GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (3/2010)

John Edmonds (5 February 2010)

Exchange Rate at 14:30 $ = R 7.69; £ = R 12.06; € = R 10.55

Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Spanish citrus exports fall

At the end of January 2010 shipments of clementines, oranges and lemons to the North American and Russian markets were sharply lower than the 2008/09 figures.
[Reefertrends; 02 February 2010]

Moroccan citrus 'behind schedule'

Despite anticipating larger export volumes in 2009/10, shipments to mid January were running almost 10% lower than at the same stage last year.
[Reefertrends; 03 February 2010]

US: January crop production forecast

Oranges - The 2009 - 2010 California Navel orange forecast is 80.0 million cartons, unchanged from the October forecast and up 16% from last season's crop. The 2009-10 navel harvest continued to progress well, with good sizing and quality. Freezing temperatures in December do not appear to have significantly impacted the crop. The 2009-2010 Valencia orange forecast is 30.0 million cartons, unchanged from the October forecast, but up 7% from last season's crop.
Lemons - The 2009 - 2010 California lemon forecast is 40.0 million cartons, 9% below last season's final production and unchanged from the October forecast. The 2009-10 lemon harvest continued in the desert region and began in the Central Valley. Freezing temperatures in December appear to have affected the lemon crop, though the full impact is still unknown. Despite the freezes, supplies and quality have continued to be good.
Tangerines - The 2009 - 2010 California tangerine forecast (including mandarins and tangelos) is 16.4 million cartons. Production is 22% above last season's crop and up 17% from the October forecast. Sweeties from Central California became available in early November. Clementine harvest started in mid-November. Satsuma and Fairchild harvest continued with good quality and color. Organic Satsumas became available in mid-December.).

Grapefruit - The 2009 - 2010 California grapefruit forecast is 8.4 million cartons, 11% below the October forecast and down 25% from last season's crop. Rio Red harvest began in the Desert region of California in early November. Interior and exterior color is excellent. Only limited volume is being moved in California at this time as much of the packing takes place in Texas and Florida this time of year.
[californiafarmer.com; 02 February 2010]

US (FL): Mechanical citrus fruit harvesting stalemated

Florida citrus officials hope federal approval of a new chemical that loosens the bond between the stem and fruit will lead to more widespread adoption of mechanical harvesting.
Once seen as the answer to the rising costs and occasional shortages of labor for manual picking of citrus fruit, mechanical harvesting has reached a "stalemate," Fritz Roka, a University of Florida agricultural economist at the Southwest Florida Research and Education Center, told the Citrus Harvesting Research Advisory Council Tuesday. "Growers haven't seen enough of a price difference between mechanical harvesting and handpicking," he told The Ledger…By loosening the stem-fruit bond, CMNP causes the citrus to fall easily, making machine harvesting more efficient and less damaging to the trees.
[theledger.com; 3 February 2010]

Citrus trade and world markets

Global orange production and trade is estimated at 52.2 million metric ton (MMT) and 3.8 MMT, respectively. Due to the poor growing conditions in Florida in 2009, the orange production is forecast to drop by 11%. The figures in this report do not reflect damage done in January by the cold weather as the full extent of the damage is not yet known. In California where the majority of US fresh orange exports are grown, the forecast is up 13%. The US orange trade is forecast to rise due to a good demand from Canada and Korea. Due to continued demand from Russia and the Middle East, South African exports are also expected to rise.
[Freshplaza.com; 01 February 2010]

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
YOUR LEVY WORKING FOR YOU – GROWER LEVIES ARE USED TO FUND THE ACTIVITIES OF CGA