FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (17/09)

Justin Chadwick (30 April 2009) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "Never trust a man who, when left alone in a room with a tea cozy, doesn't try it on" Bill Connolly

CELEBRATE SUCCESS: South Africa's staging of the Indian Premier League (cricket) – it has been a huge success and has shown that South Africa can rise to the big occasion – with very little notice.

CITRUS BLACK SPOT

Mention was made in an earlier newsletter about a visit by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) of the European Union. This visit is scheduled for the period 15 to 26 June 2009. It is essential that the industry is well prepared for this visit, as a negative experience or findings could have serious consequences. The major reason for the visit is an increase in interceptions of consignments with CBS in the EU. Although the number of consignments intercepted is miniscule when compared to the actual consignments imported, CBS is considered a quarantine organism and therefore these increased interceptions have raised concerns in Europe. Although the technical validity of the current EU CBS regulation is being contested, as long as these regulations remain in place it is necessary to comply with them.

It is important that all role-players in the industry are aware of the impending visit as the delegation will be visiting citrus facilities and orchards throughout the country. Access to the EU is based on the following; *the fruits originate in an area recognised as being free from Guignardia citricarpa Kiely;* ***or*** *the fruits originate in a field of production subjected to appropriate treatments against Guignardia citricarpa Kiely (all strains pathogenic to Citrus),* ***and*** *none of the fruits harvested in the field of production has shown, in appropriate official examination, symptoms of this organism.*

When production units are registered for the EU, growers are required to sign off on a good agricultural practices document for CBS. These practices have been developed over time to ensure no CBS lesions develop on fruit intended for exporting to CBS sensitive markets. It is essential that all growers are fully aware of the contents of this document, are implementing the required practices at farm level, and can show proof of such implementation. The FVO delegation will be doing spot checks at different farms and all those exporting to EU will need to show compliance.

PACKED AND SHIPPED 2009

At the time of sending this PPECB information was not at hand. Detailed information will be provided next week. Growers and export agents can check out details on www.cga.co.za in the members section – a password is needed, available to all CGA, FPEF and CMF members.

RUSSIAN RESIDUE REQUIREMENTS

In previous newsletters exporters to Russia have been asked to ensure that they understand the Russian requirements in terms of residues. A recent media release indicates that Turkey have managed to negotiate a risk based approach to the Russian residue issue. In terms of the memorandums signed between exporting countries and Russia, should there be a high level of non compliance then the whole countries imports of that product is halted. Turkey has managed to negotiate that only the company concerned will have its imports halted. In addition these restrictions will only be applied if the company shows non compliance on three occasions (three strikes and you are out). Companies that show compliance over a year are also given dispensations thereafter and do not have to comply with some of the analytical and reporting requirements. This targeting of non compliant companies is a significant improvement on the original decision to disqualify the entire countries imports of that product, and hopefully it will be rolled out to the other countries that have signed (or are in the process of signing) similar memorandums.

THIRD COUNTRY EXPORTS FROM SPAIN

Indications are that overall Spanish exports to third countries (i.e. countries excluding EU) are similar to the 2007/8 season. However, the target markets have changed somewhat. The three biggest markets are USA, Russia and Norway. The US has shown marked increases in imports from Spain – up 20% on 2007/8 (to 57 934 tons); with 96% of this seasons imports being clementines. Norway is down 8% to 31 167 tons; importing 53% oranges and 45% clementines from Spain. Russia is a whopping 35% down on last season (to 32 247 tons); pretty much evenly split between clementines and lemons.

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