

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (13)

John Edmonds (17 April 2014)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Spain: "Citrus sector needs to coordinate its activities to become more competitive"

The Spanish citrus sector will remember this season as one of its worst nightmares, recording the lowest prices in recent memory in the case of oranges. It has hardly rained in the Spanish Levant since September, especially in Valencia, and although the conditions are certainly not the most ideal, "nobody imagined the consequences to be so catastrophic," says Cristóbal Aguado, president of AVA ASAJA. "We have never suffered such severe quality problems or obtained such low prices." Clementines have not been as strongly affected, although some varieties have suffered physiological alterations, like the 'bufat' (separation of the skin over the pulp) and/or reached small calibres, but in any case oranges got the worst part, as they have been hampered by both notably small calibres and by the 'clareta' (splitting of the skin)... The Spanish citrus sector agrees in considering imports of South African citrus as a potential hazard, as they could potentially introduce a pest still unknown in Europe, the "Black Spot"..."We have been protesting for several years, as the disease is occasionally detected in South African shipments..."Right now the South African season is about to start and hopefully drastic measures will be taken in case of 5 "Black Spot" detections being reached."

[Freshplaza.com; 17 April 2014]

South African citrus exporters find it tough in Europe

Concerns in European countries about the spread of black spot disease have made for tough regulations regarding the importation of citrus from other continents. South African citrus exporters, who have found it especially tough to send their products to Europe, have had to look to other markets to compensate. "South African citrus growers feel regulations have more to do with market protectionism," said Don Limon's Andreas Schindler. "They feel there's a Spanish lobby that's promoting barriers to entry that make it difficult for exporters from other continents, especially South African exporters, to enter the European market."... "Europe is still a big market for South Africa," he said, "but we're happy to develop markets in Asia." Don Limon, which is based out of Germany and which has offices in South Africa, China and Latin America, works with citrus growers around the world to market their fruit. Schindler noted that, though Asia, and China in particular, is an attractive destination for growers, breaking into that market requires the right contacts.... "We see so much potential in South Africa – we plan to double our citrus volumes from there," he said. "We're developing markets so we can find a home for all the fruit on the tree."

[Freshplaza.com; 14 April 2014]

'Fresh From Florida' produce enjoys warm reception in South Korea

More than 100 South Korean Outback Steakhouse restaurants plan to offer a grapefruit cocktail called "Fresh from Florida." Florida Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam announced the grapefruit trade partnership in a press release Tuesday. He says Florida's grapefruit exports to South Korea have increased more than 400 percent over the past five years...Putnam says Florida citrus is sold in several Asian grocery stores and restaurants already and that South Korea is the fastest-growing single market for Florida agricultural exports.

[Freshplaza.com; 16 April 2014]

Uruguay to place approx. 9,000 tons of citrus in the U.S.

Federeico Montes, citrus advisor to the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries (MGAP), revealed that Uruguay expected to place between 8,000 and 9,000 tons of citrus in the United States...The citrus harvest began with the Satsuma tangerine early variety... 2014 will be the first year Uruguay really starts sending shipments to said market. "The first containers of Satsuma tangerines will depart within ten days and then we will continue the Clementine variety," Montes said, adding that, "there will be a good demand because the U.S. had weather problems and wont be self-sufficient."...At present, the Uruguayan government is working to lift restrictions in China, Vietnam and the Philippines, as well as to achieve a trade flow in the so-called "American path" which includes countries such as Colombia, Panama and Mexico, which are in the fruit's way en-route to the United States.

[Freshplaza.com; 16 April 2014]

Falling citrus consumption in Europe

Citrus export figures have fallen, which contrasts sharply with the upward trend registered in previous years...The main reason lies in the weather conditions, which are generally at the root of the deterioration in the fruit's trade (low calibres, creasing, cracking, etc.)...The weather also had an impact at the destination markets, as this winter was not cold in Europe, and low temperatures are what stimulate orange consumption....Another element that had an impact on orange sales was the supermarkets purchasers use of diseases like creasing to push prices down; a strategy they learned from Spanish traders, who use it to increase their sales volumes by putting their competitors' fruit down, but which eventually turned against them.

[lasprovincias.es; 11 April 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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