

"Birds scream at the top of their lungs in horrified hellish rage every morning at the top of the truth, but sadly we don't speak bird." Kurt Cobain

MID-SEASON REVIEW

At the end of July, Portia Magwaza (CGA Research Economist) prepared a mid-season review (available from portia@cga.co.za) which was sent to all CGA members.

With an additional week added to Portia's document, South Africa has now reached the two thirds mark in terms of citrus packed and passed for export. **Grapefruit** is 94% complete with just 1 million cartons of the 17.2 million predicted cartons (15Kg) to pack. If this prediction is realised it will be just 5.5% below the 18 million estimate. Interestingly, **Lemons** are at exactly the same point with 94% packed and passed for export, with 1.5 million 15Kg cartons still to pack to get to the latest prediction of 27 million cartons. This prediction is 3.2 million less than the original estimate – a drop of 10% from the original estimate. **Navels** have packed and passed for export 22 million cartons – with 4.3 million cartons still to pack to get to the predicted 25.3 million cartons (87% packed). If realised, the prediction will be just 4% off the original estimate. There are still 9 million cartons of **Soft Citrus** to pack in order to get to the predicted 30.1 million cartons – i.e. 70% packed and passed. The prediction is still tracking the original estimate (only 100 000 cartons off the original 30.2 million estimate). The big numbers to come are in **Valencia** oranges – with just 30% of the predicted 55.4 million cartons already packed. The prediction is now 2.6 million cartons (5.4%) off the original 58 million carton estimate.

Overall the 2021 citrus export prediction for southern Africa is now 155 million cartons, 5% off the original estimate. The big variable in play now is the port's ability to ship the remaining 53 million cartons. The impact of the cyber-attack, coming closely on the heels of the insurrection, means that South African ports are all heavily congested. While the port role-players are working feverishly at dealing with the backlog, clearing containers inbound and outbound, clearing cold stores of accumulated fruit, and servicing all the fruit arriving in port; growers have been advised to ensure that their fruit can be handled before trucking the fruit to the port. CGA and Transnet are holding regular meetings with all role-players in a bid to keep all informed, and to reduce pressure on an already pressurised port systems.

VACCINATION OF FARM WORKERS

Many agricultural stakeholders pushed for essential worker status for those working on farms, in order to prioritise their vaccinations for COVID 19. Over the past week CGA has learnt of at least three citrus farms in Limpopo that have joined with the provincial department of health in getting all their workers vaccinated. The CGA COVID 19 RESPONSE COMMITTEE (CRC) has identified the risk of harvesting gangs, packers in the packhouse, workers in cold stores, PPECB and DALRRD inspectors and port workers contracting COVID as high in terms of both probability and impact. By vaccinating picking and packing workers these citrus estates will significantly reduce the risk of disruption in the future. Growers are encouraged to follow suit; but must take cognizance of the debate regarding individuals' rights, and the rights of owners to provide a safe working environment.

PACKED AND SHIPPED

End of Week 30 Million 15 Kg Cartons	Packed	Packed	Packed	Shipped	Shipped	Original Estimate	Latest Prediction	Final Packed
SOURCE: PPECB/AGRIHUB	2019	2020	2021	2020	2021	2021	2021	2020
Grapefruit (17kg)			14.3 m		12.2 m			
Grapefruit	15.5 m	13.8 m	16.2 m	12.4 m	13.9 m	18 m	17.2 m	15.5 m
Soft Citrus	13.4 m	17.3 m	21.1 m	14.6 m	16 m	30.5 m	30.1 m	23.6 m
Lemons	18.5 m	24.2 m	25.5 m	21.5 m	22 m	30.2 m	27 m	29.6 m
Navels	19.3 m	21.4 m	22 m	18.6 m	17.2 m	26.3 m	25.3 m	26.2 m
Valencia	13.3 m	17.9 m	17.3 m	10.4 m	9 m	58 m	55.4 m	55.1 m
Total	80 m	94.6 m	102.1 m	77.5 m	78.1 m	163 m	155 m	150 m