GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (27)

John Edmonds (17 August 2012)

Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Venezuela: Production of citrus under threat.

According to the chairman of Asociación de Fruticultores del Occidente de Carabobo, and director of Frutales FEDEAGRO, Ricardo Bello, Venezuela's consent to join Mercosur last month will affect the position of citrus fruits on the domestic market. "We cannot afford Brazil to offload their products in Venezuela at a price that is ruining our national citrus production," says Bello. "It would be a heavy blow to our markets if access to the dollar prevails over the wellbeing of our country." Mercosur, looking to promote free trade and the fluid movement of goods, people, and currency between several South American nations, provides the possibility of 'legal' Brazilian products to enter the Venezuelan market. The Brazilian giant estimates its production of oranges in 2011 to be over 20 million tons, over 40 times that of Venezuela. "We can't imagine the disastrous consequences if Venezuela's economy has to take on this Brazilian monster," says Bello.

[Freshplaza.com 15 August 2012]

Moroccan citrus sector affected by water shortage

Heat disastrous for mandarins in the Souss region… The total citrus production in Morocco is 6% higher in 2011/2012. This estimation appears too high though, claim experts, as bad weather conditions have had a negative effect on the quality and size of the fruits, specially the oranges. About half of the citrus production of Morocco is situated in the Souss region, from where also 80% of the export takes place. As there is a water shortage, expansion of the sector is not possible. There are possibilities though in the Gharb region. The yield for 2012/2013 doesn't look very well. Drought has had a negative effect on the fruit production, especially in the Souss region. Cultivators have asked for help from the government. Marocco exports mainly oranges and mandarines. Important varieties are Clementine, Maroc Late, Nour and Navels. The export to Russia, by new shipping lines between Agadir and St. Petersburg, is the biggest, and accounts for 244,949 tons. Europe is the second destination. The export to United Arabian Emirates has also increased. This is because of new shipping lines between Tanger and Jabel Ali.

[Freshplaza.com; 14 August 2012]

Citrus Growers' Association OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

US: Florida orange crop to rise 7-13% 2012-2013

Florida's 2012-2013 orange crop looks to be between 7-13% bigger than last season's volumes -still small enough to ensure profitable prices for the state's growers. Orlando citrus consultant Elizabeth Steger released her estimate of the new orange crop Thursday, putting it at 156.7 million boxes, or 10.2 million more boxes than 2011-12 production. Winter Garden-based Louis Dreyfus Citrus Inc. also released its estimate of 165 million boxes. If these estimates are close to reality then its indicates that Florida has recovered from hurricane damage experienced in 2004 and 2005. Florida citrus officials widely consider the Steger and Dreyfus forecasts as the first authoritative estimates of the new orange crop. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will release its first official citrus crop estimate Oct. 11, around the time the first harvesting begins. The gap between the Steger and Dreyfus estimates could put more uncertainty into negotiations between growers and processors who buy around 95% of the total crop.

[theledger.com; 17 August 2012]

AU: Navel oranges abandoned

Tonnes of navel oranges are being left to rot in the orchards of New South Wales. Growers have abandoned their fruits as the Australian dollar is so high in value they can not compete in the international marketplace. They claim "rock bottom" prices do not cover harvesting costs, let alone production costs. The Riverina's largest export packing house, Pacific Fresh, at Leeton, is dumping truckloads of oranges on local cattle farms and is battling to keep all 45 staff on its payroll. Pacific Fresh chairman Frank Mercuri said exports had stopped. Buyers are turning to the US and South Africa, where they can get the oranges for lower prices. "I've been packing for 15 years and this is the worst season I've seen," Said Mercuri…A NSW Department of Primary Industries spokesman said it was a reminder "consumers need to buy more Australian fresh juice and oranges to support our farmers, not imports".

[www.weeklytimesnow.com.au; 15 August 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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