FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (5/11)

Justin Chadwick (11 February 2011)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK “In Scotland there is no such thing as bad weather- only the wrong clothes” Billy Connelly

WEATHER PLAYING A BIG ROLE

An outsider sitting in on the meetings of the citrus industry in Berlin could have been excused for thinking that he was at a meteorological conference – cyclones, hail, wind, snow, floods, frost and drought have all played a significant role in forming the 2011 season.

Heavy flooding in Australia made for some amazing photography (the floods covered an area equal to the size of Germany and France combined!!) – coupled with human misery. This after many years of drought. And then just as they started to dry out along came cyclone Yasi which wiped out a lot of bananas and affected other crops. Fortunately for the Australian citrus industry in those areas it was out of season and as a result the impact will be limited. In fact domestic citrus demand in 2011 could be positively influenced due to devastation of competing products.

The Valencia region of Spain experienced a severe frost on 26 December 2010 and again at the end of January. This will impact on volumes through to the end of the season – the Spanish soft citrus estimate has been reduced by 98 000 tons (from January to June 2011); oranges have been reduced by 150 000 tons; lemons by 36 000 tons and grapefruit by 3 000 tons. As the frost affected fruit is harvested a clearer assessment will be made on the marketability of the fruit.

Israel reported on two weather related events during their season – June to November 2010 was extremely hot – with temperatures of over 20 C in the night in November; this resulted in colouring problems even though the internal quality was good. The second event was a wind storm at the end of December 2010 where for three days winds of over 100Km/Hour were recorded. This caused wind scarring and fallen fruit. Israeli soft citrus estimate decreased by 9 000 tons, oranges by 5 000 tons and grapefruit by 4 000 tons.

The heavy snow storms in Europe over December that impacted on those wanting to holiday in Europe and the UK due to delayed and cancelled flights had an impact on demand for citrus in those markets – with lower fruit demand and difficulties in transporting fruit to the market.

Messages from the USA are of two freezes and a drought – impacting on available volumes.

South Africa has not been spared by the weather Gods – hail in the Senwes region (Groblersdal and Marble Hall area) will mean less early lemons and navels available for the market. Fortunately the spectacular floods in the Orange River region has not impacted too heavily on citrus – but has had a significant impact on the table grape and raisin industry.

Both Uruguay and some areas of Argentina have experienced dry conditions which will impact on quantity and sizes.

MOROCCO

Watch this space!!! – Morocco has planted 4 million citrus trees per year for the past three years as part of the governments “Green Morocco” plan. The results of these large plantings will hit the market in a few years time. In the past Russia has been Morocco’s main target market. In addition there is a large domestic demand for citrus – but still that’s a lot of citrus that is going to be hitting the market in the future.

FRUIT LOGISTICA

With Department Trade and Industry’s (DTI) generous support South Africa was able to put up a stand that was even better than previous years – it was a hive of activity and drew the attention of all those at the show. Stuart and Sandra (FPEF) were once again perfect hosts and everybody was received with warm South African hospitality – WELL DONE TO ALL WHO WERE THERE FOR FLYING THE SOUTH AFRICAN FLAG HIGH AND PROUD, and I hope you all had/have a safe and enjoyable trip back to South Africa. Now we have to fulfill all the promises we made at the show!!!!

CGA ROADSHOWS

Next week sees the start of the CGA Roadshows. Tuesday 15 Feb:14h00 at Saamfarm, Vaalharts, N Cape. Wednesday 16 Feb: 18h00 at The Falls Guesthouse, Oranje Rivier. Call Gloria on 031-7652514 for more details.

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