

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (3/2012)

John Edmonds (27 January 2012)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Pakistan: 2012 kinnow targets unachievable

2012 looks set to be a bleak year for kinnow growers in Pakistan. The growers are being affected by a number of issues and the political responses to them seem to be slow and ineffective. The export target for the year was an ambitious 300,000 tonnes, but exporters have indicated that this will not now be accomplished. The reasons for this are varied and include the complete cessation of exports to Iran due to non issuance of required export documentation from the state bank. Iran is a considerable importer of the fruit, usually accounting for 50,000 tonnes per annum. Expected imports to Indonesia are now also looking unlikely to go ahead as the required political agreements failed to take place due to instability in the country. Another serious issue is corruption, which has led to a bad reputation amongst buyers of kinnow. Customs officials have been known to steal containers of the fruit that are in the process of being exported. This inevitably deters foreign investors considerably. The seeming apathy of the authorities in dealing with the situation is unfortunate given that the main outcome of all this is set to be damage to the national economy as the country loses out on exporting an iconic element of its produce and on the income of foreign currencies.

[www.dailytimes.com.pk; 20 January 2012]

Spain: Pick your own free lemons as values drop

Secretary of the Farmers Union in the Vega Baja, José Manuel Pamies, has revealed that citrus farmers in the region are giving away lemons in exchange for having their trees stripped clean of fruit. This is because the export value of the fruit is so low that they are basically not worth picking. The low value itself is a result of low prices on citrus coming out of Turkey. Meanwhile thousands of lemons are being left to rot on the trees or on the ground and many family run farms are closing down due to inhibitive running costs. The main destinations for Alicante lemons are Norway, Germany, Holland, England and Russia.

[www.roundtownnews.co.uk; 26 January 2012]

Spain: Less lemon production due to lower prices

The progressive decrease in the price of citrus caused a reduction in hectares for its cultivation in Alicante, with falls of 29% and 10% in lemons and oranges over the past ten years, according to agricultural association ASAJA-Young Farmers. Of the 14,232 hectares dedicated to lemons in 2000, it fell to 10,100 in 2010, while in the case of oranges it dropped from 17,000 to 15,153 over the same period of time, according to Asaja.

[www.freshplaza.com; 25 January 2012]

Russia expected to import more citrus from FSU countries in 2012

According to www.rg.ru, Russia imported about 1.4 million tonnes of citrus fruits last year that is almost 10% higher year-on-year. The share of FSU countries (former Soviet republics) in Russia's total citrus imports decreased to 10% in 2011, while a year earlier their share amounted to 14%. The experts say that last season's climatic peculiarities caused a reduction of Russia's citrus imports from Abkhazia, Azerbaijan and Central Asia; however, the situation will cardinaly change in 2012. David Zodelava, Chairman of Georgian-Russian Business Development Council, said that Georgia is actively working on citrus exports to the Russian Federation. According to him, Russia may recommence imports of Georgian citrus fruits already in the first quarter of 2012. Georgian produce will be exported by 4 companies. Russia's total citrus imports from Georgia may reach 55,000 tonnes per annum (mandarins will account for up to 65% of them, lemons – for 20%)...In the meantime, Abkhazia almost halved its citrus exports to the Russian Federation to about 8,000 tonnes (80% - mandarins) in 2011. According to Beslan Dzhopua, Minister of Agriculture of Abkhazia, a sharp decrease in exports was caused by low citrus production in the country. In 2012, Abkhazia plans to export no less than 10,000 tonnes of citrus fruits to Russia. Azerbaijan expects to increase its citrus exports to the Russian Federation by more than 30% to 14-16 thousand tonnes this year.

[Fruitinform; 25 January, 2012]

US (TX): Meeting being held to discuss citrus greening

Agriculture Commissioner Todd Staples is holding a meeting with Rio Grande Valley citrus growers at the McAllen Chamber of Commerce to discuss the implications of the recent discovery of citrus greening disease in Texas for the first time. The disease was found in an orange grove in San Juan.

[www.freshplaza.com; 24 January 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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