

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (20)

John Edmonds (6 June 2014)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Argentina citrus facing estimated 50-60% drop in lemon volume

Tucumán citrus farmers are already harvesting the first fruits that will either be devoted to the processing industry or be subject to a certification process to make it comply with all the requirements stipulated by SENASA for the export of fresh fruit to the international markets, some of which have quarantine restrictions, like the European Union and other nations with similar regulations. The truth is that producers always expect a good harvest campaign in terms of quality and volumes to cover both the fixed and variable production costs, which have greatly increased in recent months, and to be able to make a profit and achieve some stability over time. The problem is that Tucumán's current campaign is exclusively characterised by quality, as the volumes harvested won't be even half as large as usual for the region. According to estimates from technicians and experts, the drop in lemon harvest volumes this season (May-August) will be greater than 50% and even close to 60%. The sector will be profoundly affected by this, as the decline is very significant considering that Tucumán normally exports around 270,000 tonnes of fresh fruit and devotes one million to the processing sector. This year's production has been estimated at around 600,000 tonnes, and fresh fruit exports will continue to be made to ensure the market's sustainability. This implies that some 170,000 to 180,000 tonnes of fresh fruit will be exported. For this reason, the processing sector will be left with just around 400,000 tonnes. This situation will have a strong social impact, as it entails a huge reduction in the need for labourers, whose number is usually of around 30,000 per year. Despite these drawbacks that the sector will need to overcome, the ongoing consequences of the damage caused in recent times by bad weather conditions should also not be overlooked...

[La Gaceta; 3 June 2014]

USA: FDA approves definitely tagged laser in citrus

The medicines agency and power of the United States (FDA) has recently approved labeling laser in citrus, they has taken five years for the adoption of this new technology. But it has also requested agency approval for use in all types of fruits and vegetables. The company Natural Light Labeling System has received approval from the FDA for the use of the labeling laser system patented in all varieties of citrus. The system offers the maximum guarantee of traceability of food, is permanent, non-transferable, perfectly readable and tamper proof. This technology was unveiled a few years ago, and even in 2013 spoke of imminent approval, however, it has been needed a little more time to formalize and given green light. All the tests have been successful, there have been no unwanted effects by the use...

[Abc.com; 27 May]

Spain: Citrus prices down by up to 40% this campaign

Spanish orange and mandarin producers are about to wrap up a campaign considered "very bad" due to falling prices and especially to the consequences of droughts. The agricultural organisations ASAJA, COAG and UPA and the cooperatives have stressed that the lack of rainfall has led to smaller calibres and the spread of diseases, coinciding with a moment of low demand and low returns for the growers. Citrus producers have highlighted that the results have been especially bad in oranges, while in some cases, mandarins did a little better. Spain, a global leader in the marketing of citrus fruits (oranges, mandarins, lemons and grapefruit), produces around 5.5 million tonnes, of which over 60% are intended for export. The main production areas are Valencia, Andalusia and Murcia. "The campaign has not been good. It would be necessary to conduct an individual analysis for each sector, but the main problem has been the lack of rainfall, which increases costs for the provision of water and irrigation," explains the technical manager of Fruit and Vegetables of Valencian Cooperatives, Enrique Bellés. Bellés pointed out that the mandarin harvest "has been a little more satisfactory than the orange harvest." Droughts have caused skin dehydration and cracking and has resulted in an abundance of small calibres, explained the head of ASAJA's technical services for Fruits and Vegetables, José Ugarrio. In Valencia, the president of Ava-Asaja, Cristóbal Aguado, said that the situation in the plantations, as a result of dryness, is probably "the toughest in the past 150 years." COAG's head of the citrus sector, Paco Gil, said that droughts are not the only reason for this "terribly bad" year, as prices, in his opinion, have been "disastrous" and "ridiculous," especially in the case of oranges, with growers receiving between 6 and 7 Euro per kilo.

[Freshplaza.com; 4 June 2014]

Russia claims Egyptian oranges pose danger

Specialists of relevant surveillance service of the Novorossiysk port, in the Russian Federation, suspected that a consignment of fresh oranges from Egypt did not meet phytosanitary requirements. Laboratory tests of orange samples revealed the presence of live larvae of dangerous insects - fruit flies, which are included in the list of quarantined objects. Such objects should have been identified by regulatory authorities prior to departure from the territory of the exporting country. The whole citrus consignment, weighing more than ninety tons, was returned to Egypt in accordance to Russian Federation phytosanitary regulations, where the import of contaminated agricultural products is prohibited. Authorities say that this is not the first case where Egyptian partners failed to meet their obligations. In the first five months of the year agricultural products imported from Egypt have not met Russian standards more than 20 times. Only citrus has been shipped back; a total of 1200 tons.

[Freshplaza.com; 4 June 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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