

Global Citrus Scan (2017_20)

John Edmonds (2 June May 2017)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Argentine citrus forecast down

Heavy rains and flooding at the end of last year and beginning of 2017 will lead to a 10 per cent drop in Argentine citrus production this year according to the latest forecasts released by producer federation Federcitrus. The estimates have put the dampeners on what was shaping up to be a promising season thanks to the reopening of the Brazilian market after an eight-year hiatus and the end of the US ban on lemon imports. The 2017 harvest is expected to weigh in at 2.6m tonnes compared with last year's 3m-tonne crop and the 10-year average of 3.5m tonnes...

[Fruitnet.com/Americafruit; 1 June 2017]

South Africa: Limpopo citrus packhouse gains highest BRC grading

South Africa's Naranja Packers recently received the highest grading granted by the U.K.'s leading retail group and the British Retail Consortium Accreditation (BRC). The Limpopo-based citrus packer received a Blue Rating from the Tesco supermarket chain and an AA grading from the BRC...

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 26 May 2017]

Authorisation for planting of up to 1,000 hectares of Cambria oranges in the Mediterranean

Genesis Innovation Group...plans to start marketing licenses for the planting of up to 1,000 hectares of Cambria oranges in the main Mediterranean countries...So far, it has been produced mainly in South Africa, where there are currently more than 1,500 hectares planted...Now, after the development of the first major plantations in Spain, Morocco and Israel, with more than 300 hectares already planted between the three countries, the variety is strengthening its position in the European market during the Northern Hemisphere season...The total amount of hectares of this variety planted in the world amounts to 2,000, with about one million trees. All of this is due, among other things, to its harvest period...as it reaches its optimum level of maturation between March and April, with the possibility of extending the harvest until May in the Northern Hemisphere, and from August to October in the Southern Hemisphere...Moreover, this originally South African variety has the typical characteristics of the Navel group, such as ease of peeling and total absence of seeds...

[Freshplaza.com; 26 May 2017]

South African grapefruit exporters not rushing things during peak season

"The European market is emptier than we expected, with many South African producers sending to Asia/southeast Asia or the Far East. Apart from remnants from Spain, Israel and the USA, we're about the only ones with grapefruit at the moment," says Nico Kotze, head: marketing and sales at Bonaire Fruit. "After 2014, which was a poor year for grapefruit, it's amazing to see how it has turned around. Grapefruit and grapefruit juice consumption is a bit of a health trend in the world now. France is traditionally a strong country for our grapefruit, along with other Mediterranean and Baltic countries. All markets seem to be on consistent price and volume levels which is positive for the industry as a whole."...

South Africa is currently in its grapefruit supply peak, primarily due to production in Limpopo Province, but these days some of the fruits are left on trees into July if markets are soft ("the least expensive storage space is on the tree" says Jan-Louis Pretorius, chair of the CGA's grapefruit variety focus group) instead of rushing to harvest and shipping as soon as possible. In 2014 much larger grapefruit volumes from South Africa would've reached markets by now but more attention is now paid to reading the markets...

[Freshplaza.com; 26 May 2017]

South Africans take positives from FPI

...South African fruit is becoming better known in India and continued participation at FPI is seen as an indication to traders that the country is serious about supplying the Indian market...The CGA and the Fresh Produce Exporters' Forum (FPEF) were able to do presentations to the international audience to showcase SA and our fresh fruit industry.

"Besides a large population (1.3bn), including a younger generation which makes up 64 per cent of the demographic, what seems to keep surprising experts is how the younger generations are buying and consuming very differently to older/traditional means," the CGA said. According to the delegation, growers and exporters noted some important trends. "Mobile technology is playing a huge role in shifting patterns by providing information to consumers cheaply and abundantly," the group pointed out... "With mass information flows, branding is important as a sign of consistent quality and hygiene (food safety)," the group continued. "E-commerce has huge potential and key players like big-basket are seeing fresh produce sales expand rapidly." Attendees were however reminded not to ignore the traditional marketing channels. "There seems to be some new interest and hope for greater grapefruit imports, although this is off a very small base," they added. "It is critical to build long-term partnerships with buyers, be it for joint promotions or for working through issues that crop up during the course of the season." The CGA said it should be noted that other competing campaigns (e.g. Washington apples or Belgian pears) are spending considerable amounts on promotions and they are extremely well funded programmes.

[www.fruitnet.com/Eurofruit; 22 May 2017]