Global Citrus Scan (2018_17)

John Edmonds (26 April 2018) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

RSA optimistic ahead of new US citrus campaign

Summer Citrus from South Africa (SCSA) says the outlook for its 2018 campaign in the US is favourable in spite of the challenges associated with the droughts occurring in the Western Cape. The first containers of easy peelers, followed by Navels and Star Rubies, will start to arrive in the US at the end of May, with the first conventional vessel arriving the third week of June at the port of Philadelphia. SCSA held its annual planning meeting last month to review sales and marketing plans, production volumes, shipping schedules, and category trends…During the meeting it was announced that Johan Mouton was stepping down as chairman of the board and would be replaced by Boet Mouton…Karen Caplan, president and CEO of Frieda's, also led as keynote speaker about the importance of retail partnerships, innovation, and opportunities for the brand to grow in the US market.

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 20 April 2018]

U.S. citrus production expected to fall further in 2017/18

U.S. citrus production continues to decline. At the current forecast of 6.16 million tons for the 2017/18 marketing year, ERS expects the U.S. citrus crop to drop 21 percent from the previous season. The decline reflects expected reductions in national production across all major citrus commodities and overall smaller crops in the four major-producing States (Florida, California, Texas, and Arizona)…At the same time, orange and grapefruit crops are anticipated to have the largest declines in national citrus output, with reductions of as much as 25 percent and 22 percent, respectively, if realized…Florida's orange crop is expected to be the lowest of the last 75 years – since 1942. Note that before hurricane Irma began, the crop forecast in Florida was 75 million boxes. Tight supplies have pushed citrus prices higher in the domestic market. January 2018 prices for fresh oranges, grapefruit, and lemons were at their highest average levels for the month since the 1990s. The long term downward trend in orange production is largely attributable to citrus greening disease, a bacterial disease that can ultimately kill orange trees…Expectations of a larger orange crop in Brazil may prevent the growth of orange juice prices. According to the forecast of Fundecitrus, in the 2017/18 season, it may amount to 398.3 million boxes, which is 62% more than in the 2016/17 season and a quarter more than the average orange crop in the country over the past 10 years…

[freshplaza.com; 18 April 2018]

Imported citrus will land in empty US market

Mark Greenberg, the President and CEO of Capespan North America, stated in his Market Report for week 13-2018 that California citrus producers continued to face weather challenges that have slowed down the harvest, reduced the expected yield and threaten an early end to the domestic sweet citrus season. Greenberg also said that domestic Navel oranges were currently being sold at prices seldom seen in March with "40s selling at US$ 16 - 18, 48s and 56s at US $ 18 - 20 and 72s and 88s at US$ 20 - 22 (all prices FOB point of loading in California). Meanwhile, California's mandarins are selling at US$ 34-36 for 10 x 3 lbs bags. The CEO of Capespan said the market does not expect "California Navel oranges to go beyond June and that the mandarins would probably not go beyond mid-May, so expectations for the Southern Hemisphere sweet citrus market are running high."…"Import volumes will increase as we enter May and by mid-May there should be an interesting mix of easy peelers from Chile, South Africa, Peru and Uruguay with good volumes expected throughout the summer," he stated…The navel orange harvests in South Africa and Chile are running slightly later than last season and there is an expectation that there will be a gap on the US East Coast (USEC) between the end of the California season and the start of imports. "Imported navel oranges from South Africa will begin to arrive in mid-June in light volumes. But South African and Chilean navel volumes will ramp up in July to levels better able to service the market and retail programs," Greenberg states in his report. "The early start to the imported navel season should deliver value to growers and exporters not so much in the form of higher prices - although we are expecting stable and attractive prices this summer – but, rather, in the form of lower inventory build-up throughout the season. The impact of a low inventory build-up will result in the delivery of better quality to chain store customers and less shrink at retail as well as in the value adding process and distribution chain," Greenberg concludes.

[freshplaza.com; 20 April 2018]

Ivrea, Italy: World's craziest festival

Every year, the small northern Italian town of Ivrea comes under attack during the 'Battle of the Oranges'. Thousands of people come from far and wide to take part in the annual Carnevale di Ivrea. In most cases, the participating teams usually dressed up in brightly coloured medieval costumes and engage in a fierce orange-throwing fight leaving the streets covered in a thick carpet of mashed oranges. According to mediamaxnetwork.co.ke, the three-day food fight, dating back to medieval times, is basically a story about people rebelling against the cruel and tyrannical government, now transformed into a carnival that attracts hundreds of spectators every year. And -just like a real battle- participants are strongly advised to wear hats or head wraps to avoid serious injuries.

[freshplaza.com; 20 April 2018]