GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (4)

John Edmonds (31 January 2014) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Mixed fortunes for Spanish citrus

Spanish citrus producers are facing losses of tens of millions of euros due to what agricultural unions are calling a "catastrophic" season for Navelinas, the most important orange variety grown in the Valencia region. Ava-Asaja said since the start of the season, prices had fluctuated between €0.10 and €0.18 per kg, below the €0.22 per kg cost of production. It blamed a combination of greater availability (production has increased by 19 per cent on last year), and quality issues resulting from the unseasonably warm autumn, which had led to a high incidence of citrus creasing – a problem affecting appearance of the fruit...The situation in easy peelers is somewhat better. José Enrique Sanz of PGI Cítricos Valencianos said the quality of the clementine crop was good and the market had been fairly brisk, with "acceptable" price levels. Clementine exporters are seeing particularly strong demand in the US due to the shortage in the California deal resulting from the December freeze. John Lazopoulos of Fort Pierce, Florida-based DNE World Fruit Sales, told The Packer that a combination of the freeze and excellent quality out of Spain had led to a surge in demand. "Demand is very good, and it's strengthening," he said.
[Fruitnet.com; 27 January 2014]

Spain: Lemon exports to the EU up 23%

The Fino lemon campaign could not go any better for Ailimpo's associates. The mid-season's figures in terms of prices, volumes sold and export volumes (+23% to the European Union) are all really positive. The director of the Lemon and Grapefruit Inter-professional Association (Ailimpo), based in Murcia, explains that the reasons for these good results are the fact that the season was advanced by two weeks, that European demand is on the rise and that prices have remained above production costs. Between September and December 2013, a total of 292,386 tonnes of Fino lemons were marketed, compared to the 238,346 tonnes of the same period last year (54,040 tonnes more). "In general terms, we could say that this improvement is due to an increase in exports, to the larger volumes shipped to the juice industry and to the fact that the campaign started two weeks earlier," explains José Antonio García. Argentina finished early, in late July, due to frosts, and consequently Spanish lemons started being harvested in late September. We expect our entire production to be harvested this season," explains the director of Ailimpo.The EU is still the largest export destination. During the first four months of the season, a total of 185,141 tonnes have been shipped to EU markets; 23% more than last year. 45,600 tonnes have gone to the domestic market, and 6,828 tonnes to other destinations. "Export volumes to the EU have been record-breaking, which points to an increase in consumption levels," affirms José Antonio García. "However, shipments to new markets have remained stable." According to García, one of Spain's great competitors in the lemon market, Turkey, has had a normal production and its exports have focused on Russia, Ukraine and Saudi Arabia; three markets where Spanish lemons are hardly imported. "We still have a leading position in the European Union, although the possibility of exporting to Russia is not ruled out once the Turkish campaign comes to an end, around late February," concludes José Antonio García.
[valenciafruits.com; 29 January 2014]

US (CA): Preliminary Kern citrus freeze losses exceed $100 million

Even as area farmers are dealing with one of the worst droughts in history, county Agricultural Commissioner Ruben Arroyo told the Kern County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday that local growers of lemons, tangerines and mandarins have lost as much as half their crop to freeze damage. Arroyo estimated 15 percent of Kern County's Valencia orange crop and 35 percent of other large orange varieties also are damaged. Lemons may have taken the biggest percentage hit as growers and packers — the ag commissioner's sources of information — estimated 50 percent of the total will not meet fresh market standards. Tangerines and mandarins, which are more widely planted and more lucrative than lemons, may have sustained as much damage. Losses for those varieties are estimated at between 40 percent and 50 percent....When comparing the percentage of 2013's damaged fruit to the 2012 crop values, the estimated losses for that year would have exceeded $200 million.
As of this week, about one-third of the navel orange crop had been harvested, Houtby said. Picking can begin as early as October and extend into July. But this year, the harvest season will likely end early, probably by May...
[bakerfieldcalifornian.com; *29 January 2014]*

Spain: Recyclable specs made from citrus waste

A group of researchers from the technological centres AIDO, AIMPLAS and AINIA have been working for the past year in the development of a new plastic material that will make it possible to manufacture 100% biodegradable spectacles entirely from agro-food waste generated by the fruit and juice industry. The bioplastic material obtained, resulting from the fermenting process of citrus subproducts, will also be usable by other industries, such as the packaging and automotive sectors....
[Freshplaza.com; 27January 2014]

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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