

Global Citrus Scan (2018_13)

John Edmonds (5 April 2018)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South African soft citrus gets underway with Satsumas

Across South Africa the early-maturing Miho wase Satsuma is being harvested in a season generally a week or two behind schedule, but otherwise it's an uneventful start to the soft citrus season....In the Senwes region producers report a better pack out percentage than last year because of less wind damage. In the Nelspruit area a hail storm at the end of December did a lot of damage, but it will be more evident on Nadorcotts and other mandarin varieties (some producers expect an 80% reduction in some Nelspruit orchards). There are also reports of hail damage in Burgersfort, where the season got off to a slow start, but some producers are already more than halfway through. In the Gamtoos Valley (Patensie) the first Satsumas were harvested about three weeks ago, a harvest that is looking good and has set everyone's minds at ease in an area functioning on a shoe-string water budget. "The size of the fruit looks equivalent to the size of last year and at Patensie Citrus we expect to have enough water to take us through to the end of the season," says Madeleine Ludwig, technical manager of Patensie Citrus. "However, the drought has an impact on all of us in the wider Gamtoos Valley and we're using water as sparingly as possible. Producers in this area are applying a wide range of strategies to mitigate the drought, like mulch under trees and prioritising high-value orchards and sinking boreholes, where possible."...She adds that they haven't seen citrus black spot in the Gamtoos Valley for a long time and now, in their fourth year of using the sterile insect technique Xsit as well as the FMS FCM monitoring service, they are completely in control of the false codling moth (FCM) population...In the Western Cape, Satsumas are coming in from the Swellendam area and here and there in Citrusdal. In the latter area, Piet Smit, marketing director of Favourite Fresh Export, reports very good colour and high sugar because of a stretch of sunny days. By the end of week 12, 57,000 x 15kg cartons of Satsumas had been shipped from South Africa, just a fraction of the 1,862,735 cartons expected of the season (7% up from last year). They go mostly to the UK and Russia, not much to the EU as yet, but figures could look quite different a week from now. Some South African exporters have removed Satsumas from their portfolio, partly because of limited marketing options for the fruit, partly because Southern Hemisphere Satsumas come under pressure from Northern Hemisphere late mandarins and partly also because the Satsuma has a tendency to become puffy when receiving a lot of rain close to harvest, rendering the fruit unmarketable.

[freshplaza.com; 29 March 2018]

China: New agency to undertake AQSIQ's role

China's highest legislative body, the National People's Congress, has approved a sweeping government restructuring plan that will affect phytosanitary watchdog AQSIQ...As part of the new plan approved on March 17, China has established a State Market Regulatory Administration (SMRA), which will merge and undertake the responsibilities previously held by AQSIQ – the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine...Mao Zhang...was appointed as the director for the new SMRA, the National Law Review reported. It said the institutional reshuffle may take several months or longer to complete....

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 4 April 2018]

U.S.: "Exorbitant" tariff increase will directly impact California citrus producers, says CCM

California Citrus Mutual (CCM) president Joel Nelsen has lamented the trade dispute between the U.S. and China that has seen the latter implement a 15% tariff on numerous horticultural imports. The tariffs, which apply to a range of U.S. produce items including California citrus, come in retaliation to President Donald Trump's new tariffs on steel and aluminum. China's Ministry of Finance announced the proposed tariffs on March 23, later confirming they had come into effect on April 2. "The decision by the Chinese government to levy exorbitant tariff increases on U.S. produce will surely have a direct impact on California citrus producers," Nelsen said...

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 3 April 2018]

Argentina leads the world's lemon market

... Argentina is the biggest producer of fresh lemons and the world's most important player regarding lemon derived or industrialized products...Besides being the main producer of this citrus it is also the leading exporter of lemon juice. According to data from the Ministry of Agribusiness, 38% of the total hectares used for growing citrus (131,000) correspond to lemon plants. According to the director of Institutional Relations of the citrus company San Miguel, Lucas Mendez Tronzo, the sector has several strengths..."We are blessed to have water. It's not an issue here," he said. Another of the sector's strengths is their location in the world. When the lemon supply in the Northern Hemisphere ends, the world is supplied by the Southern Hemisphere. Prices go up due to a lack of supply and Argentina is the biggest provider in the world. In fact, Argentina's industrialized lemon accounts for 37% of all the industrialized lemon in the world, but for 92 percent of this production in the Southern Hemisphere. For example, you need 200 kilos of fresh fruit to get a kilogram of essential oil, and 17 kilos of fresh product to make a kilogram of natural juice.

[freshplaza.com; 4 April 2018]