

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (35/2011)

John Edmonds (23 September 2011)

Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

EU: Stable citrus market southern hemisphere

Although many traders are starting with Spanish citrus, Anaco Greeve will first round off the overseas season before changing. "The colour and taste of the Spanish mandarins is not yet at the very best, whilst we still receive Nadorcott from South Africa and Murcotts from Argentina, which are of good quality," Jan van der Voort says. The importer will still have citrus from South Africa, Argentina and Uruguay available for a few weeks. "Import duty will increase after 15 October and arrivals will stop, but sales will continue for a few weeks." Jan is satisfied with the present market for citrus from overseas. Especially oranges are doing well, according to him. "The demand for oranges is good and less volume is available. Argentina and Uruguay do not have all that much and South Africa is sending less. From South Africa more and more goes to Arabian countries and Asia, because prices are better." The mandarins are almost finished, but are doing well, according to him. "Also Spain is not yet a threat at the moment." According to Jan it was a special citrus season. "The EHEC-crisis did a lot of damage to the trade and also the bad summer did not help a good market." The market for grapefruit has been bad during the entire season. "There is over-supply and demand is bad" he explains. "The South African grapefruit should have been gone already with other production countries on the market, but sales have been disappointing during the entire season." He expects a stable market for the last few weeks. "The demand is good, so that the last oranges will also go well." ... "The prospect for the Moroccan citrus is first class with good sizes and also from Spain the expectations are O.K. so far."

[www.anacogreeve.nl; 23 September 2011]

S. Africa: East Cape expects 2011 citrus boom

The Sundays River Valley in the Eastern Cape is one of the top citrus-producing regions in South Africa which, following good winter rains, expects a bumper crop in 2011... With fruit being grown there since the early 1920s, the region employs about 30 000 people, says Ken Nieuwenhuizen, managing director of the Sundays River Citrus Company (SRCC)... The lemons, rated as having the best quality and flavour in the country, are the valley's flagship product and are picked throughout the year. Land reform and empowerment forms an important part of the company's social responsibility focus, says Nieuwenhuizen. To date, the SRCC has bought six farms on which black emerging farmers are trained and developed. More schemes like this are planned for the future. "Our aim is to have 30% of productive land, currently delivering to SRCC, put into the hands of previously disadvantaged individuals within the next four years... Following good winter rains and perfect seasonal conditions, the area expects a bumper crop this year. SRCC marketing manager Hannes de Waal says they expect a 20% increase in fruit production when the season winds down in October... The effect of global warming has also been noticed, says technical manager Dave Gerber. "We have noticed our maximum summer temperatures becoming lower and maximum winter temperatures becoming warmer. This has a serious implication for citrus." In summer the area can be up to 10 degrees hotter than in Port Elizabeth, while the valley becomes extremely cold, but remains frost free, in winter. "The cold conditions are necessary to create that rich colouring in citrus fruit, while the extreme heat of summer adds to the sugar content of the fruit," Gerber says...

Through its sustainable spray programme, the SRCC also encourages farmers to make use of insects occurring naturally in the area, rather than rely on chemical sprays. Known as the natural enemy complex, the approach encourages the "soft" use of chemical sprays in the valley, adds Gerber. One of the most vital resources required for good citrus production is water, which the Sundays River Valley enjoys in abundance. Fed via a tunnel from the Gariep Dam into the Fish River, the water flows into the upper reaches of the Sundays River and from there into the Darlington Dam, which feeds the valley's irrigation system.

[medioclubsouthafrica.com; 21 September 2011]

Fresh blow for South African citrus exporters

Last week the Itajaí port authority announced its closure after several days of heavy rain when the Itajaí valley was declared in a state of emergency. The Port and Logistics Complex in the Itajaí suspended its operations due to the closure of the bar and due to the strong current of the Rio Itajaí-Açu, the terminal is situated at the mouth of the river, and was flooded by the swollen river which flows through the Itajaí valley. This event also caused a further headache for some South African citrus exporters. Containers were building up in Durban due to low demand in Europe, so some exporters decided to take a much cheaper option and send the containers to Rotterdam via Brazil only to find the port closed due to the flooding, meaning a big delay for the fruit.

This just another blow for the South African citrus industry which has just about everything possible thrown at it this season.

[Freshplaza.com; 20 September 2011]

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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