

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (13)

John Edmonds (8 May 2015)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

"South African citrus exporters avoid EU as much as possible, but can't do without"

The South African citrus season has started once again. "There is a good citrus harvest on the trees in South Africa, albeit with smaller sizes, but larger volumes," says an importer. The hot topic in recent seasons was the discovery of Citrus Black Spot (CBS) and the measures are hovering over the market once again this year. According to the citrus buyer the imposed CBS measures aren't simple, but are doable. "CBS is a political problem, as in the last century not a single tree in Europe has been affected. Despite this, the Spanish lobby was so strong that these measures have been taken. It's expensive for the South Africans and difficult for us, but enough South African citrus will once again make its way to Europe, also through re-export to Spain, as long as it's declared somewhere else."

"You can see the South African growers trying harder and harder to meet the demands laid out. Especially at first, people will do anything to avoid Europe. You can already see with lemons the people are sending as much as they can to the markets outside of Europe. A grower with the full citrus package won't send his first lemons to Europe, as if there is a CBS find there will be immediate action and he won't be able to send the rest of the citrus to Europe either. But Europe is such a big client that they do need us. And a little less being sent from South Africa to Europe isn't even that bad a development for the market situation," observes the importer. Last week the first red Star Ruby grapefruit from South Africa arrived in the Netherlands. "Unlike last year, where there was enough Turkish and Israeli grapefruit on the market, the South African product is linking perfectly to an almost empty market. We expect a good start to the new season. The opening prices are around 15/16 Euro. South Africa will send as much grapefruit as possible to other destinations like Asia and Canada first of all, but in the end quite a lot of volume will come this way. Hopefully this will happen structurally and not arrive all at once. France in particular is a big grapefruit buyer. Around 50% of the volume goes there and Russia is also a big customer. So far not that much fruit has been packaged and the market will remain at this level for the next few weeks. Grapefruit will be available until September."

[Freshplaza.com; 7 May 2015]

Please report poor treatment and wage violations, says Citrus Australia

A representative of Citrus Australia has called on people to report to the Fair Work Ombudsman if they see any activities that resemble the types of behavior shown in the recent Four Corners report into labour abuse on the country's farms. Citrus Australia's regional chair for South Australia, Con Poulos, told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) the issue was a concern. "We need three, three-and-a-half thousand workers over the next six months and a lot of them are 417 backpackers that come through, so I'm a little concerned," Poulos told the broadcaster, referring to this year's harvest in the Riverland region... "The horticulture industry has got to be united on this because it is important that we keep attracting these workers especially to a region like ours..." "People have ample opportunity to earn good money, well above the minimum wage," Poulos was quoted as saying.

[Freshfruitportal.com; 7 May 2015]

Less Florida grapefruit coming to Europe

...The Florida grapefruit season is almost over. Michael D. Schadler, the International Marketing Director from the Florida Department of Citrus (FDOC), has announced that the weather during the growing season has been favourable...However, the harvest volume is 10% lower this season than last year due to citrus greening...Sales to Europe is a challenge. This is mainly due to the exchange rate...Michael says that sales to Europe have fallen approximately 10%. This is equivalent to the decrease in production...France is the biggest market in Europe. Approximately 50% of all the grapefruit that is sent to Europe is consumed by the French. Other important markets include the Netherlands, Belgium and the United Kingdom. Poland, Sweden, Denmark and Switzerland are also interesting markets for Florida grapefruit...There is some competition from Israel, Turkey, Mexico and Spain...

[Freshplaza.com; 1 May 2015]

Egypt: Orange growers protest against low prices

Orange growers in some Egyptian cities, including Kafr El Dawar, Obouhms, and Nubaria, have shown extreme anger over the Government's failure to solve the current export crisis, stressing that they were determined to uproot trees to compensate for the losses they have suffered this year, while others have been forced to bury the crops with sand after failing to sell the fruit in local markets. They point out that the local market is not large enough to absorb the entire orange harvest and have had to resort to natural juice factories for the disposal of their crops, stating that its price paid dropped to 0.25 pounds per kilo (0.03 Euro), compared to the 175 pounds (20.52 Euro) per kilo reached in previous years...

[Freshplaza.com; 1 May 2015]

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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