GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (16)

John Edmonds (1 June 2012) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

SA growers speed up navel picking to avoid 'creasing'

South African growers are prioritizing navel orange picking ahead of lemons in a bid to minimize creasing problems with skin breaks… Grown For You chief executive officer Snyman Kritzinger said original estimates of a bumper crop had been revised due to creasing. “But the positive side is the navels we are putting into cartons are more class I and IIs. People will come back for more because it eats well.” Sunday’s River Citrus Company marketing director Hannes de Waal, said the problem was “manageable”. “The key thing is you pick the fruit prior to it happening. It is a factor in our pack houses and it will decrease the crop. However, the quality of the fruit this year is quite beautiful… Picking of early navels started four to five weeks ago with mid navels picked last week and huge volumes set to be harvested over the next few weeks. Lemons are even further behind with Kritzinger reporting only packed 50% so far compared with what was ready for shipment in 2011. Argentine lemon export volumes are currently low due to a mixture of bad weather and currency problems which means South African lemons have commanded good prices. Wholesale prices for a 15kg carton of lemons in Europe are EUR16.5 (US$21), while navels are commanding freight on board prices of US$8-10 per carton for the smaller sizes and US$12-15 for the larger sizes.
[www.freshfruitportal.com; 29 May 2012]

Brazil reports surplus orange record

A record orange crop, the falling of orange juice exports in the world and stocks that are almost full, make for a "disturbing" situation in Brazil, leading orange producer, according to exporters and producers. "The situation is disturbing because in the worst case, one quarter of the 2012/2013 harvest, equivalent to 83 million boxes of 40.8 kilos of oranges, will not be collected" from the trees, said Christian Lohbauer to the AFP on Tuesday, president of the National Association of orange juice Exporters (CitrusBR). Brazil, the largest exporter of orange juice with 85% of the world market. Currently Brazil has, before the record crop this year, "accumulated (juice) stocks of 560,000 tons, when its maximum limit is 825,000 tons," said Lohbauer. "If we process all the oranges of the next harvest, estimated at 364 million boxes, there will be no room to save all the juice," said Lohbauer, who will meet on Wednesday with the Ministry of Agriculture in Brasilia to discuss the problem. Brazil exports 70% of its orange juice to Europe and 15% to the U.S., which represents 1.2 million tons of concentrated juice per year, a consumption that has been decreasing for 10 years. "Orange juice has been replaced by flavored water, gatorades (energy drink) and juice made from various fruits," he said. "The surplus of oranges becomes a chronic problem and we’ll have to see what we can do with the government to sell more oranges in Brazil. But anyway, it is only a palliative," the President of CitrusBR said. From the perspective of the producers, the concern remains. Most still do not sign contracts with industries, according to Associtrus (Association of Brazilian citrus growers).
[AFP ; 31 May 2012]

Spanish citrus producers protest on the low prices

Agricultural organizations Fepac-Asaja and the Union prepare protests due to the situation within the sector, that caused many farmers not to recollect oranges and the ones doing it charged prices below the production costs. That's what was announce yesterday by representatives of both organizations, after a meeting in Vila-Real to deal with the "disastrous" citrus campaign this year. People coming from Valencia and Tarragona will add up to this groups of farmers, to make a Group of Agricultural Pressure (GAP), to unify petitions of the several groups. During the meeting, producers expressed the need to only recollect fruit with the adequate size, since it's the way to get better prices. And in the opinion of the representatives of Fepac-Asaja and the Union, it's also a way to reduce production costs.
[Las Provincias; 31 May 2012]

Argentina: Harvest is delayed by about 30 days

Roberto Sanchez Loria (ATC) recognized that the climate has reduced fruit production and for many lemons to exceed export sizes. There is less fruit compared to 2011, there is a crop that shows a delay of approximately a month, many farms with little activity, lemon prices (international) located in reasonable values for the productive, industrial and export sector, high quality fresh fruit but with over proportioned sizes, and costs that show significant hikes, make up the picture which the 2012 citrus season in Tucumán develops…
[Lagaceta; 29 May 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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