



This week, news from the southern hemisphere; 30th November was a busy day in the ARRA world, with field days held simultaneously in South Africa and Brazil. In this edition, we report on these field days and take a look at the ARRA varieties season in Namibia and ARRA Sweeties™ (ARRA 15) season in western Australia.



TopFruit field day in Augrabies, South Africa

On 30th November, [TopFruit](#) hosted their annual field day on Sweet Sensation farm, situated in the northern region of South Africa. Grapa's Rafi and Vered, were also present to share in the day's events. The field day was attended by approximately fifty producers and table grape marketers, mainly from the Northern Cape with a few travelling up from the Western Cape.



The aim of the field days in the northern region, which alternate between Aussenkehr and Augrabies, is for TopFruit to showcase the ARRAs™ varieties which are commercially planted, as well as to present the promising ARRAs varieties and selections in the test blocks.



So far, TopFruit has seen major success with these annual field days, where producers and industry representatives get a chance to see and taste the ARRA varieties that are showcased. Producers view these field days as an opportunity to observe the development and growth of the existing and new ARRA varieties, as well as to receive the valuable technical advice that is provided by the TopFruit team and their consultants based in the northern regions, Herbert Hattingh (table grapes) and Chris Kalp (raisins).



From left: Herbert Hatting, Vered and Chris Kalp

This year's field day at Sweet Sensation farm saw major interest in the new [ARRA 33](#) planted in the test block. Even though the ARRA 33 was slightly overripe due to the timing of the field day (21 Brix on the day of the field day), the bunches looked very good and the berries had a great crunchy texture.



ARRA 33; looking good inside and out

Several producers showed particular interest in the ARRA selection [8A-19+4](#) which is yielding good results also as a raisin cultivar due to large berry size, good fertility and great presentation as a golden raisin.



ARRA 8A-19+4 in the test block, showing its great potential

ARRA Passion Fire™ (ARRA 29) also received good feedback as an early red substitute commercially. ARRA Passion Fire (ARRA 29) vines have been planted extensively this year and the producers are very optimistic about this variety.

Regarding the commercial vineyards; all praise must go to the team at Sweet Sensation for their preparation of the ARRA varieties, with attention to detail and following the growing protocol recommended by TopFruit, the great results were evident.



ARRA Passion Star™ (ARRA 13); Giving great colour and taste



ARRA Sweeties™ (ARRA 15) had nice small bunches with an average of sixty berries per bunch, giving optimal consistency in the ripeness within each bunch and a yield large enough to satisfy any producer.



ARRA Mystic Bloom™ (ARRA 14) is grown on two different rootstocks and was a good talking point of the day, with discussion on the different manipulations that each had received, resulting in an amazing berry size.

At the conclusion of the field day, the participants shared their feedback whilst enjoying lunch and drinks. ARRA 33 was undoubtedly the highpoint of the day, with the other varieties receiving good feedback due to the high quality and low labour input.



Enjoying a little light refreshment: From left, TopFruit's table grape technical field officer, AJ Jansen van Vuuren, Chris and Rafi

TopFruit and the Grapa team would like to thank the Sweet Sensation team for hosting this event and all the producers for their attendance and contributions to the field day. A special thanks to Fritz Ferreira, for the warm welcome and great hospitality he extended to all.



Fritz Ferreira in the vineyards



2019 Namibian Table Grape Season

The Namibian table grape season is currently 90% complete with harvesting and packing of all cultivars. The ARRA varieties in this region have produced very good quality this season and the producers are very satisfied, although the yield is down in some farms as the season started two weeks earlier than usual. Again, the ARRA varieties have received positive feedback regarding the low labour input required.



Where the growing protocols were followed, producers saw good results with berry sizes of up to 27mm on varieties like [ARRA Sweeties™ \(ARRA 15\)](#)



Sonop's ARRA Sweeties™ (ARRA 15) makes a big impression

Capespan Namibia has produced a beautiful and abundant crop of [ARRA Mystic Bloom™ \(ARRA 14\)](#) as can clearly be seen below. Capespan Namibia's executive director, Kobus Bothma, summarizes the season so far, "Harvest is 80% completed at this stage and the volumes are exceeding the planned estimates. At present, the markets are very strong and are expected to remain this way due to the current shortage in grape supply.



Capespan's beautifully coloured ARRA Mystic Bloom (ARRA 14)



ARRA future is rosy in Brazil

On 30th November, Agrivale hosted a field day which was attended by Brazilian ARRA growers, approximately one hundred participants took part in all. The aim of the field day was to show the great results achieved at Agrivale's ARRA test block. Five red ARRA selections on six different rootstocks were presented, including [ARRA 30A-11+3](#), [ARRA 17A-14+2](#) and [ARRA 94B-37+2](#) on rootstocks; Paulsen, SO4, Ramsey, Freedom, MGT (local Brazilian rootstock) 101-14, IAC 313. Given the success of the white ARRA varieties in Brazil, we are looking forward to achieving the same great results with the red ARRA varieties in this region.



It is important to note that the great colour developed naturally, without any special treatments. As agronomist, Augusto Prado explains, "At present, the climate in Brazil is not ideal to achieve natural colour, the average daytime temperature is 35C and the nights are warm. Even under these conditions, we see good colour and brix (20-24) and the production for the first season was incredible, twenty-four tons per hectare in some codes."



The field day, sponsored by Agropodas, Basf and Timac Agro, was a great success. As Grapa's technical representative in Brazil, Russaika Nascimento remarked, "It was a great moment for the ARRA varieties in Brazil because the growers have understood better the potential of the red ARRA selections and the future is open with great possibilities."



From left: Agropodas director, Carlos Furusato, Agrivale's production manager, Nami Ando and Nami's daughter





Grapa technical team in Brazil: From left; Russaika Nascimento, Augusto Prado and Amanda Rodrigues Da Silva



The farthest harvests

The ARRA Sweeties™ (ARRA 15) harvests are underway in Western Australia. As seen pictured below, [Romeo's Best's](#) growers in Carnarvon are showing some great results.



Photographed a week before harvest, A & MF Paulino's ARRA Sweeties (ARRA 15) is looking good. From left: Farm owner, Frank Paulino and Romeo's Best CEO, Tony Romeo





Andrew Durmanich, owner of Dawn Vineyards has produced a beautiful second-year crop of ARRA Sweeties (ARRA 15).

In case you missed it

It is our pleasure to share with you the latest article about Grapa recently published in Fresh Plaza online magazine. Please [click here](#) for the article.



Coming up in 2020

It is our pleasure to invite all our readers to register for TopFruit's Hex Valley Field Day. Please see details below.



AARA
HEX VALLEY

Hex Valley Field Day

Date: Saturday 4 January 2020
Time: 10h00
Place: Meet at the packshed
- Môreson Farm

Lunch and drinks will be served afterwards

RSVP by 19 December 2019
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TopFruit



Thank you for reading
