

Global Citrus Scan (2017_45)

John Edmonds (20 November 2017)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

New genetically engineered virus to protect Florida's citrus come 2019

The Agriculture Department is expected to allow Florida citrus growers to start using a genetically engineered virus to protect trees from citrus greening disease in early 2019...Citrus greening has nearly wiped out Florida's citrus industry. The disease, which currently does not have a cure, has infected almost all of the state's groves over the past decade, resulting in small, under-ripe fruit...USDA is expecting Florida growers to produce just 50 million boxes of oranges in 2017-2018, 39 percent smaller than the harvest in 2015-2016. The GE virus, which would make trees resistant to the disease, is being developed by Southern Gardens Citrus Nursery.

[geneticliteracyproject.org; 20 November 2017]

584 tonnes of Egyptian produce shipped to Vietnam in two weeks

The resumption of agricultural exports to Vietnam two weeks ago has resulted in the arrival of 584 tonnes of Egyptian vegetables and fruits to Vietnam, as revealed by the Central Department of Agricultural Quarantine of the Ministry of Agriculture in an official report...183 tonnes of citrus fruits...This comes after the relevant authorities in Vietnam agreed to officially open their markets for Egyptian agricultural exports and to re-allow the import of Egyptian soybeans and citrus fruits, such as oranges and lemons. This will be an important factor in increasing Egyptian agricultural exports abroad, especially in the South East Asian region.

[www.freshplaza.com; 20 November 2017]

Israeli grapefruit season going well so far

The red pomelo and sweetie seasons are over, but grapefruit is in full swing. "The season started well, but it is slowing down now", says Oron Ziv, Befresh Europe's General Manager, about the grapefruit season. "This is normal as November is a quiet month for grapefruit." He added that he started the season with very good prices. "We will have to see if this continues. It is a long season.. We keep sending grapefruits from Israel until April." Oron says they are also starting with the white pomelo season. "Europe is no longer a player when it comes to this product", says Oron. "We cannot compete with the Chinese pomelo. He says that since Israeli pomelos are a niche product, with relatively small volumes, they go to other areas of the world. Befresh Europe exports other products too. "Dates are an important product for us," says Oron. "It has been going well so far, and we are busy trying to develop new markets for our dates." He says dates are definitely a more stable market than other crops. When asked if he saw competition growing in this market, Oron said, "I have seen a lot of new plantations in the Mediterranean, including Israel. I don't know what the future will bring, but so far it is a very interesting item."...

[www.freshplaza.com; 17 November 2017]

South African citrus industry to add new CBS mitigation measures

Spanish agricultural union UNIÓN de Llaoradors regards the increased number of CBS interceptions on South African citrus during the latter part of the 2017 season as evidence that the South African industry isn't taking the pest seriously, a claim the South African industry denies. "The industry has done a serious analysis of factors relating to CBS incidences during the 2017 season and have added two measures to strengthen the CBS risk management system to further mitigate the risk to Europe," responds a South African industry spokesperson, adding that these additional measures will shortly be communicated by the South African Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) to its European counterparts. "A comprehensive report on this matter will follow early in December." A shortage of juicing oranges due to an early end to the Brazilian season and the impact of Hurricane Irma on the Florida industry, stimulated demand for South African Valencias in Europe. South African exporters responded briskly to the unexpected opportunity, shipping volumes rising from 44.9 million cartons at the end of week 38 to 50.8 million equivalent 15kg cartons by the end of week 44...In October the South African citrus industry decided to pro-actively end the export season early in response to these CBS interceptions, saying that the decision was taken as a measure to ensure continued access in future to the European market...

[www.freshplaza.com; 17 November 2017]