



Matthias Eggemann from Fresh-Connection Fruchimport Ltd:

"Difficult South African citrus campaign due to increased problems with Blackspot"

The South African



citrus campaign has been particularly challenging so far. "A lot of Blackspot has appeared in lemons and oranges in particular, due to rainfall during the flowering period. Across the range, we're also seeing a high proportion of large calibers. Small-caliber juice oranges, on the other hand, are rare and are marketed at very high prices," summarizes Matthias Eggemann, citrus importer and managing director of Fresh-Connection Fruchimport Ltd, based in Geesthacht.

The situation is aggravated by the fact that South African producers are taking advantage of other attractive sales markets. In particular, high prices are being obtained for the goods in the Far East and the Arab countries, Eggemann said. "People are now trying to procure complementary goods from other countries such as Peru, Chile or Turkey. In Latin America, the orange harvest is already drawing to a close, but in Turkey it hasn't really started yet. We are still able to fulfill the food retail programs and supply the wholesale markets, but the overall supply situation is quite tight."



As juice oranges, the Midnight variety is offered primarily. This is usually marketed from August to October. The edible Navel Late orange season, on the other hand, is now coming to an end. In the grapefruit segment, the Star Ruby variety is predominant and it is expected to be available for another four to six weeks, after which it will be replaced by Mexico. Eggemann: "The South African lemons of the Eureka variety are also still available for about a month, after which the new harvest from Spain and Turkey will hit the market sometime in the fall."



Upward trend for clementines and mandarins

Clementines and mandarins complete the citrus range from South Africa. "Here, too, the marketing situation is rather difficult this year, which again is related to the high proportion of large fruit. Fewer of the desired calibers for the packing sector, i.e. calibers I and II, are available this year, while the available calibers are mainly suitable for bulk marketing," Eggemann explains.

From a longer-term perspective, however, the trend in the clementine and mandarin segments is rather positive, he says. "These have been increasingly grown in recent years, with existing farms being scaled back and predominantly stocked with Easypeelers such as Nadorcott or Tango in line with export demand."

Images: Fresh-Connection Fruchtimport GmbH

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