

GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (2016_38)

John Edmonds (29 September 2016)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

RSA citrus finishing well in US

Summer Citrus from South Africa (SCSA) is approaching the end of a strong growing season with steady volumes of Navels and Midnights available until the end of October. The last conventional vessel will arrive at the Port of Philadelphia during the week of 26 September, concluding this season's shipments for SCSA. "Each year, our goal is to provide superior quality citrus to the US market that compliments local production and availability," said Suhanra Conradie, CEO of Summer Citrus from South Africa. "The market has been unique this year with local production running later than expected and other Southern Hemisphere shippers coming on strong, but we've stayed the course on our shipping volumes and have been successful in continuing to grow our customer relationships." To support the strong growing season, SCSA held its first consumer campaign this summer, which included a digital promotion, influencer partnerships and social media outreach to raise brand awareness and promote in-season citrus options.

[www.fruitnet.com/americafruit; 22 September 2016]

U.S. Worst-case citrus scenarios explored

BARTOW – Florida orange production could sink by another two-thirds in the next 10 years if better solutions to the fatal bacterial disease citrus greening don't arise. That's the worst-case scenario presented Tuesday to the Florida Citrus Commission in a new, long-term citrus production forecast by Marisa Zansler, chief economist at the Florida Department of Citrus, and Tom Spreen, emeritus professor of agricultural economics at the University of Florida and a department consultant...Spreen presented three forecasts based on different computer models of the future, including one based on no research breakthroughs on greening and no change in current production trends...The pessimistic model projects Florida growers harvesting 27.3 million boxes of oranges in the 2026-27 season. That compares to 81.6 million orange boxes harvested in the recently completed 2015-16 season and 242 million boxes in 2003-04, the last season unaffected by greening or hurricanes...But the most optimistic scenario makes some big assumptions, including investing at least \$500 million in planting new trees at a 255 percent replanting rate over the number of trees lost each season, he said. Growers would need to sustain that rate every year over the next decade...Even at that aggressive replanting rate, Florida growers would produce just 100 million orange boxes in 2026-27, or less than half the production 12 years ago...

[www.theledger.com; 22 September 2016]

Spain: Hail damages could hit €10M for Valencian growers

Citrus, grapes and persimmons were among the worst hit crops from a hailstorm that hit Spain over the weekend, according to the Valencian Farmers Association (AVA-ASAJA)...The worst hit areas were between the regions of Tavernes de la Valldigna, Cullera, Favara and Llaurí, with an estimated €6 million (US\$6.76 million) in losses and 2,500 hectares hit by hail stones, especially in citrus where experts observed damage to the trees, heavy defoliation and fruit falling to the ground...

[freshfruitportal.com; 26 September 2016]

Opinion: California produces stellar citrus crop against the odds

...This year's crop estimate for navel oranges is down almost 15% from last year but last year was one of the largest crops in history...This season it appears an "average" size crop is waiting to be picked...Lemon numbers are solid and high demand promises some good revenue for producers... we are also harvesting a few million more cartons of grapefruit...But it is one of the most expensive crops to farm in the annals of our great industry. Government-imposed costs have exploded. In the past 10 years, according to the University of California, they have risen 88%...By the time July 4th rolls around we should be done, a bit exhausted and hopefully profitable.

[freshfruitportal.com; 26 September 2016]

South African teen wins Google prize for orange peel innovation

A 16-year-old South African schoolgirl has won the grand prize at Google's science fair for using orange peel to develop a cheap super-absorbent material to help soil retain water. Kiara Nirghin beat students from around the world for a \$50,000 (£38,000) scholarship with her "fighting drought with fruit" submission...Ms Nirghin, a student at the Anglican Church-founded St Martin's High School in the main city Johannesburg, said three experiments over 45 days resulted in her coming up with the "orange peel mixture" as an alternative to expensive and non-biodegradable super-absorbent polymers (SAPs)... "The product is fully biodegradable, low-cost and has better water retaining properties than commercial SAPs. The only resources involved in the creation of the 'orange peel mixture' were electricity and time, no special equipment nor materials were required," Ms Nirghin added in her online submission. The student, who was awarded the prize at the annual fair in California, said she hoped it would help farmers save both money and their crops. The competition was open to children from the ages of 13 to 18.

[www.bbc.com; 28 September 2016]