

Global Citrus Scan (2017_15)

John Edmonds (26 April 2017)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South African Navel exports from Eastern Cape possibly 50% down

South Africa, the biggest exporter of Navel oranges in the Southern Hemisphere, has a problem: the skin of early and mid-season Navel varieties are splitting on the underside and there is an unprecedented level of fruit drop; so much so that Eastern Cape growers reckon there might be up to 50% or even less class 1 and class 2 Navel oranges for export. Some in the industry are predicting a drop of 4 or 5 million 15 kg export cartons from the original 26 325 830 carton estimate. "It's a disaster. In my 19 years in the industry I have never seen anything like this," says Snyman Kritzinger of Grown4U in the Gamtoos Valley, Eastern Cape. Hannes de Waal, managing director of the Sundays River Citrus Company says that it's the first time in living memory that something like this has happened on this scale. Madeleine Ludwig, technical manager of Patensie Citrus in the Gamtoos Valley confirms the incidence of splitting, much higher than usual, in the orchards of their producers. Piet Smit, producer in Citrusdal, Western Cape and from Favourite Fresh Export, concurs that he has never seen it this bad, although it doesn't seem as acute there as in the Eastern Cape. FreshPlaza has spoken to growers in Limpopo and the Senwes region who confirm that they haven't seen the same problem on their Navels, so it appears to be restricted to the Western and particularly the Eastern Cape... On the up side, however, Kritzinger says that the internal quality of their Navel oranges is fantastic with good colour... "We've alerted our clients to the problem with the Navels and we'll focus on the emptier markets, like the Middle East... Piet Smit adds that they can see an increase in Navel demand in the run-up to Ramadan in the Middle East... National extension manager of CRI Hannes Bester is of the opinion that the reason can be found in extremely high temperatures and low atmospheric humidity during the flowering time in October last year which adversely affected cytokinesis (cell division) within the rind. Hannes de Waal from the Sundays River Citrus Company (SRCC) also mentions that where they normally get some rain during October, there was none last year... On a general note, De Waal is happy to note that there's almost no overlap between the Northern and the Southern Hemisphere's citrus seasons this year and says they're expecting a strong orange season. Smit of Cedar Pack expects a good season in the UK and the EU where markets are empty, adding that they're looking forward to an exciting season.

[Freshplaza.com; 25 April 2017]

Ailimpo warns of crowded EU lemon market

...The latest forecast from Ailimpo points to a harvest of 300,000 tonnes in 2017 – a 55 per cent increase on last season's 193,680 tonne crop... Ailimpo's director José Antonio García warned that... the European market was likely to become "extremely competitive" in the coming years during the summer months. Argentina is expecting a full crop of 1.5m tonnes now that production has fully recovered from the devastating freeze of 2013... The 2017 campaign has got off to a strong start, with prices averaging €0.60-€0.70 per kg... Nevertheless, Ailimpo warned that prices would deteriorate once Argentine lemons arrived on the market...

[fruitnet.com/fpj; 24 April 2017]

Chile exports the first clementines to US a week early

According to information provided to SimFRUIT by Chile's Citrus Committee, the Chilean citrus season began a week earlier than the previous season, on week 15, with the first shipment of clementines... The Citrus Committee expects Chilean citrus exports will increase by 3% in the 2017 season, amounting to around 256 thousand tons. Of this total, 43% would correspond to clementines / mandarins, 29% to oranges and the remaining 28% to limes... clementine exports would amount to 42 thousand tons (-2% compared to 2016) and the country would export around 67 thousand tons of mandarins, 26% more than in the previous season.

[Freshplaza.com; 25 April 2017]

"South African grapefruit arrives on empty market"

The South African grapefruit season is about to start for VerDi Import. "We expect the first arrivals of Star Ruby next week. The grapefruit arrives on an empty market, because Spain and Turkey finish the season this week, and the Florida season also ends earlier," says Conrad Rijnhout... "Quality is looking good. Because of a better harvest, we expect slightly more volume than last year. The majority of the volume will consist of sizes 45/50... "The consumption of grapefruit remains stable in any case, and even appears to be recovering again somewhat."

[Freshplaza.com; 24 April 2017]

"Uruguay relatively small player on global citrus market, but of great importance to us"

Last week, the first Urud'or Satsuma tangerines from Uruguay arrived at Jaguar... Uruguay is a relatively small player on the global citrus market, but it's a large one to us," says Eddy Jager... "We expect a regular harvest with normal sizes from Uruguay. That's much more favourable for sales towards European retail than last year, when mostly small sizes were harvested... Considering South Africa's tangerines are a bit smaller, Uruguayans are hoping to have an advantage. Prices started at a decent level, and we hope to retain this..."

[Freshplaza.com; 25 April 2017]