GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (2016_40)

John Edmonds (18 October 2016)

Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

"Drop in lemon prices due to panic of Dutch importers"

At the end of August/beginning of September, the prices of lemons decreased. During the whole Argentinian season, the prices were extremely high, right until there were multiple volumes. "In a few weeks the prices were halved, from 30 to 15 euros per box," says Peter Maes of Zeghers. It was not just the extra volumes that made the prices drop, because the sales were good, according to him. "It should never have dropped this much. Some Dutch importers panicked and this is the result. Some were even selling at silly prices, which was definitely not necessary."

Right now, the Argentinian season has finished and this week the Spanish season will start. "In general, we're satisfied with the past season and we are looking forward to the new Spanish season. We are not sure about the volumes, but we expect the harvest to be larger than last year. What the prices will be, we cannot say. I do not expect them to be as high as during the summer months. The consumers are fed up with paying so much money for lemons."

[Freshplaza.com; 10 October 2016]

Uruguay produces 4.3% more citrus

According to projections released by the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries, the current orange, lime, tangerine, and grapefruit harvest in Uruguay indicates that the overall citrus production this year, where the growth of the orange and lime production stands out, will be around 263,000 tons, i.e. 4.3% more than in the previous harvest…The report states that the harvest will yield approximately 263,000 tons, a significant increase over the 252,037 tons collected last year. According to the report, there will be 135,000 tons of oranges, 88,000 tons of tangerines, 39,000 of limes, and more than 1,000 tons of grapefruits…Preliminary estimates indicate that the country's exportable volume this year will amount to 100,000 tons of citrus, i.e. roughly 38% of the total citrus production…

[Freshplaza.com; 10 October 2016]

Russia lifts ban on Turkish citrus, stonefruit

Russia has dropped its ban of various key Turkish produce items, almost a year after the restrictions were put in place due to a military jet being shot down by the Mediterranean country. The ban was implemented in January this year, and applied to produce items including tomatoes, oranges, grapes, plums, peaches, apricots and strawberries…The development comes just a day after Turkey and Russia struck a historic pipeline deal on Oct. 10 to carry natural gas beneath the Black Sea before it reaches Europe…

[freshfruitportal.com; 12 October 2016]

More Turkish lemon shipments intercepted

The European Commission has revealed that four batches of Turkish lemons were prevented from entering the European Union in September following the detection of chlorpyrifos residues in concentrations that were double the MRL established by EU legislation. One batch was rejected in Greece and three in Bulgaria…"These four health alerts notified through the European Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) database confirm the deficiencies in the official Turkish control system regarding the commercialisation and use of phytosanitary products, and provide key information for distribution chains and European consumers by highlighting the issues facing Turkish lemons for failing to meet the EU food safety standards."

[www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit; 13 October 2016]

South Africa: Pure fruit juice may come under sugar tax

Pure fruit juice may be added to the list of drinks expected to face a levy under a proposed tax on sugary drinks, South Africa's Treasury has said. Reuters reports that in his budget speech in February, Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan proposed the tax on sugary drinks to be implemented in April next year, aimed at fighting growing obesity in the continent's most lucrative market for Coca-Cola. Health campaigners have welcomed the tax, citing obesity in South Africa, where 42 percent of women and 13 percent of men are categorised as obese. The proposal initially exempted beverages containing natural or intrinsic sugars found in unsweetened milk and milk products and 100 percent pure fruit juices from the 20 percent tax, but officials have recently reconsidered their decision citing similar health risks to drinks with added sugar. "Many health experts argued that 100 percent fruit juice should also be subject to the tax, as the natural sugar levels it contains have the same or very similar negative health consequences as that of sugar added in soft drinks," the National Treasury said in an emailed response to Reuters. Chairman of the South African Fruit Juice Association, Johan de Kock, said the big difference between fruit juices and some of the other beverages is that fruit juices contain a lot of nutritional value in vitamins and minerals. "We believe the health benefits of 100 percent fruit juice outweighs the fruit sugar that it contains," de Kock said, adding that his group had not been formally informed about the tax on pure fruit juice. The Treasury said it will debate the proposed tax, including the inclusion of pure fruit juice, during a meeting in November. If the proposed law is passed, South Africa will join Mexico, France and Hungary in introducing taxes on sugary drinks to fight obesity. Britain also plans to launch the tax.

[Freshplaza.com; 18 October 2016]