



Capespan dazzles as Exporter of the Year

Great is the euphoria at Capespan after winning the Absa/Cape Town Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Exporter of the Year competition. At a gala function on 7 October, Capespan managing director Neil Oosthuizen accepted the trophy on behalf of the company. He stressed that winning the award was a tribute to the impressive calibre of Capespan staff and dedicated the award to each staff member throughout the world.

Having been a previous award winner in 2004 didn't detract from the joy of receiving the 2008 award in the face of formidable competition. There was a record number of entries and Chamber president Dr Gerald Wolman said standards were so high that the judges had to increase the number of finalists from the traditional six to eight. In the initial judging round, the focus was on export volumes, financials, growth and job creation. In the second round the judges visited all the semi-finalists' businesses to verify submission details and explored innovation, new services/products and social involvement.

Half the entries were from the food and agricultural sectors, the backbone of the Western Cape economy. Jumping off the page for the judges in this year's competition were the innovation and enterprise of Western Cape industry – with Capespan leading the way.

In his acceptance speech, Oosthuizen touched on the challenges facing the fruit industry. "As is the case with global organisations the world over, the Capespan group has to grapple with external negative factor that are impeding industry development. The most pertinent of these being the international monetary crisis, food inflation and global warming. Locally, the industry also is facing various issues and will be at pains to take remedial action."

Looking ahead, Oosthuizen said visionary leadership, imaginative thinking and courage to act were needed. "And in doing so, Capespan will at all times value people, while building long-term partnerships and relationships. Thus, to guarantee exceptional services, Capespan has examined ways to elevate our service delivery and offering to the highest levels."

As an exporter, importer and logistical service provider, Capespan is a global leader in marketing fresh produce, as well as value-added products such as fruit juices and processed fresh fruit to retailers world-wide.

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