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FTW Pick: EU citrus inspection costs raise concern

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A decision by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (Daff) to appoint the Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) to undertake all orchard inspections for EU exports has raised concern among citrus growers around cost and quality control.

“Discussions are however under way between Daff, the PPECB and the Citrus Growers’ Association (CGA) to reach a workable solution,” CGA CEO Justin Chadwick told FTW. According to Daff, limited resources prompted its decision. “Our resources have been severely stretched by the additional phytosanitary measures for fruit originating outside the citrus black spot (CBS) pest-free areas – and it was an issue of concern raised by the European Commission last year,” a spokesman said.

“It’s the reason why the PPECB has been designated to take over orchard inspections, pack house inspection and issuance of phytosanitary certificates for the 2017 export season. We see it as a practicable service delivery option, thus preventing the risk of losing the EU citrus market and thereby rendering the citrus industry uncompetitive.”

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