Global Citrus Scan (2018_4)

John Edmonds (9 February 2018)

Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Zimbabwe and China strike citrus deal

An agreement has been made that China will import around 45,000 tonnes of oranges annually from Zimbabwe, with trade taking place as early as June this year. The deal was solidified after Zimbabwean delegates toured Chinese citrus facilities and were able to approve the quality of their home fruit…Bulawayo 24 reported that the market value of 45,000 tonnes of oranges is in the region of US$18m. "The 45,000-tonne order is more than what Zimbabwe's citrus producers have managed to export for all citrus fruit combined, in any year previously," said ZimTrade Matabeleland regional manager, Similo Nkala. He added that The Ministry for Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement alongside ZimTrade will assist the industry in boosting local production. Zimbabwe's opposite harvesting season is a key factor in its potential for trade success. Bulaway 24 mentioned that this should prompt the country to develop a deliberate strategy for increasing citrus production. A Chinese seedling grower has offered to supply Zimbabwean farmers with citrus seedlings, should they need help with scaling up production…

[www.fruitnet.com Asiafruit; 6 February 2018]

Spanish cold snap puts citrus and veggies at risk, says Anecoop advisor

…Speaking at the media preview for Fruit Logistica in Berlin yesterday, Paco Borrás, an advisor to leading Spanish produce cooperative Anecoop, told the press that 90% of his country was covered in snow but not along the Mediterranean "where the production really is". "That is not normal, but it is true that all things have their advantages," he says, mentioning the snow brings well needed water after a long period of drought…"Then citrus has a risk," he says, mentioning the fruit can resist temperatures of between -3°C and -4°C but anything below that could result in damage. These effects would be compounded by a crop that's already lower because of the preceding drought…

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 7 February 2018]

Chile: Low chill hour accumulation could impact citrus quality for coming season

…Julio Cornejo, a citrus consultant with Agroconsultores, told Fresh Fruit Portal there had been less accumulation of cold hours this growing season. "The growing stage is a little more challenging than in other years and citrus fruits like oranges and mandarins might have lower Brix levels this season," he said. "It is likely the lemons won't be so affected, but with oranges, mandarins, and clementines we might see lower quality fruit due to the lower accumulation of cold hours, which could also cause some problems in terms of getting the fruit to color." However, Cornejo explained that these factors can be minimized with adequate farm management prior to harvest… On a separate note, the consultant said that mandarin production should end up around one-third higher year-on-year, adding that lemon exports would likely begin from mid-April. "The clementine export season should begin in the first week of May and for oranges between the end of May and the beginning of July. For the W. Murcott variety the season should begin at the end of August," he said.

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 6 February 2018]

China: Citrus greening disease causes drop of 70%-80% for Gannan Navel orange"

"…At first the three major production areas were Anyuan, Xunwu, and Xinfeng. Since 2012, however, these areas have suffered from a widespread outbreak of citrus greening disease, and in recent years their production volume has decreased with 70%-80%." This is according to Mr. Gu Yuanfeng of Shenzhen Mu Tian Agricultural Development Co., Ltd…overall production volume is relatively stable. On the one hand, Gannan Navel orange production has decreased to about 1/3 as a result of citrus greening disease. On the other hand, the Navel orange production of Hubei, Hunan, and Guangxi show significant expansion of plantations and production volume has increased substantially as a result of this expansion…"Even though the nationwide, overall surface area devoted to Navel orange production is close to 400 thousand hectares, and production volume is 7 million tons, still the industry is unable to satisfy consumer demand. This creates room for imported Navel oranges from South Africa and Egypt. The imported oranges have a clear price advantage as a result of relatively low labour and plantation costs. This has created a strange market situation where imported oranges are cheaper than domestic oranges. Still, some of the imported oranges, such as those from Egypt, cannot compete with domestic oranges when it comes to taste, sugar content, and fertilizer residues."..''The peak period for imported oranges is May to October… Many domestic plantation owners with a vision look to this gap in the market. They are currently vigorously cultivating late-maturing orange varieties to compete with imported Navel oranges."

[www.freshplaza.com; 29 January 2018]

Brazil: Pheromone identified from insect that transmits citrus greening (HLB)

Researchers grouped in the National Institute of Science & Technology for Semiochemicals in Agriculture, based in São Paulo State have identified and synthesized the sex pheromone of the Asian citrus psyllid Diaphorina citri…According to a sciencedaily.com article, it will now become possible to synthesize the substance and use it in traps to attract and kill the Asian citrus psyllid, helping control the worst pest faced by the citrus industry. In Florida alone, orange production has decreased in the order of 90 million boxes in the last 15 years.

[www.freshplaza.com; 9 February 2018]