GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (2017_3)

John Edmonds (27 January 2017)
Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South African relief and anger at Spanish citrus allegations

The South African Citrus Growers Association (CGA) has expressed relief and anger at the admission of the Spanish Citrus Management Committee (CGC) that there were no South African citrus on the shelves of Spanish supermarkets during December 2016. Spanish growers' union Unió de Llauradors alleged that "bad quality" citrus from South Africa was putting pressure on Spanish citrus growers. The CGC now says that the oranges were erroneously labelled as South African and were, in fact, of Spanish origin. The South African Citrus Growers Association CEO, Justin Chadwick, calls the allegations "a slap in the face" for South African growers. "We're very proud of our product and well-known for good quality citrus. A lot of growers were very upset." "We were very surprised at the allegation since our citrus reaches Europe before 15 October and our last Navel consignment by mid-September already. It would be very strange if oranges that old were still on the shelves since Spain produces excellent citrus themselves," says Deon Joubert, CGA envoy to the European Union. "However, it is a big concern for South Africa that such a mistake could occur at pack-houses where labels are printed electronically. It's difficult to see how this could have happened accidentally and one wonders if there was any intentional act here to stir up emotions between SA and Spain." If the mistake was the result of negligence, someone should be held accountable for the impact it has had on the reputation of the South African citrus industry, Chadwick says. Joubert adds that South African citrus imports to Spain complement the local growing season and keeps citrus on the minds of local consumers year-round, thereby benefiting the Spanish citrus industry and that South Africa still considers Spain an excellent trading partner.
[www.freshplaza.com; 20 January 2017]

Australian citrus exports hit record numbers in 2016

Trade data released this week for the period January-November 2016, confirm that the 2016 season was another record year for Australian citrus exports. Total citrus exports until the end of November were just under 220,000 tonnes to a value of $335 million. Citrus Australia Market Access Manager, David Daniels, said this represents an increase (in volume) of 10% for the same period last year. "However, in value terms, this represents an increase of 24%," he said…This is due in part to a more favourable exchange rate but we are also seeing exporters focus on high-value markets with an outstanding crop this season." As predicted, the China market has continued to grow with a volume of 40,000 tonnes at a value of $A72 million. "We have also seen growth in Japan of around 25% to a value of $A53 million…"Despite some serious regulatory challenges, Indonesia really fired this year with volumes around the 13,000 tonne mark." The Philippines and Canada have been two recent surprises with trade volumes around 6000 tonnes in each market. Thailand has become a strong market for Queensland Murcotts with volumes of just under 8000 tonnes. "This highlights the importance of Free Trade Agreements. This season was the first season with no tariffs or quotas since the FTA entered into force a decade ago…
[citrusaustralia.com.au; 26 January 2017]

Ambitious growth in store for Israeli Jaffa Orri mandarins

…Israel's season for Jaffa Orri mandarins is running a week earlier than normal and projections are for volumes to rise 50% to 135,000 metric tons (MT) in 2017. In a release, the Plant Production and Marketing Board of Israel said harvests began in mid-December, allowing for fruit to be on shelves by Christmas.
"We set ambitious goals to increase Jaffa Orri export volumes in 2017, and hope to double exports of the fruit by 2020," says Israel's Plant Production and Marketing Board head of the citrus sector Tal Amit…The board estimates production will reach 200,000MT in 2020, compared to 90,000MT last year.
"This significant increase in the Orri harvest is a direct result of improving quality in cultivation, and in attaining better crop protection during growth," Amit explains…Jaffa Orri is exported worldwide to 45 destinations. Most of the crop is exported to the European market (78%)…18% of the fruit is sent to North America and 4% to Asia Pacific.
[Freshfruitportal.com; 26 January 2017]

U.S. puts Argentine lemon import access on hold

Just days after Donald Trump's inauguration as president, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has issued a stay on a controversial rule to allow Northwest Argentine lemon imports into the U.S…APHIS said its decision to issue a stay of 60 days was in accordance with guidance from the White House on Jan. 20. Juan Luis Fernández, Minister for Economic Development in Tucuman – the main province where Argentina's lemons are grown – said the decision was a "normal transitionary measure". "What has happened is a suspension of any type of agreement in all aspects of the United States administration by effect of a rule signed by the new president, Donald Trump, for which those agreements that haven't entered into force remain suspended for a period of 60 days and should be revised by the new administration," Fernández was quoted as saying…"It's important to note the technical aspects which were the subject of discussion these last few years were clarified and resolved between the phytosanitary organizations of the United States and the Republic of Argentina, which are difficult to reverse."
[Freshfruitportal.com; 23 January 2017]