. Sustainable Domestic Market Development
- vii. Strengthened Institutional Arrangements & Coordination (the National Horticulture Working Group)

We're pleased to report that progress is being made on the **Zimbabwe – China Trade Protocol** for Citrus. China has requested further commodities to be added to the Protocol. Under the Deputy Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement Hon. V. P Haritatos' office a technical committee has been established and is currently analysing the recommendations put forward. The team is working tirelessly to ensure that the protocol is complete within 3 months. The Horticulture sector awaits this outcome with bated breath – we'll keep you updated on this exciting new market.

This month we put the spotlight on Citrus and most importantly a snap-shot of the bio-security threats facing the industry not just in Zimbabwe but globally, whilst trying to keep it in simple layman's terms as some of the names are real tongue twisters! Hope you enjoy the read. We value your feedback and input for improvement or inclusion as we journey towards growth and transformation!



Biosecurity threats

When looking at the citrus industry, One of the biggest threats globally is in regard to biosecurity. The implications of a biosecurity breach range all the way from having a reduction in the agricultural yield, to a total collapse of the industry which can result in devastating socio-economic implications. This is why it is important to have management practices that reduce risk of entry and spread of pests that are not already in the country. Of all the potential threats, Asian Greening is the biggest one of them all.



Asian Citrus Psyllid (Vector)

Certified nurseries are importing clean virus indexed bud wood from the South African Foundation Block in Uitenhage, South Africa. This is essential to monitor field grown trees which have potential for spread of local diseases such as African Greening (prevalent in Harare and Mazowe Valley), *Cercospora Angolensis*, CTV, Blackspot, *Exocortis* and other fungal pathogens. The Citrus Growers Association of Zimbabwe and HDC are working together with the Department of Research & Specialist Services in order to create Protocols and Legislations which will protect the Zimbabwean citrus industry from HLB. Quarantining facilities are currently in place but not the laboratory testing. It is important to have this in place as soon as possible. It is also important to avoid import of plant materials from countries that have HLB. Some of these include - USA, Brazil, Tanzania, Kenya, China, Mauritius and others.

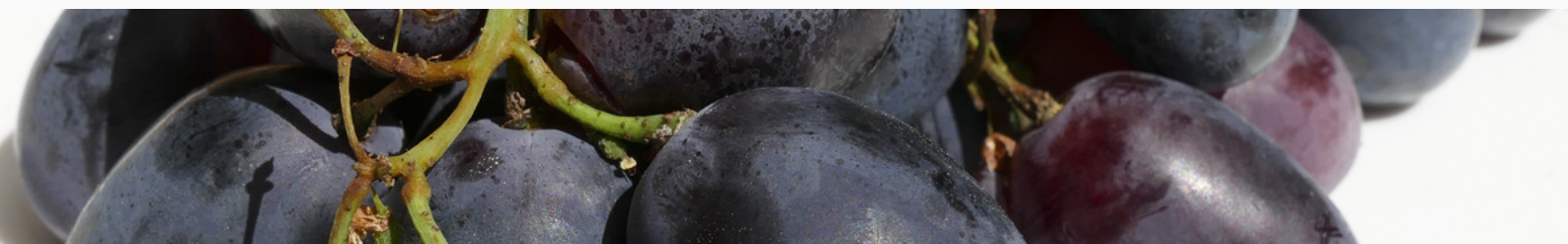
If you are interested in joining The Citrus Growers Association of Zimbabwe please contact John Perrott on 0772 237 841 or johnwperrott@gmail.com

Asian Greening (HLB))

Huanglongbing (HLB), or Asian Citrus Greening, is a bacterial disease caused by *Candidatus Liberibacter asiaticus* and is spread by the insect vector Asian Citrus Psyllid (ACP), *Diaphorina citri*. HLB is the most devastating disease of citrus worldwide and presently does not occur in southern Africa. However, ACP was detected and is spreading in central-east Africa, and HLB occurs in Ethiopia, Mauritius and Reunion, and was also recently reported from Kenya. Both HLB and ACP occur in countries that are frequent trading partners with southern African countries and traders and travellers pose a threat of inadvertently spreading the disease or the vector.



An infected citrus tree



Training

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected economies all around the world and this is the same for Zimbabwe. With the number of COVID deaths in the country going up, it is increasingly important to exercise the best safety practices around the work place to minimize the spreading of the disease. One way in which companies are ensuring the safest working environment for their employees is by taking up covid 19 training. Through our partners at COLEACP, this training is available for our members and/or their staff for free.

This training aims at informing you on the coronavirus, how it spreads, the barrier gestures and principles to adopt and mainly the new ways of working in companies and organizations to avoid contamination of the staff members, their families and their communities. Following this training, you will also have the opportunity to benefit from coaching for the implementation of these measures within your company. This is a digital e-training available for you to go through at your leisure and we encourage our members and their staff to complete this course

COLEACP are also hosting a BREXIT Workshop on the 18th February 2021 from 3pm to 5pm (CET) that's 4pm to 6pm Zimbabwe time. The objective will be to present and explain the key practical recommendations tackling the priority issues faced by ACP horticultural businesses trading directly or indirectly (via the EU) trade with the UK

The International Trade Centre (ITC) held a very informative webinar on Virtual Trade Fairs. This webinar was particularly relevant for our export members who learnt how to participate on virtual fairs. As most international trade fairs are going digital in 2021, it is crucial for companies and business support organisations to master the specific knowledge and skills that will allow them to stand out and be successful in these online events. Copies of the presentation and a summary of the key points is available if you are interested.

