GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (41)

John Edmonds (15 November 2013) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Small sizes of oranges may cause problems"

The citrus season is having more difficulty getting going than in other years. According to Francis van Overstraeten of De Roeck & Zonen there is still quite a lot of volume from overseas on the market and the citrus from Spain is only trickling in…Francis indicates that they have to wait and see what will happen. "We're not getting huge volumes of Clementines in yet. It's all coming in small amounts because the products aren't colouring enough. This is due to too high temperatures in Spain. The oranges are also just trickling in. We still have production from overseas, especially pressing oranges. The season is late compared to last year." "The prices are reasonably correct. So when we're talking about Spanish Clementines, it's between 9 and 15 Euro per 10 kilo box. The Spanish hand oranges are making a Euro per kilo at the moment. This is for the best products, even though they're a bit sour at the moment. We have to wait and see when more citrus from Spain will arrive. There are a lot of small sizes of oranges this season, which is a bit of a problem. Everyone wants the big sizes 2/3 but there is a lot of 5/6 or smaller. There just aren't a lot of large sizes expected with the first varieties. This will be a problem. I don't think the small sizes will go for much."…There isn't a lot of competition from other European countries in the area of citrus. "Morocco is mainly on the market in Holland. The first Clementines are in there and are making around 90 cents to 1 Euro. We're not bothered by that as much in Belgium. The Clementines from Morocco are without leaves. They don't want that here." The trader expects the citrus season to really get going after the 11th of November. "Then we'll really open the registers and if I'm right, there will be enough supply and demand."
[Freshplaza.com; 12 November 2013]

EU citrus growers not convinced by CBS research

After the findings of leading experts that Citrus Black Spot (CBS) cannot establish in the EU, Justin Chadwick, CEO of the South African Citrus Grower's Association stated, "This is what we always believed but it is nice to have it confirmed by experts." After a draft PRA on CBS was published back in July by the EFSA, experts from around the world went over the report, page by page, word by word and found it "terribly flawed". Each of the experts prepared submissions which were combined into one document which is now being looked at by the EFSA, who will give their final PRA at the end of December. Commenting after a meeting of EU's Citrus Group in Brussels yesterday, president of AVA-ASAJA, Cristóbal Aguado said, "What took place today at the meeting was indecent and a mockery. These gentlemen have lost the little credibility they had left, because if after 34 cases of black spot having been intercepted, they are still avoiding the issue, they've certainly shown that they don't care about the future of citriculture."…Antonino Catara, chairman of the Sicily science and technology park, says that he has "examined the papers, and I wouldn't be so sure of the fact that the fungus wouldn't spread in Europe. The conclusion of the panel is much too simplistic, especially if we consider preventative measures. Experienced researchers from countries that would have a lot to lose have dismissed the risks and transformed the CBS question in a quality matter. According to them, we wouldn't even have to carry out checks!"…As far as the South African growers are concerned it's just business as usual, they are still growing according to the CBS regulations. Chadwick commented that October had been an especially friendly month where the CBS controls were concerned, with little rain which meant the spraying, which is critical at this time of the year, could take place. Chadwick also said that citrus producers were still looking for alternative markets to limit the reliance on the European ones. He estimated that the cost to meet the CBS regulations cost the South African citrus industry around one billion Rand last season.
[Freshplaza.com; 8 November 2013]

USDA says Florida orange crop will decrease

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued its initial forecast on Friday pegging the 2013-2014 Florida orange crop at 125 million boxes, down 6 percent from last season. The USDA estimated early-mid varieties at 58 million, down from 67.1 million at the end of last season, while the Valencia orange total is at 67 million boxes compared to 66.5 million in 2012-13. "The number shows HLB continues to affect our industry and growers are faced once again with a challenging season," said Michael W. Sparks, executive VP/CEO of Florida Citrus Mutual. "The good news is that at this size crop, there should be upward pressure on prices."…During the 2012-2013 season, Florida produced 133.6 million boxes of oranges. The Florida citrus industry creates a $9 billion annual economic impact, employing nearly 76,000 people, and covering about 550,000 acres.
[Freshplaza.com; 11 November 2013]

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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