

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO (30/14)

Justin Chadwick (8 August 2014)

QUOTE OF THE WEEK “The best way to get a bad law repealed is to enforce it strictly”

Abraham Lincoln

2014 EUROPHYT TO END JULY

The EU Plant Health website EUROPHYT is a notification and rapid alert system dealing with interceptions for plant health reasons of consignments of plants and plant products imported into the EU or being traded within the EU itself. EUROPHYT is established and run by the Directorate General for Health and Consumers of the European Commission. The website has been updated with information to the end of July 2014.

From a South African citrus point of view the website shows five interceptions for citrus black spot (CBS). This corresponds to the number of notifications of non compliance (NONC) received by DAFF. To end July South Africa had exported just over 300 000 tons of citrus to the EU. The website shows Argentina with 3 CBS related interceptions – from a total citrus export volume of 95 000 tons (Source: SHAFPE).

The five South African interceptions recorded to end July 2014 is similar to 2011 and 2012 (both had six) and higher than 2013 (2 interceptions). Two interceptions were from lemons (from 35 000 tons) and 3 from oranges (130 000 tons). All 3 of Argentina's interceptions were from soft citrus (from 12 000 tons exported to EU).

For South Africa two interceptions were from Netherlands, and one each from Italy, Spain and Germany.

In the latest SHAFPE newsletter clarity is given with respect to the first four interceptions recorded as at the date of publication; *The Commission has clarified that while it keeps records of all interceptions under the Europhyt system, it will base its assessment on the new rules as laid down in implementing decision 2014/422 and applicable from 24 July. The interceptions recorded so far (four interceptions in NL, ES and IT) do not fall into this period. If an interception should occur under the new rules, the Commission will assess whether this interception is the result of failures in the new procedures for official monitoring and certification by South Africa. For each confirmed case, South Africa will have the opportunity to provide comments and feedback. If the number of four interceptions under the new rules is reached, discussions will take place between the Commission and the member states on how to deal with this. Consultations will also take place with South Africa.*

Scanning through the EUROPHYT it is hard to understand the amount of attention given to CBS by the EU authorities – in 2014 to date there have been 55 interceptions on eggplant (aubergine) from Ghana, 43 interceptions on basil from Cambodia, 28 interceptions on eggplant from Dominican Republic and 27 interceptions on mango from Sri Lanka. The list goes on and on – and yet there seems to be some additional factor that causes citrus from South Africa to get so much attention after just 5 interceptions. Surely if the concern was plant health there are bigger problems that the EU needs to address?

Obviously the South African citrus industry and the CGA are concerned regarding the disruption in trade brought about by these interceptions, and (together with the authorities) has sent experts onto the farms implicated with the interceptions in order to determine the reasons for failure of the risk management system. The CGA and DAFF are also in the process of getting a CBS expert to visit the countries reporting interceptions so as to learn as much as possible from these incidences. The expert will also follow up on concerns expressed by importers and exporters regarding the methodology used in testing the samples in some of the member states.

We are still confident that there will be a significant improvement in the interception levels in the EU in 2014.

MARKING REQUIREMENTS

DAFF and CGA staff at the Durban port have raised concerns regarding the high rejection of consignments due to incorrect marking requirements.

Please make sure your packhouses know what the protocols for each of these markets requires, and do not place fruit in boxes where the box was originally intended for another market. These problems are avoidable and will eliminate the costs of handling rejected consignments and the burden of doing so.

PACKED AND SHIPPED

To Week 32 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed
SOURCE: PPECB	2012	2013	2014	2013	2014	2014	2014	2013
Grapefruit	12.2 m	16.4 m	14.4 m	15.9 m	13.6 m	16.5 m	14.9 m	17.9 m
Soft Citrus	6.4 m	6.8 m	8.2 m	6.4 m	7.5 m	9.2 m	10.1 m	8.4 m
Lemons	8.8 m	9.5 m	12.4 m	9.1 m	11.6 m	12.1 m	12.4 m	10.6 m
Navels	22.6 m	23.1 m	22.3 m	21.6 m	20 m	25.8 m	25.4 m	25.4 m
Valencia	18.1 m	18.4 m	18.1 m	11.5 m	11 m	49.5 m	49.5 m	51.4 m
Total	68.1 m	74.2 m	75.4 m	64.5 m	63.7 m	113.1 m	112.3 m	113.7 m

GROWERS' ENSURE A COMPETITIVE AND SUSTAINABLE SOUTHERN AFRICAN CITRUS INDUSTRY BY FUNDING AND GUIDING THE CGA GROUP (CRI; CITRUS ACADEMY; CGACC; RB AND XSIT)