

Global Citrus Scan (2018_1)

John Edmonds (19 January 2018)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Citrus greening insect advances quickly in Portugal, sparking concerns in Spain

A Valencian farmer group has sounded the alarm about the 'rapid and irrepressible' expansion of African citrus psyllid (*Trioza erytreae*) detections on citrus farms near the Portuguese capital Lisbon...The insect is one of two vectors known to carry the disease Huanglongbing (HLB) – also known as citrus greening – with the other being the Asian citrus psyllid (*Diaphorina citri*). The disease however has not yet been reported in the European Union. In a release, The Valencian Community's Unió de Llauradors i Ramaders (Union of Farmers and Ranchers) said the vector had recently been confirmed just south of Lisbon in the municipality of Almada... The group mentioned the pest first moved into Portugal in 2014 from the northern Spanish region of Galicia. "For some of the world's citrus powers, as is the case in the United States, Mexico and Brazil, HLB has caused millions in losses and even threatens the sector's subsistence as there is no known cure," the union said...

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 11 January 2018]

Turkish oranges force Egyptian Navels from Russian market

Egyptian exporters are still working with Navels. However, according to Mohamed Ghallab of the Egyptian export company AgroEgypt, the season has been challenging thus far. "The Russian market is hard. Prices for Egyptian oranges are high when compared to Turkish ones. Turkish exporters are selling lower than us, with price differences of 20% to 25%. As our oranges are very expensive for Russia, the export to Russia has slowed down. This season, we exported less than half the volume to Russia we sent last year." According to Ghallab, Egyptian exporters are forced to seek out other markets. "Vietnam has opened its market for Egyptian fruit, which is a good thing. Vietnamese importers are taking in good volumes, especially with regards to Navels. The Vietnamese market wants big sizes. We've already been working with Vietnam, also with regards to other types of fruit like mandarins and especially lemons. As for China, we only send very limited volumes, as China doesn't really take in Egyptian Navels." ...With the Navel market under pressure and markets in Eastern Europe out of the question, Egyptian growers and exporters are switching over to Valencia oranges. "During last season, the prices for Valencia oranges became unrealistically high. Growers and exporters were expecting something similar to happen to Navels. Growers are holding their fruit back and are asking higher prices. However, these unreasonably high prices for Navels are proving to be unsustainable in the future..."

[www.freshplaza.com; 17 January 2018]

Tough, and likely shorter, season for Florida grapefruit

After Hurricane Irma swept through Florida late last summer, grapefruit growers in the state are now feeling the effects. "We were devastated by the storm and were expecting a good solid year—at least a good year in the sense of where we'd been in the last two years," says G.T. Parris of Vero Beach, FL.-based Seald Sweet International. "But the storm decreased our volumes by as much as half. The quality has also been a bit down—the fruit's been beat up. So there's less fruit, the quality has been suspect and it's made for a tough season for grapefruit." David Haller agrees about the lack of supply. "Production is down as much as 50 percent since so much of the crop was affected by Irma," ...The season is likely to be cut short. Parris says that while normally growers are hitting the peaks of their season right now, some are talking about being done by the first of February. In the meantime, other regions are stepping in to supply the fruit. "Texas grapefruit is taking advantage of Florida's deficit in the U.S. and imports from Mexico and Israel are capitalizing on the shortage overseas," says Haller. Not surprisingly, this combination of events and others (Haller points to increasing grove care costs) has led to historically high pricing on the citrus. "On average, it's \$2-\$3 higher across the board. "And this has an effect on what retail does because they have price points. They know where their fruit is going to sell at. And when you start getting outside of those numbers, they pull back," says Parris...

[www.freshplaza.com; 16 January 2018]

"Spanish citrus very constant in quality"

... "The shelf life of the goods is very stable so far. It arrives beautifully and stays that way," confirms Barbara Thuy-Pichl, Managing Director of the Fruit Häusler GmbH in Immenstadt. The quality of the oranges is excellent, the prices and the availability of goods is almost the same as last year. Currently, the kilo prices at purchase vary between 1.00 and 1.50 euros and Spanish Navelinas still dominate events, at Häusler GmbH. Thuy-Pichl as well: "We especially like the 48-caliber juice oranges. Their prices are even rising slightly." ... "Demand in the clementine sector is, in my view, very constant. Since the easy-to-peel varieties have expired, the sales fell back a little after Christmas. For the leaf clementines, the demand is rather low compared to the normal clementines." Over the years, demand in the citrus area has changed significantly, according to Mrs Thuy-Pichl. "We used to market many blood oranges as juice oranges, especially the Moro in 2 kg nets. Nowadays, hardly anyone wants them." A similar development is noted by the wholesaler in the grapefruit business: in the past, there was still a great demand for white grapefruit. At the moment, almost only the rose-colored ones are being sold...

[www.freshplaza.com; 19 January 2018]