GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (2016_4)

John Edmonds (5 February 2016) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Spain: Lemon harvest estimated to drop by another 17%

AILIMPO's current lemon harvest estimates for the 2015/2016 campaign predict a production of 710,000 tonnes in Spain; a figure 35% below that of last year, when a record (and thus, exceptional) production of 1,100,000 tonnes was achieved. In September, AILIMPO had already estimated a 23% drop in the harvest due to adverse weather conditions during the flowering and setting stages in spring 2015, which mainly affected the late varieties. These data confirm, on the one hand, that the reduction in the harvest takes place mainly in the second part of the campaign, and on the other hand, that the Fino lemon harvest has fallen because of the development of the fruit's calibres, which has not gone as expected due to the warm temperatures, lack of rainfall and the early harvest at the start of the season. Regarding the development of the campaign, AILIMPO stresses that the good farming practices carried out have resulted in an excellent quality production, with a sufficient supply to properly meet all demand. However, the volume available for the processing industry is much smaller, with a 75% reduction from the start of the campaign up until December. Given these updated estimates, the Spanish lemon season is expected to finish earlier than last year, and as a result, there should be an early start in the European import of lemons from the southern hemisphere (Argentina, South Africa, Uruguay, etc.), which are under official controls from the EU to prevent the entry of pests, especially CBS/Black spot, canker, greening disease/ or Thaumatotibia leucotreta/False Codling Moth. Furthermore, exporters in the southern hemisphere are not allowed to use guazatine as post-harvest treatment, given that it is a banned phytosanitary product in the EU with an MRL (maximum residue limit) of 0.05 mg/kg.
Ailimpo will confirm the final balance of the campaign on Tuesday 30 August 2016.
[Freshplaza.com; 29 January 2016]

Chinese mandarin export to Indonesia peaks

The import of Chinese citrus into Indonesia has increased over the past weeks. This February 8 celebration of the Chinese New Year haS prompted traders to bring in much larger volumes of mandarin oranges and other sorts of citrus fruits from overseas. The price of oranges, including those originating from ‘kumquat’ and ‘chusa’ citrus trees from China is normally cheaper than similar products from other countries like the United States, Australia, Pakistan and New Zealand. This is according to Efrizal, a senior customs and excise official at Surabaya’s Tanjung Perak Port, as reported on Friday (29/1) by Detik.com. This had caused the smuggling of oranges, Efrizal said while adding that Indonesia currently levies a tariff of 20 percent on imported citrus.
Earlier reports said that rising imports of oranges during Chinese New Year in Indonesia had been due to the limited supply of local products.
[Freshplaza.com; 1 February 2016]

Abandoned Californian citrus groves destroyed

Officials in San Bernardino County are bulldozing dead, dying or abandoned citrus trees as they pose a serious threat to nearby commercial citrus groves, due to the Asian citrus psyllid. The county warned owners about the threat of infestations in December, but after no response, took action. The trees were removed under the authority of the state Food and Agricultural Code, which allows neglected or abandoned orchards that harbor agricultural pests and diseases to be declared a public nuisance and removed at the owner's expense.
With hundreds of citrus acres abandoned statewide, Alyssa Houtby of California Citrus Mutual said, "We've been working on this issue extensively the last few weeks… *[agalert.com; 2 February 2016]*

Medfly scare prompts U.S. ban on Moroccan citrus imports

The U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) has announced it will prohibit imports of Moroccan tangerines, clementines, mandarins and sweet oranges as of Feb. 8. The decision was made after live medfly larvae was found on commercial consignments of cold-treated clementines on Jan. 13, during a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) at the port of entry in Philadelphia.
Cargo bound for any U.S. port of entry will be allowed to enter the country if it has an onboard date that is no later than Jan. 21, has successfully undergone cold treatment and past inspection prior to Feb. 8.
"APHIS is also prohibiting overland in-bond transit movements of tangerine, clementine, mandarin, and sweet orange fruit south of 39° latitude and west of 104° longitude in the United States," APHIS said.
"These prohibitions apply to all importation and movement, including commercial and non-commercial cargo, passenger baggage, international mail, and express courier shipments."
[Freshfruitportal.com; 3 February 2016]

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