GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (10)

John Edmonds (28 March 2014) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

US (FL): Early end to grapefruit season opens up market

With Florida's grapefruit growers contending with the effects of citrus greening, their season will likely be cut short. That absence of product on the market will, in turn, open opportunities for shippers from California and Mexico. “We're quickly coming to the end of the grapefruit deal,” said Seald Sweet's David Brocksmith. “So the season's going to end a little early.” He estimated that growers in the state's interior region will finish by the end of this month while those in the Indian River region will likely wrap up in the first week of April. If that prediction holds true, that would mean the season will end about a month earlier than it has in previous years. “I'd say Florida will be done with grapefruit by the last week of April,” said Brocksmith....Growers have had to run a lot of fruit to fulfill domestic orders that make the grade. With the early end to the season, that will likely make for gaps in the market. “Florida ships grapefruit to Japan and Western Europe, and in the next few months, you'll see fruit from South Africa, Israel and Turkey,” said Brocksmith. Domestically, shippers from California and Mexico...will benefit from Florida's early departure this season. “Florida and Texas have better grapefruit, so those states dominate when they have fruit, but when we shut down, everyone goes to fruit from California and Sonora, Mexico,” said Brocksmith. “Florida has had the smallest crop in 25 years, which is due to quality issues from citrus greening.”
[Freshplaza.com; 21 March 2014]

Drought may cut Brazilian citrus estimate

Brazil’s upcoming orange harvest could be noticeably lower than predicted because of drought, according to industry officials. Last month’s 317.4 million box (40.8kg) forecast for orange production in 2014/15 did not take into account the effects of the dry spell that affected orange groves, representatives of citrus growers and the orange industry body CitrusBR said. “We made this estimate before the effects of the drought [were known], in mid-January. It is still impossible to know, realistically, the effect of these climatic conditions on the fruits. In theory, plants have lost part of their development potential, meaning that fruits will be smaller,” said CitrusBR executive director Ibiapaba Netto adding that March rainfall could help the fruits recover.
[www.foodnews.co.uk; 14 March 2014]

Citrus sector grinding to a halt

The Spanish citrus campaign has entered its final stages, and taking into account the prices which oranges and mandarins have been reaching in Valencia and Andalusia, the quality problems growers have had to face, and the slow pace of sales both nationally and internationally, most operators agree that the situation is catastrophic after a season likely to have been the worst on record. In the Region of Valencia, Spain's largest orange and clementine producer, quality has been affected since the beginning by the fruit's lack of colour and small calibres, in addition to two physiopathies which have caused significant losses...The weather has been remarkably mild, both in Spain and the rest of Western Europe; something which, according to exporters, has taken a toll on consumption levels..." Regarding prices, clementines have reached the most reasonable levels, with higher prices for varieties such as the Afourer and Nadorcott. "The problem is that prices have been even higher at origin than at retailers, with distributors paying between 0.80 and 0.90 Euro/kilo," continues the exporter. "Additionally, while Spain sold its export box for between 15 and 20 Euro, Morocco shipped it for between 12 and 13 Euro." In the case of oranges, which have seen a considerable increase in production volumes, "prices have been terrible during the entire season, starting with the Naveline and continuing with the Navelate, Navel Lane Late etc. It is also worth noting that the plentiful supply from Egypt has pushed prices down, especially for the Navel." Given the circumstances, many growers have already decided to abandon the crop, as the low prices do not cover the harvesting costs. The clearest example is that of the province of Valencia, where the citrus acreage is expected to continue dropping, while other fruits, like kakis, are gradually expanding.
[Freshplaza.com; 21 March 2014]

Argentina: Entre Rios to sell 20,000 tons of citrus to Japan

The system that will be implemented to maintain the cold chain of 20,000 tons of tangerines and oranges that will be exported to Japan will be defined during the next few days when Japanese technicians visit the production plants at Entre Ríos. This is the last step will green light exports...to Japan, a trip that takes 42 days. "I think we can participate in the Japanese market with three varieties of tangerine and one of oranges," said Mariano Caprarulo, director of the Chamber of Citrus Exporters, who is accompanying the governor of Entre Rios in the Japanese mission...Regarding the business relationship, he said that, "we know that Japan has two seasons when they import fruits and that the United States and Australia are present in these windows. We can participate in the window from August to May, just like Australia. We will have to compete with them, but the Japanese seem enthusiastic about our products, which they already know from other markets. They are even interested in varieties that Australia is not exporting, so we will try to be present with two or three varieties and start growing slowly," said Caprarulo. Regarding prices, the employer argued that they had to assess this aspect seriously and contemplate issues such as tariffs and shipping terms. "The truth is that we are excited because we were very surprised to learn that Japan was interested in our products. We'll do everything we have to because it is not easy to enter this exclusive market, especially because of the extensive treatment imposed by Japan's Ministry of Agriculture on exports," he said.
[Freshplaza.com; 25 March 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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