

Global Citrus Scan (2017_41)

John Edmonds (27 October 2017)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Jordan: Directorate of Agriculture calls for citrus harvest not to be rushed

The Directorate of Agriculture in the Jordan Valley has addressed a call to all citrus growers in the Valley, asking them not to rush to harvest their fruit before these are fully ripe, so as to ensure better marketing conditions. The Director of Agriculture, Engineer Baker Balawneh, stated that the Directorate advises producers to delay picking fruits until the rains fall, which helps in the fruit's colouring process and its ripening, making it more attractive for the consumer. He added that citrus farms are mostly located in areas of the northern Jordan Valley, with an acreage estimated at 55 thousand acres, pointing out that the fruit load of citrus trees is good and that the gradual colouring of the fruits has started already after the recent rains....

[www.freshplaza.com; 20 October 2017]

Great quality for Turkish grapefruit

Turkey is currently involved with its citrus seasons. The Turkish lemon sector started out with Enterdonat and Meyer lemons and since the 11th of October, grapefruit is being harvested as well. According to Seref In of Ekonomik Sistem, otherwise known as Eko-Sis, the quality of the harvest is excellent. "The colour and external appearance of our Star Ruby grapefruit is looking very nice this season, when compared to last year," says Seref. "Sizes are small, which is normal for both this time of year and for the Star Ruby variety itself. Volumes are higher than last year. We aim to export a volume of 3,000 to 5,000 ton per year and this year won't be any different."...All in all, there aren't really any major changes for the Turkish citrus sector when compared to previous years. "Quality is good and we're expecting high demand for grapefruit in Europe. The only difference would be the diminished volumes for lemons, as we're producing 30% less this year. But this isn't really a problem."

[www.freshplaza.com; 20 October 2017]

South African soft citrus volume ends higher than expected

The South African citrus season is almost at its very end and FreshPlaza spoke to Martina Odendaal who is chair of the CGA soft citrus variety group. The latest estimate of the current season's soft citrus volume has been updated to 13.4 million cartons, of which 13 million had been shipped by the end of week 41. It's up from 12.2 million in 2016, when almost 183,000t of soft citrus was exported. "It's no secret that there is growth in the soft citrus sector in South Africa but an awareness is being cultivated among growers in the industry to plant with responsibility," Martina says. "There is a lot of information and a lot of expertise available to growers in the South African industry. There are often road shows organised by the CGA and, with the availability of very good information, it is possible to make reliable estimates which guide our growers and exporters."...In the growth of soft citrus, there is a greater emphasis on the late varieties, specifically late mandarins like the Nadorcott, but there are also increased plantings of Tango, Leanri, Nova, Orri and ARCLS (ARC Low-Seeded) amongst other varieties. Last year's budwood sales for mandarins were close to 2 million. Early varieties like Satsumas have reliable markets and therefore she expects those volumes to remain steady. In 2016, Nadorcotts made up the largest proportion of exported soft citrus (over 3 million x 15kg cartons), followed by Nova (1.9 million) and clementines (1.69 million). This year mandarin exports rose to more than 8 million x 15kg cartons, compared to fewer than 7 million last year....She continues: "Demand stimulation; be it in the form of expanding access to new markets, improving export terms in existing markets or getting existing consumers to up their consumption by means of promotions and the like still need to be further explored. Our fruit has a good reputation based on internal quality and sweetness and we're seeing consumer consciousness growing of the high quality of South African soft citrus."...

[www.freshplaza.com; 23 October 2017]

Climate disrupts life in South Africa

The Lowveld area of north-eastern South Africa has been hit by hail as one of the most violent storms in recent history caused widespread damage in the region, as well as in KwaZulu-Natal. The area affected by hail lies mainly around Nelspruit, with growers at Malalane further down the Crocodile River not being affected. In KwaZulu-Natal, unprecedented rain in one single day caused flooding and damage in and around the city and in the port of Durban. For citrus growers in this area of the Lowveld, producing mainly navels, Valencias and mandarins, the hail is a tremendous setback as the crop for next year is now setting on the trees...The CGA's grower representative in the Lowveld region, Andrew Muller, said that assessments as to the scale of the hail damage were still underway. "It could cut next year's citrus exports from this region by around 1.8m cartons," he said. "Some orchards suffered 80-90 per cent damage."...Since hail often occurs in patches, Muller suggested caution when making early predictions...

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