

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (2016_3)

John Edmonds (28 January 2016)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South Africa: Citrus season too early to call

It is still a bit early to be predicting the effect of extreme heat and drought on the citrus volumes in South Africa but it thought that next year's fruit (2017) is more likely to feel the effects than this year. However the pre-Christmas hail in Hoedspruit will reduce volumes of predominately grapefruit and Valencias by 3-4 million cartons. Justin Chandwick, CEO of Citrus Growers Association said that the Eastern Cape was not seeing any problems for the citrus just now but the Western Cape is coming under a bit of pressure due to the heat and lack of water and the effects of this will be seen in next season's fruit set. "There are mixed messages from the various regions as to how much water there is, all the citrus is under irrigation and it comes down to the allocation of that water, some areas are already down to 50% of the normal allocation," he explains. "The growers up in the north feel it is too early to call, there is also the forecast of heavy late summer rains. If you have late summer rains and still have the heat units you will still get some sizing up of the fruit. It is too early just now to start predicting what the volumes will be, we will know more in March just before the harvest starts." [Freshplaza.com; 26 January 2016]

FLIA 2016: Outspan character tells zesty 'seed to plate' story

South African produce giant Capespan sits alongside nine other nominations for the Fruit Logistica Innovation Award (FLIA) 2016. As part of our ongoing series, www.freshfruitportal.com takes a closer look at the promotional character for one of its fresh fruit flagship brands, Outspan. Meet Outspan Sam, a fun character promoting 'top of mind' awareness for Capespan consumers whilst educating children on South African citrus. Outspan Sam narrates a series of fun and educational videos telling the story of Capespan's citrus, taking viewers on a journey which blends animation with real life footage from South African farms and elsewhere. "The Outspan Sam digital campaign focuses on the production process from 'Seed to plate'," says a Capespan spokesperson... The campaign focuses on the natural and healthy environment of the product and the care that is taken to grow, select and pack citrus as well as compounding Outspan's heritage dating back more than 75 years. "Consumers today are very focused on food safety - especially in Asia - and the natural goodness of a product like fresh fruit." The campaign also educates children on the seasonal aspect of fruit and how this impacts the availability and sourcing of fruit globally to ensure that they can enjoy the product all the year round." Consumers can access the clips through QR codes applied to packaging and in-store point of sale material. [Freshfruitportal.com; 27 January 2016]

Hard times for Moroccan tomato and citrus production

Morocco's two main agricultural export products, tomatoes and citrus fruit, are losing ground. Citrus fruit has seen its export share compared to volume produced fall to 25% from 40% 5 years ago. Moroccan citrus has been banned from entering the USA by health authorities. Officially, the ban is due to health reasons (a cargo of clementines containing larvae from Mediterranean fruit fly) but some believe it to be a protective measure for Californian oranges and clementines. Meanwhile, it will be harder to stock European shelves with Moroccan citrus fruit as the warm temperatures in Europe have led to a higher European production... [Freshplaza.com; 26 January 2016]

Early end for Spanish clementine exports to US

The mild winter has brought an early end to US-bound citrus exports from the Spanish port of Castellón this season, according to a report in El Periodico Mediterraneo. Fricasa, the coldstorage terminal at the port from where the fruit is stored and loaded, said the unseasonably high temperatures had resulted in the region's main clementine variety, Clemenules, spoiling on trees, preventing shipments to the US port of Philadelphia from continuing through January, as it had in previous years. The trade has been in decline for some time as US importers increasingly favour late season Southern Hemisphere clementines over Spain's early offering. Figures from the Institute of Foreign Trade (Icex) show that between October 2014 and January 2015, 32,520 tonnes of citrus were shipped to the US from the port of Castellón – way below the 75,000 tonnes shipped at the beginning of the 2000s. In the four seasons since 2010/11, volumes have dropped 32 per cent. Initial figures for 2015/16 show that this trend is likely to continue: shipments during October stood at 2,091 tonnes, a 28 per cent decrease on the previous season. This is partly due to the fact that no Marisol clementines were exported from the province for the second consecutive year, having lost out to Southern Hemisphere supplies. The number of vessels chartered this season was lower than in previous years, but Fricasa claimed that the volume of fruit on each was higher [fruitnet.com; 22 January 2016]