

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (14)

John Edmonds (26 April 2013)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Drought could affect lemon processing in Argentina

DROUGHT conditions in Argentina are thought to have had an impact on the country's lemon crop, FOODNEWS understands. Sources put this year's harvest at anywhere between 1.3-1.5 million tonnes. Processing figures are still unclear, but reports are that some 950 000-1.1 million tonnes of lemons will go for juicing. "We have seen a lack of water in the lemon area during January and a part of February, but in spring and the start of summer and autumn we have seen a lot of rain," a well-placed agricultural analyst explained. "There is a lot of fruit, but of a poorer quality than other years. What was important was that the rains in spring (unusual in this area) which marked the fruit due to increased disease. "It is difficult to know how much will be processed. Now the plants do not want fruit. If you consider that 300 000 tonnes will be exported, plus 100 000 tonnes for the domestic market, we can expect that if they harvest everything some 1.1 million tonnes will be processed."...Fruit for processing is expected to be affected by the fresh sector this year. Smaller harvests in Spain and Turkey have meant that demand for fresh lemons from Argentina and South Africa will be higher... A key processor based in Argentina told FOODNEWS: "Exports of Argentine lemons have already begun earlier than normal... Another processor explained that fresh exports were "of course developing well, but should not affect overall processing volumes". "The volume of export will be more I think, but domestic costs, inflation and overall uncertainty makes exporters cautious," FOODNEWS' first source added. "If they don't close on high prices and expected payments, exports will slow. No one wants to put USD16 down for the cost of shipping a box without knowing payment details." ...Increased labour costs are likely to have an impact on the industry too. It appears a definitive decision has not been made, but there are rumours that salaries will increase by 25-30% in Argentine pesos. Continuing inflation, rising labour costs, and devaluation of the peso against the dollar is making this very difficult for those in the industry...Export data for fresh lemons up to week 14, supplied to FOODNEWS from CIF Business Intelligence, reveals that most fruit has gone to Russia. Other markets, such as mainland Europe, still remain uncertain to whether they will purchase Argentine lemon, despite competitive prices.

[Foodnews; 16April 2013]

Greening hit 7.2 million trees in Sao Paulo state last year

Around 7.2 million citrus plants have been uprooted because of Huanglongbing (HLB, or greening) in Brazil's São Paulo state in 2012, according to disease monitoring reports submitted by producers to São Paulo's agriculture defence coordination body (CDA). The CDA recently announced that citrus producers inspected 213.69 million plants planted in 85 940 orange groves on 16 329 farms in the second half of 2012. Four million citrus plants were uprooted of HLB symptoms and 14.5 million plants were uprooted for other reasons, during this six-month period. Only 1.1 million citrus plants were replanted in the same period.

[Foodnews; 16April 2013]

Egyptian citrus exporter reflects on new markets

With Egyptian citrus under reconsideration by the U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), exporters face more than a new market possibility...Sherif Mezar, business development manager of El Gebaly, explained that although the U.S. offers opportunity, it also offers challenges. "The US market is a very competitive market and a very big market for us, but unfortunately we don't always have the premium quality," Mezar said. "But if we had the opportunity to enter, it would be a big chance to expand." Mezar referred to Florida in particular as major competitor, if Egypt were to enter the U.S. market. He said, however, that the East Coast market has potential and would be the regional focus for Egypt. Regarding cold treatment requested by APHIS, he said the requirement would not be a problem, as long as exporters maintained quality standards...In terms of growth, Mezar explained that Egypt still has some improvements to make before it can reach "premium" markets like Japan. He said the nation is producing good quality fruit but is still pushing to reach the highest quality standards. "My eye is expanding to the Far East. The Far East is very challenging and very interesting for us. This area is rising. Everybody is turning their eyes to the East – Singapore, Malaysia, India, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia. And there's Afghanistan, not many people are focusing on this market," he said. He mentioned other traditionally overlooked markets like Ghana, Cameroon and Chad as possible opportunities to tap into still undiscovered potential.. "For us we have zero record of any problem. It was a very good season. We have very good growth compared to last year," he said. Overall, he said the Egyptian industry has grown 9% compared to the same quarter last year. His company, he said, has grown 12%. "Taking into consideration strike and other problems, this is a big achievement for Egypt. We have new farms, we have new plantations. Most exporters are less than 10 years old, so people are getting knowledge and getting new plantations," he said.

www.freshfruitportal.com; 22April 2013]

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