

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (38)

John Edmonds (30 October 2015)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Texas Rio Red grapefruit available now through April

"Shipment of Sweet Scarlett grapefruit started about 10 days ago," says David Krause with the Wonderful Company. The company farms over 10,000 acres of the Rio Red grapefruit variety in the Rio Grande Valley in South Texas. "We anticipate this year's supply to be similar to last year," mentioned Krause. "It's the second year for the Sweet Scarlett brand and reception has been great. Retail trade is very happy as we are promoting a citrus category that was in decline," declared Krause. "The consumer has forgotten about grapefruit and we are increasing awareness and trying to bring the consumer back. This is a slow process, but we are working hard to bring the consumer back and get the younger generation to incorporate this healthy citrus variety in their diets." Traditionally, the older generation has been the larger grapefruit consumer and the Wonderful Company is focused on building a new consumer base... Each year for the next three to four years, the Wonderful Company will be planting 1,000 to 1,500 combined acres of Texas grapefruit and oranges...

[Freshplaza.com; 29 October 2015]

Spain: Citrus harvest down 20%

The high temperatures recorded in May, June and July and, to a lesser extent, the reduction of the number of hectares devoted to the production of citrus in Valencia, will result in a 2015/16 orange, mandarin, grapefruit and lemon campaign with around 20% lower volumes than those recorded last year. The regional estimates early in the season were down by 22.3% (3.05 million tonnes) in Valencia, by 11.2% (1.73 million tonnes) in Andalusia, by 23.4% (722,758 tonnes) in Murcia and by 5.83% (35,392 tonnes of oranges and lemons) in Catalonia. The Andalusian Councillor of Agriculture, Carmen Ortiz, recently announced that Spain's total citrus production in the 2015/16 campaign would amount to about 5.7 million tonnes (-19.2%). The regional surveys conducted in July and August reflect a commitment to these crops in Andalusia (85,000 hectares), with new varieties, as well as reductions in Valencia (by 162,000 hectares, -2.02%, due to abandonment or conversion to kakis or pomegranates) and Catalonia. The deputy general manager of Anecoop, Paco Borrás, described the decline in the harvest as "within normal limits" and confirmed "an improvement in the quality of the fruit." The cooperative is consequently confident that "this citrus campaign will be better than those of the last three years." Anecoop accounts for about 30% of the total domestic revenue, 217.6 million Euro in 2014, and produces citrus in Valencia, Seville, Murcia and Almeria. For Borrás, this campaign could bring the "recovery of varieties like the Navelina and Clemenules" and has "good prospects" for sales in Europe now that "we have found alternatives to the Russian market, with new overseas markets that we believe are here to stay."...The head of UPA for citrus, Rafael Cervera, stressed that this citrus campaign "will yield enough fruit, but not excessive volumes." He recalled that Spain exports an average of 4.6 million tonnes per season, devotes another million kilos to juicing and domestic consumption amounts to about 600,000 tonnes. In Spain "the yield per hectare has increased" and "growing habits are changing with the switch from traditional varieties (Navelina and Clementine mandarins) to others more accepted by the market, including extra-early clementines or late hybrid mandarins.

[Freshplaza.com; 28 October 2015]

U.S.: Paramount Citrus to plant seedless lemons in 2016

Paramount Citrus is gearing up to plant significant acreage of a seedless lemon variety next year, which the company's head believes will be 'phenomenal' for food service applications. Speaking to www.freshfruitportal.com at last week's PMA Fresh Summit in Atlanta, Georgia, president David Krause said the entity had exclusive U.S. marketing rights for a variety originating from Australia... "It's a naturally seedless product, not genetically modified. There are a couple of different varieties, from South Africa and Australia, and the strain that we're going to get is from Australia." Plantings are set to go in the ground across Mexico, and California's Ventura County and Central Valley in order to achieve a year-round supply... "We've seen enough to know that we're going to be pretty confident in it, so we're going to roll out a couple of thousand acres," he said... The first commercial volumes are expected to be available in around seven years' time... Aside from seedless lemons, Paramount Citrus is also planting around 1,000-1,500 acres of citrus in both Texas and California annually. The Texas plantings are largely made up of oranges and Sweet Scarlet-branded red grapefruit, while in California the focus is on mandarins. The company is also set to plant a new early Navel variety in the Golden State, which Krause described as 'unique' to the industry... With the harvest for Paramount Citrus' 2015-16 season already having begun, Krause said the warm temperatures over the summer were lifting fruit quality and bringing the campaign forward... "The impact for us is we're early, as early as we've been in the last several years. With California's second ever confirmed detection of citrus greening disease, or HLB, having occurred in July this year, the industry is on high alert...

[freshfruitportal.com; 29 October 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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