



GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (28/2009)

John Edmonds (31 July 2009)

Exchange Rate at 11:00 R/\$ 7.81 R/€ 11.01 R/£ 12.92

Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Organic food is no healthier

London - Organic food has no nutritional or health benefits over ordinary food, according to a major study published on Wednesday. Researchers from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine said consumers were paying higher prices for organic food because of its perceived health benefits, creating a global organic market worth an estimated \$48bn in 2007. A systematic review of 162 scientific papers published in the scientific literature over the last 50 years, however, found there was no significant difference. "A small number of differences in nutrient content were found to exist between organically and conventionally produced foodstuffs, but these are unlikely to be of any public health relevance," said Alan Dangour, one of the report's authors. "Our review indicates that there is currently no evidence to support the selection of organically over conventionally produced foods on the basis of nutritional superiority". Sales of organic food have fallen in some markets, including Britain, as recession has led consumers to cut back on purchases. [Reuters; 28 July 2009]

Zimbabwean citrus exports show sharp decline

Citrus exports have slumped to a third of the industry's capacity due to lack of investment and funding challenges on the existing established growers, managing director for Mazoe Citrus Estates, Mr Gabriel Chinembiri said. He said numerous orchards were lying abandoned or neglected with virtually no re-planting for continuity although Zimbabwe was still producing for such international export markets as the Middle East, Russia, China and the European Union. Mr Chinembiri also noted that despite the decline in export volumes Zimbabwe still exported to regional destinations such as Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Malawi and Mozambique. "Regional exports offer very good prices and we can compete better against South Africa banking on the fact that Zimbabwe is exempt from duty within Comesa. "Zimbabwe's global position and climate also make it ideal for good citrus production hence our capacity to produce early maturing varieties which reach the target markets earlier than other competing producing countries," observed Mr Chinembiri. Mr Chinembiri said it was vital to embark on a specific replant programme with an aggressive view to have citrus included into mainline agriculture in this country to harness its big potential in earning foreign currency. The potential of the citrus industry can still be harnessed by resuscitating growers associations to monitor production and offer updated technology, through links with research institutions such as Citrus Research International of RSA. The absence of an even playing field in which subsidies were availed for selected sectors at the detriment of important sectors as citrus, was also a major hindrance to progress. "Most support is aimed at short term crops and grain crops, which unfortunately do not bring outside money as they only depend on local money in circulation," said Mr Chinembiri. [Source: www.herald.co.zw]

Argentinean fruit crops hit by severe frost

Extreme weather conditions over the weekend have destroyed the country's banana crop and are forecast to bring a premature end to this season's citrus exports. [Reefer Trends; 27 July 2009]

South Africa drops Valencia forecast

Saturated export markets and a delayed production season may lead to the southern hemisphere's leading citrus exporter shipping 10% fewer late oranges than forecast. [Reefer Trends; 27 July 2009]

Spain – New Tasks For Intercitrus

An agreement has been reached at Intercitrus for close monitoring of the upcoming campaign. Producers will inform the interbranch organisation very two weeks of the progress of the season for 16 varieties of oranges and clementines. The report will include information about average production per tree, percentage of picking, influence of disease and climatic conditions. Traders will on the other hand provide progress reports of produce placed on the market and going to processing. Such an effort might allow more in-depth discussion at a later stage regarding sizing, planning of the season and the link between the fresh and the processing market. [Freshfel; 24 July 2009]

Citrus prices on FreshPlaza.com and AGF.nl

Please click on the link below to display these prices which are average Free on Truck prices in Euros recorded in the Dutch fresh produce market and can be taken as an indication for the European situation.
http://www.freshplaza.com/price-watch/archief/2009/citrus_week30-09.pdf

If you need more information on any of these issues, or if there is anything else that CGA can assist with, please contact us at 031 7652514, or johne@cga.co.za
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