



Cultivating Momentum in 2026

Cultivating Momentum

SETTING THE TONE FOR 2026

After a strong 2025 for Dutoit and the wider agricultural industry, we enter 2026 with cautious optimism and a clear focus on sustainable momentum. While the year ahead presents familiar pressures, including hot, dry growing conditions, hail damage, ongoing logistical disruptions, shifting global market dynamics and a much stronger ZAR currency, we also have a solid foundation to build on and further grow the business.

Our priority for the season ahead is to strengthen the value we deliver to our customers by continuously refining our products, improving execution across the supply chain, and investing in the people and partnerships that underpin our business. Quality, consistency and reliability remain non-negotiable.

Guided by our purpose, Cultivating Wellness, one harvest at a time, we remain committed to growing with intention, adapting where needed, and delivering long-term value across our markets.

“

*I am excited for what lies ahead
and look forward to sharing this
journey with you all.*

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CEO



Harvest Update

2026 SEASON OVERVIEW

The 2026 harvest season has progressed steadily across both fruit and vegetable categories.

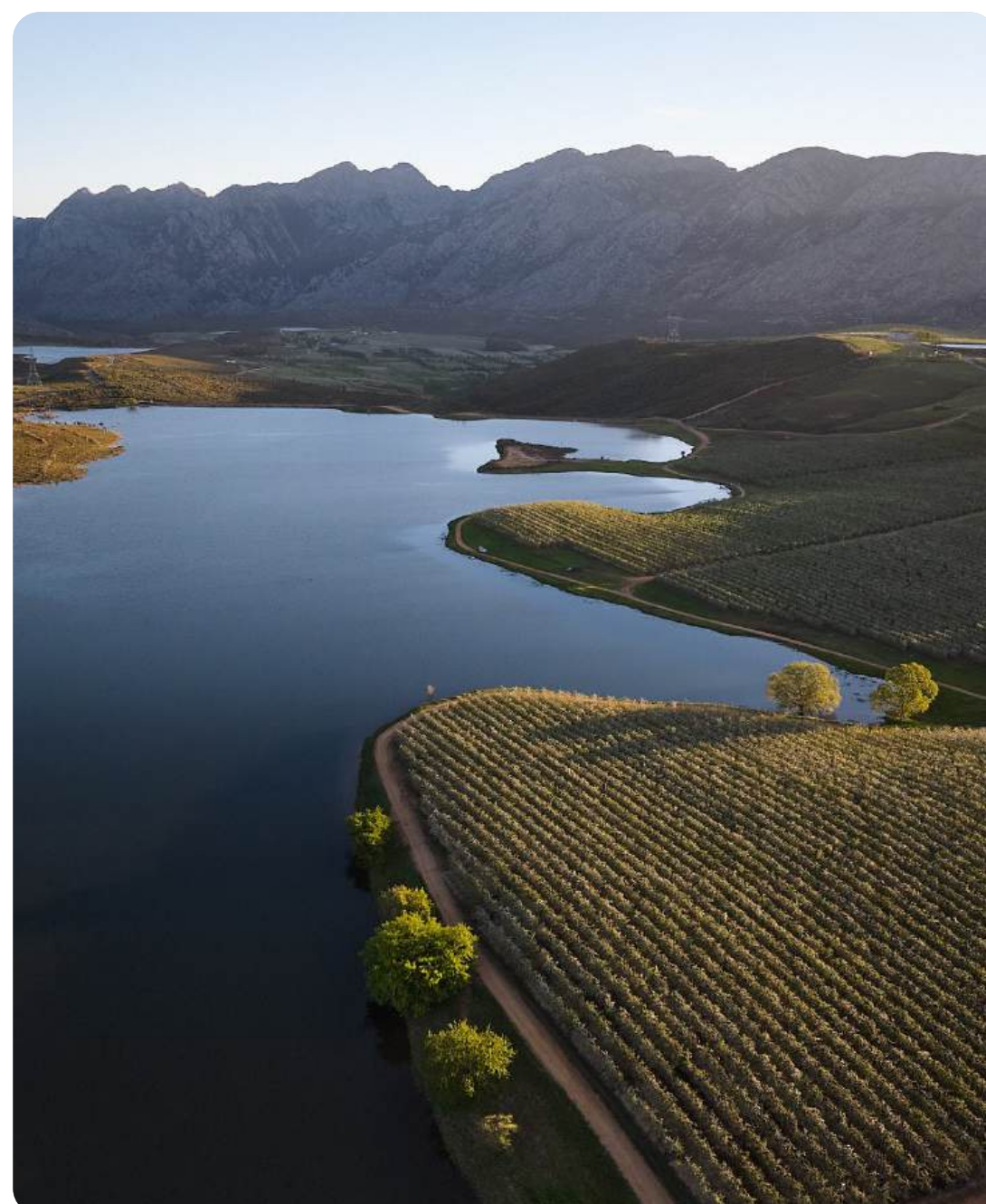
Early onion harvesting commenced on Platkloof and Skaapkraal and is nearing completion, while harvest activity in the Koue Bokkeveld has peaked under favourable conditions and is now completed.

Although early yields were slightly below budget, overall supply is tracking in line with expectations. Potatoes and sweet potatoes have benefited from a positive growing season, with normal volumes and quality anticipated. The potato harvest will kick off during the first week of March.

On the fruit side, nectarine harvest is completed, with improved pack-outs reflecting strong technical input. Volumes are slightly ahead of budget.

Pome fruit harvesting has begun with early pears, Panorama Goldens and Gala apples. While initial size concerns still exist, fruit size has also recovered well on some farms in the Western Cape. The Eastern Cape season remains on normal timing, though water availability continues to present challenges on selected farms. Both the Eastern and Western Cape were impacted by hail during the recent weeks.

Our situation however is better than many others and our strategies of spreading risk across geographical areas as well as installing overhead netting is paying off. Water management remains a critical focus across all regions, particularly given the hot summer conditions and limited rainfall experienced this season. During peak irrigation months, water use has been carefully managed in both provinces, and while carry-over reserves are expected to be lower, planning and efficiency improvements remain central to long-term sustainability.



We expect to carry over approximately 15–20% into the next season despite the ongoing lack of rain in both the Western and Eastern Cape. This challenge continues to shape our farm planning discussions, where teams are focused on improving usage and building resilience.

Through it all, our production teams remain committed and hopeful, doing everything within our control while trusting that Mother Nature will bring relief in time.

Willem Coetsee
Managing Director





At Dutoit, success is defined by the **experience our customers enjoy** and the **strength of the partnerships that support it.**

From orchard to consumer

QUALITY & THE SUPPLY CHAIN

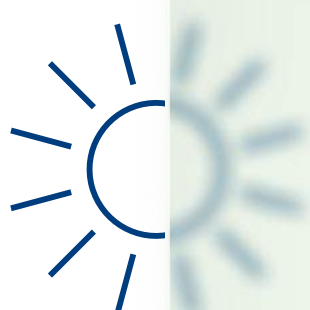
Delivering on this requires a shared commitment to quality at every stage, from winter orchard preparation through to the final consumer experience. Quality is established long before harvest begins. It starts in winter, when trees are at rest and technical inputs are carefully planned and executed, and continues through precise harvesting practices that meet market regulations, customer requirements and quality standards.

Quality across the supply chain is built through:

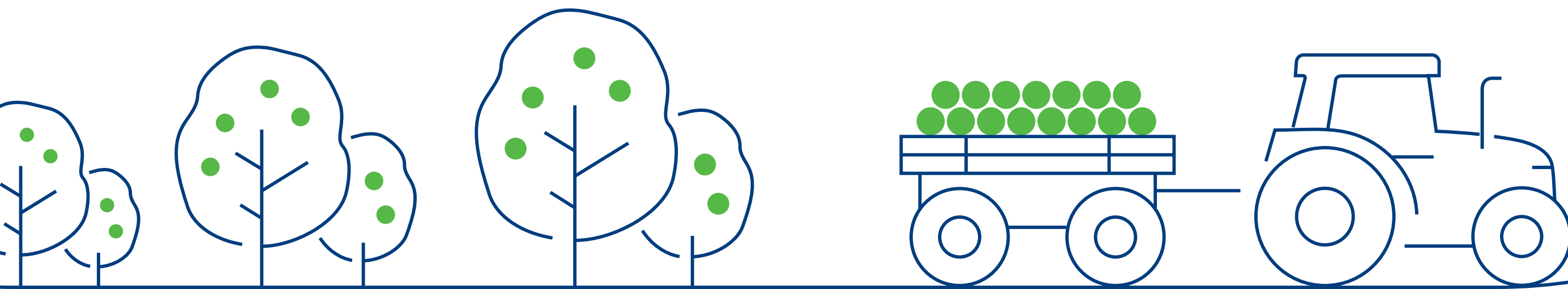
- Pre-harvest compliance and technical inputs
- Strict post-harvest handling protocols
- Packhouse compliance, standards and operational discipline
- Fruit quality specifications, including internal condition, firmness, colour, size and overall eating experience

From there, fruit moves through a complex and carefully coordinated journey, from orchard to storage, packhouse, holding facilities, port or local depot, onward to vessel or retail distribution, and ultimately to the consumer. Each step carries risk, making seamless logistics and disciplined execution essential.

Quality can easily be taken for granted, but maintaining it across this journey requires consistency, care and close coordination between all partners involved to ensure the end customer receives a product they can trust.



As Dutoit enters the **2026 pome fruit season**, post-harvest management remains a critical focus area in protecting quality, extending market windows and meeting evolving customer expectations across apples and pears. With pre-harvest foundations already in place, attention now turns to storage performance, shelf-life integrity and **consistent eating quality**, all of which rely on disciplined orchard-to-market decision-making and close coordination across the supply chain.



Key Focus Areas for 2026

→ **Pear programmes:** Pears remain highly market-specific, with distinct requirements between summer and winter cultivars. Summer pears continue to follow a pick, pack, ship model, while winter pears rely on carefully managed cold storage to support uniform ripening and off-season supply.

→ **Ripening management,** whether delivering crisp and juicy or ripe and buttery pears, is aligned to market preference through the use of technologies such as 1-MCP and controlled atmosphere (CA) storage.

→ **Apple storage strategy:** Apples respond particularly well to ripening inhibition, allowing quality and texture to be preserved over longer storage periods.

For 2026, cultivar-specific storage protocols remain central, with careful management of oxygen and carbon dioxide levels to minimise internal disorders and protect eating quality.

→ **Harvest maturity & timing:** Correct harvest timing remains the foundation of post-harvest success. Fruit destined for long-term storage is prioritised at horticultural maturity, while fruit closer to optimal eating ripeness is channelled to shorter marketing windows. A combination of firmness, sugar levels, starch conversion, pip colour and background colour continues to guide harvest decisions.

→ **Storage monitoring & risk management:** Post-harvest monitoring continues throughout storage and packing. While advanced technologies track atmospheric conditions at room level, regular fruit sampling remains essential to identify faster-ripening batches and prioritise packing accordingly. Packaging selection and shipping protocols are carefully aligned to cultivar physiology and destination requirements.


Commercial Director

Post-Harvest Priorities for the Season Ahead

- Orchard maturity monitoring and harvest release
- Optimised, cultivar-specific storage protocols
- Ongoing fruit quality assessment during storage
- Strategic prioritisation of packing and marketing
- Technical support for quality claims and market feedback
- Ongoing collaboration with local and international post-harvest specialists

Crop Focus

ONION SEASON OUTLOOK 2026

Following a cold winter and moderate rainfall, the 2026 onion season is shaping up to deliver strong quality across Dutoit's production regions. The business produces sweet onions, shallots, brown and red onions across six geographically dispersed farms, reducing climate and production risk.

This season marks the first commercial harvest of sweet onions following several years of trials. Initially produced for the Spanish market, sweet onions offer significant potential for local growth as consumer awareness increases.

Export demand from the EU and UK remains encouraging, particularly for late-season supply. Approximately 30% of Dutoit's onion and shallot crop is earmarked for export in 2026.



“Investment in optical grading technology supports strict internal and external quality standards, ensuring consistent delivery to both local and international markets.”

While port logistics remain a key constraint during the January–March export window, domestic demand remains strong, with pricing expected to remain stable until Northern Cape supply tapers off later in the season.

Overall, favourable growing conditions, continued investment in quality systems and strong market interest position Dutoit well for the 2026 onion season.

Pieter du Toit

Commercial Director: Vegetables at Dutoit

