

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (31)

John Edmonds (25 August 2014)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Argentina: All Lemon finished the 2014 campaign with a 45% decrease in exports

All Lemon ended the 2014 season with a lower export volume and with optimal quality fruit as a result of the intensive controls it carried out. All Lemon, the Argentinean lemons for export seal of quality, is in its final weeks of the campaign, which was characterized by having a lower fruit volume than the 2013 season but a better quality. Hence it was well received by customers around the world. "Exports in 2014 will have dropped by more than 45% when compared to 2013, mainly because of the heavy frost in 2013's winter in the plantations of Tucumán, and the severe drought between spring and midsummer. Altogether, exports will amount to approximately 145,000 tons of fruit. This drop in volume made it hard for us to meet the requested volumes, but we believe that next season will be better and everyone will be able to enjoy our lemons," said Martina Corneille, from All Lemon.... ALL LEMON is developing one of its most ambitious plans: promoting and encouraging a greater consumption of lemon worldwide via a campaign that, for the first time, will be directed to the end consumer. "We want to tell consumers about the lemon's ample health benefits and great nutritional value so that they know about everything they can do with the lemons and incorporate them into their daily lives throughout the year. We want to help improve people's quality of life by bringing them closer to a product that has no waste or contraindications," Corneille said. The campaign will be implemented once the 2014 season comes to an end via various interactive initiatives on the web and social networks. Then, it will be held throughout the year...

[www.freshplaza.com; 21 August 2014]

Spain: European Commission leaves out oranges and mandarins

Last Monday, the European Commission approved the new list of products eligible for support to palliate the effects of the veto imposed by Russia on the import of certain products from the European Union and the United States. In the list, citrus fruits, which are an essential product for Valencian growers, have been omitted. The decision from Brussels to exclude Valencia's main horticultural product has led to indignation among the professional associations. "This patch to the problem is a mockery to Mediterranean agriculture," said the president of the Valencian Growers Association (AVA), Cristóbal Aguado. Although Russia is not a big market for Spanish citrus, 75% of whose production concentrates in Valencia, the fact is that a significant growth had been registered in recent years, with Russia being one of the countries with the highest growth potential for the sector. According to data from last year's campaign, 2% of Valencia's total citrus exports, worth over 2,000 million Euro, were shipped to Russia. This figure, which entailed 40 million Euro in revenue for Valencia's growers, was almost 20% higher than in the previous campaign. The consequences of the ban go beyond the money that will no longer be made, as attempts can be made to re-allocate this volume in other countries. The point is that in order to establish a marketing network in a new country it is essential to invest and consolidate each operation with every new campaign. With this year's citrus season about to start, the Russian market remains a mystery to Valencian growers, who are studying ways to bypass the ban on the import of European oranges ordered by the Russian government. One involves using countries not affected by the veto as initial destinations from which to try reaching their clients.

[www.freshplaza.com; 21 August 2014]

Brazilian authorities approve GM fruit fly trials

Genetically modified fruit flies deliberately engineered to kill themselves off could help save fruit crops by controlling the pest population without the need for pesticides. That's the assertion of Oxitec fruit fly team leader Dr. Martha Koukidou, who spoke with www.freshfruitportal.com about the benefits of introducing these flies into the agricultural sector. In opposition is policy research and public interest group GeneWatch...The National Technical Biosafety Commission, a multidisciplinary body that advises the Brazilian government on biosafety matters, has given the green light for the Oxitec netted field experiments. The U.K. pioneer in controlling insects that spread disease and damage crops is now putting together further work before those trials actually happen. Koukidou explains how the current line of defense against pests like fruit flies is insecticides, but the project's aim is to reduce this usage and save crops as well. The Oxitec GM fruit flies have a gene which interrupts female development and will only reproduce male offspring... "In the case of fruit flies, it is the females that cause damage to agriculture by laying eggs into a fruit... "We believe that this is one of the most environmentally-friendly techniques one can use because it's totally species specific, does not rely on any chemicals, and does not leave any residue in the environment, the method is self-limiting."...GeneWatch director Dr. Helen Wallace has a very different opinion, believing that it's impossible to predict the long-term outcome possibilities of releasing genetically modified fruit flies into the environment and how, over a period of time, the pests will naturally evolve a resistance to dying off and quite possibly get into the food supply...

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 22 August 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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