Global Citrus Scan (2018_8)

John Edmonds (9 March 2018)

Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

New strategy to protect Australian citrus

The Australian government has launched a ten-year strategy to safeguard the country's citrus industry from pest and disease incursions. The National Citrus Biosecurity Surveillance Strategy was unveiled in Mildura today (8 March), with A$$352,000 dedicated to the launch of the initiative. The funding will cover the appointment of a steering committee to oversee the new programme and the recruitment of a national citrus surveillance coordinator. "Fruit fly and other pests can ruin fruit and kill market access for our valuable citrus industries," said Australian minister for agriculture David Littleproud. "Keeping Australia free of the bacterial disease Huanglongbing (HLB) and the insect that spreads it - Asian citrus psyllid - is a priority. Citrus canker and the nation's number one unwanted plant pest…Littleproud said the new strategy would pave the way for a nationally coordinated response to strengthening citrus surveillance by government and industry, which would be led by Plant Health Australia and Citrus Australia…
[www.fruitnet.com/asiafruit; 8 March 2018]

U.S: California Valencia orange production forecast downward

The California Department of Agriculture (CDFA) has forecast Valencia orange production down by 14% to 19 million cartons for the 2017-18 season. This forecast was based on the results of a survey conducted from Jan. 12 to Feb. 23. Estimated fruit set per tree, fruit diameter, trees per acre, bearing acreage, and oranges per carton were used in the statistical models estimating production. “The season has had mostly dry weather with occasional periods of cold and even freezing temperatures. Measurements indicated slightly above average fruit size and higher than the previous year fruit set,” the CDFA said. “Survey data indicated an average fruit set per tree of 524, a 14 percent increase from the previous year but below the five-year average of 590. The average March 1 diameter was 2.585 inches, slightly above the five-year average of 2.536.” The number of bearing acres has steadily reduced from 47,000 a decade ago to 30,000 this season.”
[www.freshfruitportal.com; 9 March 2018]

Argentina: Mandarin shipments to Europe begin next week

Next week, producers will begin to embark the first containers of about 1,000 tons of okitsu mandarins to the European market. This is the first variety of the 2018 citrus season…The okitsu variety used to be commercialized almost entirely in the foreign market, but the emergence of new varieties in the northern hemisphere and the high internal cost of the Argentine product relegated the product from Misiones…After working with the okitsu variety, they will continue with the clemenules variety, at the end of March; the nova variety in April, the nadorcott variety in May and June, and the murcott variety in July and August. The president of the citrus cooperative of Alem, engineer Carlos Satur, said the current harvest would be normal, as the plants were not very loaded. "There won't be a super production, but there is plenty of fruit," he said…
[www.freshplaza.com; 2 March 2018]

Oranges: The good-luck fruit

The Chinese New Year celebrations have just been concluded. In Chinese traditions, oranges are a popular symbol of good luck and so they are displayed as decoration or exchanged as gifts among friends and acquaintances during the 16-day festival. In 2016, China and Hong Kong were the fifth and the sixth largest importers of oranges. Together they imported 498,535 tonnes of oranges, valued at an estimated $514 million. This represented close to 10% of the total world import of oranges. The US, Australia and South Africa are the three biggest exporters to the Chinese markets. So there is a real huge flow of oranges going into China each year. Is there still room for more? Apparently there is. Intracen.org tells us that according to ITC’s Export Potential Map, the total untapped potential remaining in China and Hong Kong is around $330.1 million. This suggests that other orange-producing countries such as Egypt, Turkey and Morocco could further grow their exports by targeting the Chinese markets, with a combined untapped potential of almost $14 million.).
[www.freshplaza.com; 8 March 2018]