Global Citrus Scan (2017_40)

John Edmonds (13 October 2017)

Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Morocco: "We expect between 25 and 30% less citrus"

Morocco has started harvesting and selling citrus in the international market with its early clementine varieties, such as the Bruno. This campaign, the weather conditions have not been ideal, because it has not rained enough. That is why "we expect our citrus production to fall by between 25% and 30% compared to last year," explains Issam Mounir, of the company Overseas Market. According to its estimates, the Moroccan firm expects to have about 500 tonnes of this clementine variety, and although this is less than last year, "we can say that production is gradually increasing under the government's Maroc Vert program, thanks to which the acreage is expanding…

[www.freshplaza.com; 17 October 2017]

Argentina's citriculture is experiencing a boom

…"The citrus sector is the leading employer in the country's primary food production, we employ far more people than the extensive grain producers," said Jose Carbonell, president of Federcitrus, the association that brings together entrepreneurs and producers of Argentina's fresh citrus fruits…The main export destination is the European Union, but there's also has a strong presence in Canada, the East, and Eastern Europe (Russia and Ukraine have been very important customers for many years). "We have been able to undertake a task of opening new markets thanks to the accompaniment of the Government. Some openings have been very publicized, like the opening of the American market for our limes, and others have been less known, such as the opening of the Vietnamese market, the reopening of Indonesia, or the first exports of oranges to South Korea," he stated. Argentina is also trying to access the important Chinese market and working very insistently to recover Japan. "The great challenge for the entire sector is to win over the Latin American market. In that sense, the opening of Mexico and Brazil this year has a lot of significance and a great projection for the future," stated Carbonell…

[www.freshplaza.com; 17 October 2017]

U.K.: Tesco to sell green soft citrus in fight against food waste

Tesco says it has become the first U.K. supermarket to start selling green satsumas and clementines, in a bit to cut food waste. The move has been prompted by recent higher early season temperatures in Spain which have slowed down the natural process by which the skin of the fruit turns orange. Despite the skin being slightly green the fruit is still as perfectly sweet and as juicy as when they turn orange, Tesco said. In order to accelerate the coloring process, growers have been putting the easy peelers into a ripening room, but this extra handling has led to a small amount of fruit being damaged and therefore going to waste. By taking out this stage shoppers will also be able to benefit from the move as the fruit will have an extra shelf life of up to two days meaning less potential food waste in the home. "At the moment green easy peelers fall outside of the general quality specifications set by UK supermarkets but Tesco has made the leading move in order to cut down on food waste," Tesco citrus buyer Debbie Lombaard said…The fruit will be sold as 'Perfectly Ripe Early Season Satsumas' and will cost the same as orange colored ones…

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 18 October 2017]

Australian citrus exports climb

An insatiable demand from China has propelled Australian citrus exports to record heights so far this year. Figures released by industry body Citrus Australia show overall export sales generated A$277.6m until the end of August, a 23 per cent increase compared to the same point of 2016. Export volumes were up 11 per cent year-on-year, at 161,111 tonnes. Australian mandarins are proving increasingly popular with consumers in offshore markets, with 48,077 tonnes exported as of 31 August. This marks a 23 per cent increase on last year, the highest growth percentage of any citrus category…Oranges continue to be Australia's largest citrus export category by volume, with 110,528 tonnes shipped over the first eight months of 2017 (up 8 per cent on 2016), while 'other' citrus came in at 2,507 tonnes (down 37 per cent). China is now the Australian industry's biggest export market, with a total of 46,512 tonnes shipped to the People's Republic so far this year, a figure that already surpasses last year's total of 39,591 tonnes. Japan (28,214 tonnes), Hong Kong (13,338 tonnes), the US (8,520 tonnes) and Malaysia (7,299 tonnes) rounded out the top five."

[www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit; 19 October 2017]

Mandarins have become the new driver of the citrus category in California

As with other citrus production this year, mandarin volume out of California is expected to be down, growers say. But the category continues to explode in sales, often at the expense of navel oranges.

"It has eroded (navel) sales," said Randy Jacobsen, sales manager at Orange Cove, Califonia based Cecelia Packing Corp. "The mandarins have become the driver of the citrus category, whereas navels were a decade ago." Navels remain the core of the citrus deal in Arizona and California, but not the growth driver…

[www.freshplaza.com; 18 October 2017]