



## Who is APAC?

(By Michael Cordes)



South Africa has a unique system of commission markets with financial security for farmers not found anywhere else in the world. Despite this, many farmers are not fully aware of how the system operates and what benefits they enjoy.

It is common knowledge amongst fresh produce market people and others in this country that our system is the envy of many marketers and farmers from around the world. Let's see what this all means to the fresh produce farmers of South Africa.

In terms of the Agricultural Produce Agents Act, Act 12 of 1992 (amended 2003) the Minister of Agriculture is required to establish an Agricultural Produce Agents Council (APAC) - a Statutory Body - to administer the Act on behalf of the Minister.

The basic reason for having the Act and for the establishment of APAC is because Agricultural Produce Commission Agents act on behalf of their clients - farmers - in a financial capacity and the Act is there to protect the farmers' interests. This is in line with normal business practice where laws are in place for estate agents, lawyers, banks and others who work with their clients' money.

There are three groups of Agricultural Produce Commission Agents in South Africa:

- Fresh Produce Market Agents
- Export Agents

- Livestock Agents

The fundamental objective of APAC, ...."is to regulate the occupation of fresh produce, export and livestock agents and to maintain and enhance the status and dignity of those occupations and the integrity of persons practicing these occupations."

As far as Market Agents are concerned this includes:

- Making policy and promoting market agents
- Drawing up The Rules R1818 and Code of Conduct
- Administering the Fresh Produce Market Agents Fidelity Fund
- Registration of Agricultural Commission Agents
- Monitoring Market Agents' Trust Accounts
- The maintenance and promotion of the training standards of Agents
- Ad hoc audits of Agents stock on floor
- Advertising and promoting the services and facilities offered by Agents

A Registrar, Deputy Registrar and Secretary make up the full-time staff complement and they are charged with managing the day to day activities of APAC and the application of the Act.

APAC makes use of outside service providers for functions such as forensic audits, training of Market Agents and other activities as required.



## Dr Eugene Brock retires

(Article and photo: Estelle Theron)



Dr Eugene Brock (left) receiving the Solanum Tuberosum Award from Ernst Yzel

The Chairperson of the Potato Industry Forum (PIF), Dr Eugene Brock, is retiring. Dr Brock, who held this position since 2006, fulfilled his duties in a most efficient manner and role players in the Potato Industry are of the opinion that "it was a privilege" to have him as Chairperson of the Forum and to witness the example that he set. Under his Chairmanship, the PIF had several fruitful, constructive and lively discussions that brought about important viewpoints of relevance to those involved in the potato industry.

Prof Johan Kirsten will take up the seat as from 2009.

