GLOBAL CITRUS SCAN (2017_9)

John Edmonds (16 March 2017)
Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South Africa: Citrus exports forecast to rise across the board in 2017

The Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) has forecast year-on-year export volumes to rise across all categories for the 2017 season, with the most significant increases for Valencias, lemons and grapefruit. In an estimate presented to the country's Citrus Marketing Forum last week and seen by Fresh Fruit Portal, the organization estimated a 19% increase in Valencia orange exports to 50 million cartons. This compares to 42 million in 2016 and 52.7 million in 2015. Southern Africa's largest producing region for Valencias – Letsitele – is expected to see exports increase 18% to 11.8 million cartons…Navel oranges…exports estimated to grow by 1% year-on-year to 26.3 million cartons. The increase is due to an increase in late Navels slightly more than offsetting decreases to early Navels and Cara Cara…The CGA also estimates lemon exports to jump 16% to 17.5 million cartons. For the previous two seasons, total lemon exports were registered at 15.1 million cartons. All growing regions are expecting an increase in lemon volumes, with the largest growing area – the S.R. Valley – set for a 16% increase to 8 million cartons…Grapefruit exports are forecast to rise 14% year-on-year to 13.8 million cartons, putting it back at similar levels to the 2015 and 2014 seasons…The 2017 industry estimate also pegged the soft citrus export forecast at 13.2 million cartons, representing an 8% year-on-year increase from around 12.2 million cartons last year. All cartons are equivalent to 15 kilograms except for grapefruit cartons which are equivalent to 17 kilograms.
[Freshfruitportal.com; 10 march 2017]

International demand may lead to citrus shortages in Australia

According to Citrus Australia, the recent increases in international demand of Australian mandarins, consumers could see a shortage of the fruit in the coming years if local production isn't expanded. "At our current planting rate, we are going to have an issue where we do not have enough oranges to meet demand," Marketing and quality information manager Nathan Hancock said. "Just based now purely theoretically with the model we are using, we can see that if we were not to plant any more oranges in the next few years, we will be starting to affect our ability to supply our current markets, and at the moment we are trying to grow our markets. There is real opportunity for clever planting of certain varieties." He also sees this rise in demand as a positive if the Australia's citrus industry invests in other varieties like easy peel mandarins which have developed a growing popularity with consumers.
[Freshplaza.com; 10 March 2017]

Turkish citrus season slowed down by market trends and heavy rain

The Turkish citrus season is currently taking on a slow pace due to adverse weather effects and the current market trends…"The citrus season is still running, as the weather conditions have improved in the last couple of days, but it has slowed down a lot," says Coskun Eren of the Turkish export company Eren Tarim…"Russia still has a ban on trade with Europe. This means that Turkey has become the main supplier for Russia at the moment…The season for Turkish Valencia oranges had to deal with frost damage. Even though the season has only just begun, it's hard to find healthy produce…Though this leaves ample opportunity for a competitor like Egypt, Coskun isn't too worried. "European markets aren't interested in Egyptian citrus because of reliability issues..." The Turkish lemon harvest has just finished, as has the season for grapefruit. The export of citrus will last until the end of April or the beginning of May, though the export volumes will be limited…
[Freshplaza.com; 14 March 2017]

First Ever Gin Made from Citrus

"It began with a German missionary, Mr. Rottcher, who had no wine for communion so he decided to make his own out of oranges," explains Frank Theron from Rottcher Distillers. Mr Rottcher began Rottcher Wineries in 1916 in Greytown when he needed wine for 'nagmaal' and there was a shortage of grapes. He experimented a little and found he could make wine from oranges and so the Winery began. The business was bought and sold a few times and eventually moved to the Lowveld in 1959. "I was head hunted for a job in the Lowveld and when the time came to go back I said no ways," says present owner Frank Theron. So in 2012 he bought Rottcher Wineries and has begun making a much wider range of products, the most recent of which is gin…"This is the first ever gin to be made from citrus," explains Frank proudly. This means it is orange based and not just infused with an orange flavour. "I double distil and infuse botanicals such as cinnamon, coriander, granadilla and anise." Frank makes three different kinds of gin: an Orange Clear, an Orange Cloudy and a Clementine Gin. The Clementine gin is specifically made from Clementine fruit and has a very distinctive flavour…'The best way to serve my gins is not to drown them in tonic," says Frank. "I recommend half tonic, half soda and then add strawberry and black pepper or rosemary and cucumber. Or neat on the rocks with a sprig of rosemary," he adds. Frank is passionate about his job and goes on to show me what else he makes. "The Rottcher wines are more like dessert wines. Drink them as a dessert wine or else with a spritzer," he explains. "I also use them in cooking." I first got to taste the delicious Limoncello at the local Saturday morning Bagdad Farmers Market as an ice-cold slush. "That sells very well on a hot day,' says Frank with a smile. You can also buy Mampoer and Clementine Wine…
[www.countrylife.co.za; 7 March 2017]