Branding changes the fresh produce game

It would appear that success in fresh produce marketing requires more than just good quality and smooth logistics.

In the current market, successful fresh produce supply does not only imply good quality fruit or smooth logistics, and especially not just low prices. Increasingly, it has more to do with strong branding backed by marketing excellence, and the strength of a complete value chain supporting that process. ANB Produce & Marketing (ANB-PM), the commercialisation and marketing arm of South Africa-based ANB Investments, which owns the ClemenGold brand, says it is ideally positioned to match the global growing demand for premium soft citrus.

According to Marius du Plessis, ANB-PM’s chief executive, delivering to retailers and the consumer at a consistently high quality in terms of taste and consumption attributes, remains important, but the equity of a visible and well-executed brand is a game changer. “ClemenGold has trailblazed its path to sit proudly on the shelves of retailers such as Edeka in Germany, SuperValu in Ireland, Spinney’s in Dubai and various significant Chinese establishments,” he explains. “Our superior value proposition for sound business sense from our export partner Core Fruit gives us significant bargaining power.”

Du Plessis says that while the supply of the company’s fruit is backed by marketing excellence and a major investment in a recognisable brand, it remains conscious of contributing to the sustainability of supply and retail partners. “We call this our ecosystem where all parties contribute to and benefit from the growth. ‘We choose not to put all the emphasis on a variety or cultivar,” Du Plessis continues. “Buying behaviour of the consumer, although he or she is becoming increasingly educated regarding their choices, is mainly lead by a recognisable identity which fosters trust in the quality of the offering, and consistency in terms of quality. ClemenGold’s fruit sticker has become such a stamp of quality.”

He notes that this reputation has opened the door for other brands such as NavelGold (premium navels which are currently the leading brand in China based on volume), HoneyGold and LemonGold (seedless lemons) which have been successfully sold in, notably, Edeka and SuperValu for the past two years. The brand association of the ‘Gold range’ is indeed invaluable.

Whereas ANB-PM has chosen to place the different gold brands (with ClemenGold as the leader) mostly in high-end supermarket groups using an exclusivity model, they have also successfully created other brands such as Sweet C and ClemenOrange for other markets. “Sweet C is actually our biggest brand when considering volumes and you’ll find this mandarin brand with its tagline of ‘A Bold Burst of Flavour’ in such countries as Russia, Bangladesh, UAE and several nations in Africa.

“Currently our large-sized Leanri fruit finds a home in the relatively new ClemenOrange brand that the Germans and


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Irish enjoy in particular. ClemenOrange captures the imagination as an easy-peeling orange and its sheer size, high juice content and low-seeded character is a citrus lover’s dream.

market the whole citrus bin,” du Plessis concludes, “so that the producer remains profitable, while matching the expectations of the retailer and their customers. In addition, we strongly believe in innovation, not only in especially in terms of marketing and branding.”