

# PRESS ARTICLE

## International Strategic Alliance for World-Class Fruit Packing Facility in South Africa

***Colors Fruit, the largest privately owned fruit exporter in South Africa, recently formed a strategic alliance with Greefa Europe, one of the largest international designers and manufacturers of fruit sorting machines. This state of the art technology will be a first for the South African fruit industry and implemented in Colors' flagship pack house, Novo.***

Colors currently own and manage seven pack houses, which includes Novo Pack house situated in Paarl, Western Cape. The original Novo Pack house in Paarl was the humble beginnings of the Colors Group just over a decade ago. This modern pack house was the pride of the Colors Group, but was unfortunately damaged beyond repair in a devastating fire on 20 April 2009.

The catastrophe did have a silver lining. It created the platform for a new beginning and the development of exciting business opportunities. The strategic partnership with the like-minded and innovation driven company Greefa is one of those prospects.

Greefa Europe, also a solid family enterprise, has developed high-quality sorting machines for more than half a century. Greefa has gained a strong reputation in this specialized field around the world. The company designs every part of their machines and modules, and can therefore offer unique solutions regarding functionality, ease-of-use and sorting requirements.

Because both companies embody a pioneering spirit and value the innovative thinking of their employees, the strategic alliance between Colors and Greefa is not only a comfortable cultural fit, but a quantum leap for the South African fruit industry and sets a new world-class benchmark for local pack houses.

Dick Verkade from Greefa Europe stated that "We are very happy to have come to the strategic partnership with the Colors Group. We have found each other in innovations and state-of-the-art technologies. Our mutual aim is to upgrade the South African fruit industry with the latest technologies."

The first phase of the new Novo Pack house commenced in the first week of December 2009 and the objective for the project is to have the first production line commissioned in early June 2010. The new pack house will be able to sort and pack fruit at unprecedented efficiency levels which is more than double than the industry norm in South Africa, whilst giving significant consideration to the environmental sustainability of the new installation.

Revolutionary technology invented by Greefa and implemented by Novo will be a first for the South African industry and includes the state of the art iQSIII and iFA sorting systems.

iQSIII is an intelligent Quality Sorter that sorts fruit automatically according to external quality of the fruit by using special infrared and colour cameras and utilizing advanced software analyses techniques.

iFA does almost the impossible. The intelligent Flavour Analyser determines the internal quality of fruit by analyzing it using Near Infra Red (NIR). The entire fruit is screened and the brix value, internal brownness and core rot can be determined accurately.

The project scope entails the installation of a 44 channel pre-sorter with an 8-lane iQSIII grader, complemented with up to 5 specialized and dedicated packing lines, to pack pre-sorted fruit according to the marketing plan.

The project will however commence with a multi-packaging line, equipped with a 6-lane iQS system to handle apples, pears, nectarines, peaches and plums.

Novo Pack house will have the local sales support of the Port Elizabeth based Greefa SA, the South African alliance of Greefa Europe. MED Automation in Paarl, led by Gerhard Visagie, will be the key supplier of pack sets, carton conveyors and other locally supplied peripheral packing equipment.

The strategic partnership between Novo and Greefa will not be limited to the supply of state-of-the-art packing equipment. Colors Fruit will have preferential access to future sorting technology invented by Greefa's Research and Development team, ensuring that the Novo pack house remains at the forefront of this technology.

According to Willem Bestbier, Colors Group Operations Director, "Innovation and thought leadership lies at the core of Colors as a business. The new Novo pack house will truly be a physical testimony to this pioneering spirit".

For additional information on these companies visit [www.colorsfruit.com](http://www.colorsfruit.com) or [www.greefa.com](http://www.greefa.com).

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The new 'site' of the Novo pack house



Just after the contract was signed. From left to right: Dick Verkade (Manager Marketing & Sales at Greefa), Henco Smit (Group Operations Specialist at Novo Packhouse (Pty) Ltd), Gerhard Visagie (Managing Director at MED Automation), Marco Schreuders (Export Manager at Greefa), Rudi du Toit (General Manager at Novo Packhouse (Pty) Ltd), Johan Broos (Director at Greefa South Africa) and Willem Bestbier (Operational Director at Colors Fruit (SA)).



A Greefa GeoSort sorting and packing installation.

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