GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (2016_14)

John Edmonds (15 April 2016) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Organic growers in South Africa used as scape goat as a result of EU-protectionism

"On Thursday April 14, Dutch daily paper Trouw published an opinion article by Eosta's founding director Volkert Engelsman. In the article, Engelsman claims that organic citrus growers in South Africa are being used as a scape goat in an attempt to get rid of European import restrictions imposed on South Africa…"For three consecutive years the EU has used the citrus fungal disease black spot as a reason to constrain imports from South-Africa…it's obvious that the EU really wants to protect Spanish growers from their largest competitor. The South-Africans now want to sacrifice their organic growers, in a desperate attempt to get the issue under control…An international scientific panel concluded in 2013 that the fungus does not spread in area's with a Mediterranean climate and therefore constitutes no threat to citrus growers in Europe. Nevertheless, despite this clear conclusion the EU continues to apply restrictions on South African citrus. The case becomes even more absurd when you consider that there have been many more occurrences of black spot on citrus imports from South America than from South Africa. In 2015 there were 87 cases ("hits") on citrus shipments from Argentina and Uruguay, against only 15 hits for South Africa. But only the South African growers have been confronted with export restrictions, always around the start of the European citrus season. The costs of risk management, monitoring and market loss have risen to ridiculous amounts, all at the expense of growers…On April 15, DAFF and the CGA are meeting with EU representatives in Brussels to discuss the black spot situation. If the EU does not yield, DAFF and CGA are threatening to go to the WTO and sue the EU for protectionism. In any case the organic growers will have lost their 2016 exports. This is an enormous blow that comes on top of millions in costs that were already incurred. What should really be done? The EU should fully acknowledge that black spot occurrences on lemons constitute no threat at all to European growers, as scientists agree. Otherwise the most sustainable growers in South Africa will suffer unjustly.
[Freshplaza.com; 14 April 2016]

U.S. lemon market access, CBS controls on the agenda for San Miguel

…San Miguel's commercial manager for fresh fruit Walter Ojeda aims to make the most of a wider lemon market window this year…Ojeda said his country's lemon production would likely only rise slightly this year by 5-10%, but…more volume will be up to export standard." Argentina can manage to export 250,000-300,000 [metric] tons (MT) of lemons worldwide and last year they were 190,000MT. That wasn't because there was a big fall in production, but in yields for export," he said"...the market is also looking better and with Argentina's new president Mauricio Macri the sector faces a much more open and simplified operating outlook." Argentina usually sends 60-70% of the lemons it exports to Europe…What we're hearing from Turkey is that they'll finish a bit earlier than what was expected and compared to last year, and the Spanish production will less than last year when they had record production…We're trying to start sending [fruit] in weeks 16-17. "San Miguel and other Argentine citrus companies could have even started earlier to capitalize on this window if it weren't for heavy rainfall over the last three weeks…We sent a bit, starting with the Russian market and Asia, but we had to stop because there were three weeks of rain that didn't allow us to work…San Miguel also has citrus operations in South Africa, where the company is "solidifying" its presence…as well as in Uruguay…
[www.freshfruitportal.com; *15 April 2016]*

Market share of Syrian citrus in Russia may reach 10% this year

The Director of Agriculture in the Syrian province of Latakia, Mr Munther Kheirbek…pointed out that Syria's citrus fruit exports to Russia reached a volume of 8,445 tonnes since the beginning of the season…Igor Yakovenko, general manager of the Russian Dello Ports Corporation, which handles the loading and unloading of Syrian oranges and lemons, reported that Syria is still unable to fully replace Turkey's citrus exports to the Russian market…while "Turkey's withdrawal from the Russian market gives Syrian citrus a competitive opportunity, the Syrian produce is different in terms of both taste and varieties compared to the Turkish, so consumers first need to become familiar with them…
[arabic.rt.com; 11 April 2016]

Limoneira launches South Africa business

California-based citrus and avocado business Limoneira has announced the formation of its South African business, Limoneira SA, as part of its 'One World of Citrus' model to supply high-quality citrus year round. Limoneira has also partnered with South African-based Re:inc to form Real Citrus, which will manage packing and sales opportunities in the region. Together, the companies will manage sourcing, packing and sales, with citrus to be sourced from South African growers, packed locally and the marketed globally, Limoneira said in a statement released 12 April.
[Fruitnet.com_Americafruit; 12 April 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
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