GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (29)

John Edmonds (31 August 2012) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

US: California Standard to ensure sweeter oranges

…Previously, California navels were required to meet a ratio measurement, which the industry has now shown to be an ineffective predictor of eating quality. The new California StandardTM instead measures the balance between brix (sweetness) and acidity, which is a superior indicator of sweetness and taste... The California Standard is the result of consumer research conducted by California Citrus Mutual, the California Citrus Research Board, the University of California and USDA/Agricultural Research Service. The taste studies concluded that Brix minus Acid is a better predictor of flavor than the previous sugar-to-acid ratios. The new Standard was recommended by the California Citrus Mutual, supported by the citrus industry and ultimately adopted into regulation by the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Technically, the formula for The California Standard is (Brix – (TA*4))*16.5. The consumer-based research documented several key points that led to the development and adoption of The California Standard.

• Competition in the produce aisle has increased and fresh fruit consumption has increased, while fresh orange consumption has dropped
• Early season navels tend to have low customer satisfaction
• A positive eating experience would cause 65% of consumers to eat more navels
• The California Standard replaces 35% of less-tasty fruit with fruit that meets consumer expectations
• The California Standard exhibits a 90%+ accuracy in determining purchase intent.

"With The California Standard we can deliver good fruit at the first delivery, to shorten the repurchase cycle and improve sales," Nelsen concluded. "It's all about better fruit at the right time."
[Freshplaza.com; 29 August 2012]

U.S. Clementine oversupply headaches "avoidable"

Southern Hemisphere clementine exporters could have prevented U.S. prices from nosediving with better planning, communication and marketing, claims a leading distributor. Seald Sweet International chief executive officer Mayda Sotomayor, said U.S. clementine supply was 30% higher this season but the market was big enough to absorb large volumes. "It had a lot to do with the fact that the product was not being promoted. It's not the fault of the retailers; it's about better planning, knowing when the volume is coming in and better communications with suppliers to have a flow through to the consumers in a consistent way." She said promotions of cantaloupes, honeydew melons and stone fruit had taken precedence over clementines in U.S. supermarkets. South Africa shipped more fruit to the U.S. than normal due to Europe's economic crisis while Chilean supply was over a shorter period, resulting in both countries peaking at the same time in late June and early July…Sotomayor added now that clementines have started to be publicized more, the situation had changed completely with higher demand and recovering prices. She said there should be better communication within the industry to avoid the same thing happening in future seasons. "If the market had prepared itself for this, volumes could have flowed and there would have been less damage to the price.".. Late maturing mandarins are not expected to suffer the same challenges as U.S. demand is predicted to pick up from next week as families prepare for children returning to school.
[www.freshfruitportal.com; 22 August 2012]

Experts claim South African situation 'positive' despite misgivings

Whether it be floundering global economic conditions, port tariff hikes or tough competition with Egyptian oranges and Polish pears, South African growers have not had an easy 2012. But at the Produce Marketing Association's (PMA) Fresh Connections: Southern Africa event this week, listeners heard plenty of reasons why the industry should be positive for the future. Political and trend analyst J.P. Landman said South Africa's situation needed to be put in context by comparing it to other nations, such as the U.S. where the manufacturing sector is still 4% smaller than it was three years ago. "The South African economy is roughly 4% bigger now than before the recession in 2009," he said.
…The analyst drew a less negative picture of the country than most citizens perceive, despite the fact that "roughly 20% of public money goes down the drain". His point was that corruption was rife in all countries, developed or developing.
… African exporter Brendan Langeveldt of Kallos Exporters helped conference goers envision paving new African trade activity with the fruit- hungry markets of Africa... He explained that only about 5% of the African market outside of South Africa was retail, while the remaining 95% was wet markets….Kollos said "there are high risks, but high returns", which have led to successful business conditions, fueling his belief that Africa was the new growth frontier for the fruit sector.
[www.freshfruitportal.com; 24 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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