

Houston, no problem for South African citrus

Summer Citrus from South Africa (SCSA) has seen an 300% year-on-year increase in tonnage flowing through the Port of Houston this season, as the group continues its work with retailers in Midwestern and Gulf states.

SCSA – formerly known as the Western Cape Citrus Producers Forum (WCCPF) but with a change of image and name this year – says around 50,000 metric tons (MT) of South African Navel oranges, easy peelers, Midnights and grapefruit are imported to the U.S. each year.

Most of this volume enters through the ports of Philadelphia and New York, but an increase in demand has led to increased efforts to secure additional entry points into the U.S. market.

The Port of Houston is currently the only southern U.S. port approved by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the fruit's specific cold treatment program, and is now in its third season receiving South African citrus.

"With the complex USDA regulations, we are pleased that we have been able to accommodate the South African program," said Port of Houston Authority senior director of trade development John Moseley.

"Our partnership is a result of the brand's commitment to sending quality product, and we're thrilled to be doing business for another year."

In order increased volume in the Midwestern and Gulf states the brand has also partnered with regional bloggers to fuel demand at their local retailers.

Paired with the new website design and social media presence, SCSA is positive shoppers will continue to seek fresh, great tasting citrus in the summer months.

"We're confident that our consumer marketing campaign will inspire more interest in the brand," said SCSA CEO Suhanra Conradie.

"Coupled with our increased distribution, we expect to see positive sales growth from the elevated presence that Summer Citrus from South Africa will have this season."

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