

Global Citrus Scan (2017_18)

John Edmonds (19 May 2017)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Perfect storm of climatic conditions caused Navel splitting

A perfect storm of unfavourable climatic conditions during fruit set and fruit development was responsible for the disastrous splitting of Navel oranges evident this season in the Eastern and Western Cape, says Hannes Bester of Citrus Research International...Navel growers in the Eastern and Western Cape expect losses of between 30 and 50%, if not more in some areas. "There were temperatures of over 40°C with very low relative humidity of 7 or 8%, coupled with warm and high wind speeds, which all drew moisture from the flowers and fruit. This occurred during early cell division and as the fruit increased in size during subsequent cell enlargement, the rind split open." Furthermore, navel ends are particularly large this year, a common tendency under very high temperatures, and this exerted more pressure on the rind. "Last year we saw the same phenomenon on fruit in the Karino area, outside Nelspruit, and this year it's in the Eastern Cape, particularly the Sundays River Valley, and to a lesser extent in the Western Cape." "We're always busy with research on how plants could be assisted to put up more resistance to stress conditions. There's never a silver bullet but a combination of factors, like hormone treatments and more effective irrigation methods and other products under evaluation can be employed to ameliorate the effect of such conditions on plants," says Bester.

[Freshplaza.com; 18 May 2017]

Chilean citrus grower finds the bright side from recent weather problems

Intense rains in the northern Chilean region of Coquimbo have led to significant damages...the situation has also led to harvest delays. But for Ulises Contador...the refilling of water reservoirs could lead to a horticultural resurgence in an area that has been in a state of drought for the last six years...with the drought many avocado orchards have been ripped out – close to 70% – and more citrus fruit have been planted...there are currently 1,244 hectares of lemons planted in the region...there are also 1,054 hectares of oranges and 2,630 hectares of easy peelers... "We were right in the middle of the clementine harvest and now in May we were going to start with lemons, but until now we've haven't been able to pick anything. He said there were also concerns about oleocellosis...in the area. He said while the region's industry probably won't achieve the 26% increase previously forecast, the damages probably won't be "so strong"...

[Freshfruitportal.com; 19 May 2017]

China: South African grapefruits go on sale

...Grapefruits from South Africa are arriving on the Shanghai market this week and they are now being sold...Following the official start of the summer in Shanghai, the sale of oranges is booming. This week, the US late-season navel oranges were continuously at a high price...The Egyptian summer oranges, which have been in a very stable position during the whole season, are continuing in the same way this week. Their price is fixed at 150 RMB (an example is No 64)...the sales situation of the South African oranges that just arrived on the market is only average. As a result, the price of 360 RMB they had at the beginning on the week has dropped down to 300 RMB by Sunday (example is No 45). The sales speed has also slowed down. The main reasons are the high price, but also apparent problems with the quality of the early-season oranges. Because the harvest period was early, the outward appearance and the taste of the oranges still have to mature further...

[Freshplaza.com; 18 May 2017]

Spain: "Competition from Argentinian lemons helps us improve"

This year's Verna lemon season is just starting in Spain, and according to companies such as Juanito Fruit, "the price is about 0.35 Euro higher than that of the last Primofiori." According to Juanjo Cárcel, commercial manager at Frutas Juanito...The difference in terms of volume is a bit exceptional this year, as the numbers indicate that there will be between 40 and 50% more than last year; however, "we should clarify that last year there was a considerable shortage of lemons," affirms Juanjo...the weather has been favourable so far this year and "large calibres are expected; 2, 3 and up to 4," explains Juanjo. Therefore, comparing it with the previous year, "we expect a totally normal Verna lemon campaign...The arrival of the first noteworthy amounts of Argentinian lemons, scheduled for June, will cause the market to diversify...At the moment, Argentina is the main competitor in the Spanish lemon market, although we believe that this competition is good, because it helps us improve," explains Juanjo.

[Freshplaza.com; 17 May 2017]

EC includes Argentine citrus in its measures against black spot

The European Commission (EC) amended Decision 2016/715 to include Argentina in the countries (Brazil, South Africa, and Uruguay) that need to comply with special measures when exporting their citrus fruits to the EU to prevent the introduction and spread of the "Phyllosticta citricarpa" (black spot) within the Union. The new regulations - the Implementing Decision (EU) 2017/801, which was published in the Official Journal of the European Union (EUTL), stipulate that the measures on Argentine citrus fruit shipments will start applying from the 5th of June...

[Freshplaza.com; 15 May 2017]