

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (42)

John Edmonds (7 December 2012)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Spain: Bad year for Clemenules campaign

Producers and exporters of Spanish citrus are facing difficulties with the Clemenules campaign this year, which arrived with much delay. "We just started the Clementine campaign, which arrived very late this year. In some areas the exporters are still carrying out the degreening process," explains David López, of Cítricos Asunción López S.L. In any case, what is truly causing the Clemenules campaign to be bad are the low prices currently being paid for the fruit. "Prices have plummeted," affirms David. "The market is 'flooded' with Clemenules and Orogrande, which makes it difficult to get reasonable prices... Besides the large volumes of the product in the market, some also attribute the fall in prices to quality problems. "We had some very hot and dry months until October, and the heavy rains fallen in November damaged the fruit's quality," explains the trading agent José Luís Koninckx. "Many tried selling the clementines quickly, before they got spoiled." According to exporters, the clementine campaign will suffer a drop in sales due the proximity of Christmas, so they will try selling as much as possible before the second half of December. From January onwards things could recover a little... In addition to these problems, Koninckx says that "the Clemenules must also face Morocco's competition, which has already introduced large volumes in the European market." David López is also in the middle of the Satsuma campaign, which will last until late January. "It is a product with very stable prices if we compare it with the Clemenules, as the market is not as saturated." At the moment, Cítricos Asunción López has already started exporting Navelines to Poland and Russia, which are markets that demand larger sizes.

[www.freshplaza.com; 6 December 2012]

Argentina files complaint against U.S. for lemon import restrictions

Argentina has filed two complaints against the United States to the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Dispute Settlement Body, for preventing the entry of fresh lemons and meat from the South American country. A similar complaint was also filed by Argentina against the European Union and Spain for biodiesel import restrictions. The Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs said lemon exports from the country's northwest region have been impacted for 11 years now. In 2011, Argentina exported US\$172 million worth of the fruit worldwide. As of September 2012, 61 countries had received exports for a sum of US\$190 million. Tucuman Citrus Association President Roberto Sánchez told www.freshfruitportal.com the United States was an interesting market Argentina wants to reclaim, but he was not sure if the WTO complaint was the best route to reestablish commercial relations. Sánchez explained that a peaceful resolution had been attempted in November during consultations in Zurich, Switzerland. Argentina did not receive a satisfactory answer, however, which motivated a formal filing. According to reports by the ministry, the complaints presented by Argentina come after attempts to bilaterally resolve protectionist measures imposed by the U.S. and the E.U. It argues these measures violate WTO norms and have been ongoing for more than a decade. The ministry argues these restrictions have generated extensive damage to Argentine producers and caused thousands of job losses.

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 7 December 2012]

US: California urged Don't Go Green!

This week the USDA has launched a new effort to raise awareness of the threat posed by citrus greening disease in California. Californians in Los Angeles and Orange counties will soon see mobile advertisements in English and Spanish proclaiming "Don't Go Green!" because "Greening Disease (HLB) Kills Citrus." Citrus tree owners are encouraged to "Learn, Check, Report" suspected citrus diseases. Residential growers can learn about the diseases on the Save Our Citrus website. They should check citrus plants regularly for signs of disease. And they can report suspicious symptoms through the website or by using the free Save Our Citrus iPhone App available for download from the iTunes store. Residents can also call the California Department of Food and Agriculture hotline.

[www.freshplaza.com; 6 December 2012]

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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