GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (11/2012)

John Edmonds (20 April 2012) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

AU: Citrus growers to leave small fruit on trees

Citrus growers in the Murray Valley have been advised to leave the smaller fruits on the trees this year to ensure that they maximise their returns. Larger fruits are demanded by most export markets and, as the currency is still so high, it could be unprofitable to pick the fruits that are not in demand overseas.
[www.abc.net.au; 19 April 2012]

California navel demand gains with higher quality

Bigger sizes and better taste is helping strengthen markets for California navels…On April 10, the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported prices of $15.73-16.75 for 7/10-bushel cartons of navels 48-56s from California, up from $13.63-14.65 last year at the same time. As of April 10, between 70% and 75% of the California navel crop had been shipped…Most California shippers would stop shipping by late June or early July, Blakely said…Shippers also had been waiting longer than usual for big-sized navels, Galone said. That wish also had been answered by early April. Sizes would likely peak on 48s, 56s and 72s for the duration of the navel deal, he said.
[thepacker.com; 11 April 2012]

SA producers call on govt to prioritize horticulture in BRICS summits.

South African fruit producers are urging the country's government to take horticulture more seriously in future Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) discussions. The Citrus Growers Association (CGA) pressed the government at last week's Agricultural Trade Forum to move agriculture higher up the agenda at future BRICS meetings. CGA chief executive Justin Chadwick said South Africa's agricultural representative at last month's BRICS meeting in New Delhi was ill-informed and "didn't have a clue" about the country's horticultural issues… "The fruit industries see huge potential for expanding exports into Russia, India and China – in fact the future of the sector probably lies in developing these markets. And expanding the fruit industry means more jobs, reduced rural poverty, increased foreign exchange earnings and economic growth." CGA estimates fruit exports accounted for half of all South Africa's ZAR1.5 billion (US$191 million) exports to Russia.
[www.freshfruitportal.com; 20 April 2012]

US: Orange juice futures extend slump

Orange-juice futures tumbled to a 19-month low on speculation that citrus crops in Florida face no weather threat until the start of the hurricane season in June, leaving ample supply as U.S. demand slows…U.S. retailers sold 252.23 million gallons (954.8 liters) of orange juice since Oct. 1, down 11 percent from a year earlier, the Florida Department of Citrus said on April 2…Orange juice for May delivery plunged 5 percent to $1.3965 a pound at 11:04 a.m. on ICE Futures U.S. in New York, after touching $1.391, the lowest for a most-active contract since Sept. 9, 2010. Prices have plunged 38 percent from a record $2.2695 on Jan. 23, as concerns eased that a U.S. probe would lead to a ban on imports containing a banned fungicide…Inventories held by the three biggest producers in Brazil will more than double to 535,000 metric tons on June 30, a Brazilian industry group has said.
[www.businessweek.com; 11 April 2012]

Spanish growers press for Argentine lemon veto in wake of Repsol debacle

Spanish growers are calling for a ban on lemon imports following the Argentine government's steps towards the nationalization of petroleum company YPF, website Lacronicavirtual.com reported. The move sparked outrage as Spanish company Repsol held a majority stake in YPF. Alicante Young Farmers' Association (ASAJA) president Eladio Aniorte is pressing for an embargo on imports, not just in Spain but for the whole of Europe…ASAJA Alicante said the issue gave Arias Cañete the opportunity to defend national production and curb Argentine imports…Alicante accounts for 40% of Spain's lemon production, covering 20,000 hectares and employing 10,000 people, although in recent years the sector has come under increasing pressure. Since 2000-2010 it's estimated the province has lost 4,100 hectares of lemon groves due to low domestic prices. ASAJA Alicante predicts more farms will be abandoned in the future due to low lemon profitability. Repsol executive chairman Antonio Brufau said the company would launch a legal action against the appropriation. Repsol shares plunged when Argentine president Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner's announced a law allowing Argentina to take control of YPF, its former national oil company in which Repsol has a 57.4% stake…Argentine Senate Committee members met this week to examine the executive bill with legislators expected to review it next week.
[www.freshfruitportal.com; 18 April 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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