The challenging South African apple and pear production season has prompted Tru-Cape Fruit Marketing to ask South African consumers to look beyond the external appearance of the fruit, and rather consider the goodness which lies beneath the skin.

Tru-Cape explained that South Africa’s apple and pear production is down by more than 20 per cent year-on-year as a result of drought conditions during the past harvest, affecting the amount of fruit the company has available for its retail customers.

As a result, the group has launched a campaign, called the Tru-Cape Quest promotion, which is similar to a campaign run five years ago when hail severely damaged crops and blemished fruit had to be offered to customers.

“Then, Tru-Cape’s #UglyPretty campaign asked supermarkets and end consumers to look beyond the superficial appeal of the fruit towards the goodness that lay beneath,” said a spokesperson.

Conrad Fick, marketing director of Tru-Cape, said that this season there is a need to run a similar campaign. “Here too, there is a need brought about by the impact of the severe drought in the Western Cape. As there is a shortage of fruit available in the market we are incentivising our customers to make the extra effort to find Tru-Cape apples and pears even when stocks are more limited than usual.”

The Tru-Cape campaign will be launched this week and will last until the end of September. It encourages consumers to search for the fruit in stores and photograph themselves with the fruit and hashtag #staytrueotrucape and #trucapersuit. There are cash prizes to be won.

Tru-Cape has also commissioned a new television commercial and digital campaign to raise awareness with a call to action.

“We have used radio to support this campaign as well as limited print advertising but also linked the campaign to our first-of-a-kind game app, Fruit-Full, that educates players about the challenging process of producing, packing and marketing fruit,” Fick explained.

“We are incentivising our customers and rewarding them for making the special effort,” he added. “If the campaign doesn’t translate into sustained sales then the following years’ harvests are at risk. All growers are faced with making economic decisions whether to reinvest and replant or not. The pressures on growers in our current economic and political climate are already so great that growers need all the support we can offer them.”