Global Citrus Scan (2018_23)

John Edmonds (8 June 2018)
Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South Africa: CGA slams "opportunistic political posturing" in citrus worker strike

The Citrus Growers' Association of Southern Africa (CGA) has slammed "opportunistic political posturing" taking place in the industry, which has been affected by a strike over recent days. Local media report that workers are demanding higher wages, but one of the companies affected has reportedly accused South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) of inciting workers to strike…The CGA said in a June 5 statement that it and the industry "will continue to support farm workers in raising legitimate labour concerns and – equally – protect everyone in the industry from opportunistic political posturing."…In a statement sent to Fresh Fruit Portal, SRCC marketing manager Erik Stroebel said it is very difficult to ascertain what every exporter in the Sundays River Valley would have exported this week, but explained there has definitely been a drop in exports over recent days. The main varieties being packed for export are lemons, Navels, Cara Cara and Novas, he said…
[www.freshfruitportal.com; 5 June 2018]

Citrus strike ends as farmers agree to R20 an hour

Workers in the Sundays River Valley in the Eastern Cape called off their strike on Thursday after reaching an agreement with their employers…Today's agreement was facilitated by the Eastern Cape MEC for Rural Development and Agrarian Reforms, Xolile Nqatha…On Thursday the Sunday's River Valley Citrus Producers Forum agreed to pay a minimum wage of R20 per hour, for two years, effective from 7 June, 2018. Chairman of the forum Hannes de Waal said the forum regretted the violence and damage to the farms but looked forward to "welcoming all our workers back to the farms tomorrow, Friday, 8 June."…De Waal said farmers did not recognise the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) as the official representative of farmworkers because there were trade unions and forums established by employers and employees already in the area. As a result the MEC had worked with the forum and SANCO to find a solution…
[www.timeslive.co.za; 7 June 2018]

San Miguel enters JV with La Calera

San Miguel has entered into a strategic alliance with Peru's La Calera to jointly market their fruit in the North American market…The US is set to become an increasingly important strategic market for San Miguel following last year's lifting of a 17-year import ban on Argentine lemons. With more than 3,000ha of farms, La Calera is one of Peru's biggest mandarin producers and also cultivates table grapes and avocados. Its annual production is expected to reach 100,000 tonnes this year, of which around 50,000 tonnes will be exported…San Miguel is the biggest grower and marketer of fresh citrus in the Southern Hemisphere. With nearly 10,000ha of production in Argentina, Uruguay, South Africa and Peru, it supplies more than 200 clients in 80 countries, among which the US is becoming increasingly important for its marketing strategy. The company processes 400,000 tonnes of citrus a year and in the last campaign exported 124,000 tonnes of fresh fruit…
[fruitnet.com/eurofruit; 5 June 2018]

US: Southern hemisphere easy-peeler season gaining momentum

The southern hemisphere easy-peeler season is now in full swing with arrivals steadily increasing since the beginning of the season last month…"Arrivals from Chile, Peru and Uruguay began about two weeks ago," said Fred Vandenberg of New York based Jac Vandenberg. "The first varieties included early Satsumas, Marisols, and Oro Grande, as well as the start of the Clemenules which are the original Clementine…At this point, the figures are indicating that arrivals from Chile are already up by 30 percent over this time last year. These are very early figures though and we predict that by the end of the season, the increase will have moderated to between 10 and 15 percent. What we know is that Clementine numbers will increase, particularly on the later varieties, and Murcotts from both Peru and Chile will almost certainly increase in the order of 25 percent."…With the California season finishing early this year, a gap in the market appeared, allowing for the early southern hemisphere arrivals to disembark into a strong market…We are seeing FOBs on Clementines in the US$ 36 - 38 range which is a little higher than usual. We expect the strong market to continue through June when more volume comes from South America as well as South Africa."…Vandenberg said that demand for easy peelers has grown every year, with consumers seeking them out all year round regardless of their origin…Where they are from is less important to them than flavor and quality. Therefore, the important thing is to consistently bring in tasty varieties. Once that confidence in quality fruit is established, consumers then will come back.
[freshplaza.com; 6 June 2018]