

Global Citrus Scan (2018_3)

John Edmonds (5 February 2018)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Spain lowers lemon production forecast

Spain's Interprofessional Lemon and Grapefruit Association (ALIMPO) has revised downward its lemon production forecast for the 2017-18 season. It now expects the crop to drop 8% year-on-year to 1,068,000 metric tons (MT)...Fino lemon production is expected to end up at 862,000MT, which would be 5% down on the initial forecast but 6% up on the previous season. The Verna lemon forecast, meanwhile, is down only slightly on the September estimate but remains a huge 41% lower year-on-year...The Fino lemon season is expected to wrap up at the end of April, following with Verna for around seven to eight weeks...

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 29 January 2018]

Producers pleased with first South African lemons

The first South African Eureka lemons harvested in the 2017/2018 season have started arriving in growing numbers at local markets. The fruit, coming from areas around Tshipise and Hoedspruit in Limpopo Province are looking very good...The upshot of a dry summer is low citrus black spot pressure and the early harvest is consequently very clean. On the local market, which prefers large lemons, prices are still high...but it is expected to start dipping over the following weeks as the influx of volumes takes off..."The quality is looking really good, it's a very clean harvest...The lemons are currently peaking at sizes 100 to 162, which are the preferred sizes for our markets, but there are a number of 189s and 216s which will go primarily for juicing or exported to markets for lower prices," says Erwee Topham, marketing manager at Alliance Fruit, based in Hoedspruit. "Volumes are picking up strongly and in our production areas of Hoedspruit and Letsitele...There is a definite expansion to the Far East for us in terms of marketing and the other thing is that, at this stage, we don't fit into a proper slot for the European market which still has sufficient volumes from Spain and Turkey..."He adds that traders in other markets are seeking out South African lemons. "We have a better quality fruit, higher juice content and better shelf life..." In the Eastern Cape lemons are still maturing in the orchards, with the harvest starting around Easter. Hannes de Waal, chair of the lemon focus group expects the South African lemon harvest to be a bit lower than last year. "In the Sunday River Valley we definitely had a smaller first fruit set on our trees and there's not much fruit on the new trees, but that's just how it works. For us it's still too early for a firm idea of what the harvest will bring. It's only by Easter that we'll have a feeling of where we're heading..."

[www.freshplaza.com; 26 January 2018]

Global orange production takes a tumble

A smaller crop for Brazil, the EU and US has caused the predicted global orange production for 2017/18 to fall around 4.0m metric tonnes, said a United States Department of Agriculture report released in January. Higher yields in China have helped to offset this number, but not enough to prevent a significant drop. In 2016/17, the total volume was at 49.3m metric tonnes, but unfavourable weather is likely to leave this year's total around 45.3m. The US has continued a 20-year downward trend, with a projected drop of 23 per cent in yield – totalling less than a third of what was produced a decade ago in 1997/98. Brazil is also forecast down 15 per cent and China up 4.1 per cent to 7.3m metric tonnes...

[www.fruitnet.com Americafruit; 28 January 2018]

Indonesia is lifting quota restrictions on Pakistani kinnows

Last Friday, Indonesia's commerce minister announced the lifting of quota restrictions on kinnow imports from Pakistan. An unlimited quantity of the citrus fruit can now be shipped to his nation...Pakistan exported 36,000 tons of kinnow to Indonesia -worth \$19.8 million- last year. "After the removal of quota curbs, it is expected that Pakistan's kinnow exports will increase to 60,000 tons... www.freshplaza.com; 29 January 2018]

Spanish police stops car with four tonnes of stolen oranges

This week Spanish police stopped a car in Carmona, near Seville, because the vehicle was being driven erratically. Then however, they made a fruity discovery: about 4 tonnes of stolen oranges were crammed inside the small vehicle. When police opened a door, a stream of oranges came tumbling out. The four tonnes of stolen fruit are worth € 1400...Theft of oranges is not uncommon in Spain, where farmers have even reportedly hired vigilantes to protect their orchards. A spike in the price of oranges is usually accompanied by a spike in orange thefts.

[www.freshplaza.com; 30 January 2018]