

Global Citrus Scan (2018_25)

John Edmonds (22 June 2018)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Eden Agri Citrus: black farmers assume majority share-holding in packhouse

In February this year the fortunes of a number of black citrus farmers changed for the better with the formation of Eden Agri Citrus, a holding company that now holds the majority of shares in the Eden Agri Services citrus packhouse outside Fort Beaufort. Eric Nohamba, who has been farming citrus for 26 years, is the chairperson of Eden Agri Services. Siseko Maqoma, director, says: "From the outset Shaun Brown, who was sole owner since the packhouse became operational in 2010, had a vision that we should all take ownership of the packhouse, but unfortunately when we started out none of us had capital to be part of the shareholding. We've gone to the stage now where five black farmers have taken up 70% of the shareholding of Eden Agri Services." Eden Agri Services are now made up of ten growers who deliver their product to the packhouse, which is packing clementines and navels at the moment. Approximately 75% of the fruit packed here are destined for the export market...Eric Nohamba, Siseko Maqoma and their colleagues...are beneficiaries of a privatisation scheme started almost 30 years ago by parastatal Ulimoco in the erstwhile (and ostensibly independent) 'homeland' of Ciskei, that was meant to transfer economically viable farming units to black farmers...but the actual transfer of title deeds to beneficiaries is, all these years later, still unfinished business...After dozens of meetings with government officials, there still isn't a tangible reason for the interminable delays, says Eric. ... "Through all of our trials and tribulations, at the end of the day the message is very positive: we're moving forwards, perhaps not at the rate we'd like to, due to these challenges," Siseko says. "I think the worst is over, primarily due to finding this home which is a fillip for us, an open, transparent family type structure." "Shaun really has gone out on a limb for us," he adds....

[freshplaza.com; 19 June 2018]

Which U.S. ag products could China soon hit with a 25% tariff?

China has included an extensive selection of U.S. fruit, vegetable and tree nut products on its draft list of over 500 exports on which it may soon impose a 25% tariff ... The list was published on Saturday (June 16) by China's State Council Customs Tariff Commission, in retaliation for the U.S. President Donald Trump on Friday announcing tariffs on Chinese products...Included in China's recently published draft list of 545 products that could be hit with the 25% duty next month are cherries, apples, walnuts, oranges and grapes...

[www.freshfruitportal.com; 5 June 2018]

"Difficult" Florida citrus season closes

In the last forecast update of the season, Florida orange production ended at 44.95m boxes and grapefruit at 3.88m boxes, according to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Tuesday's report marked the end of a season that began with Hurricane Irma. Florida growers reported 30 to 70 per cent crop loss after the storm's landfall on 10 September... "This brings a very difficult citrus season to a close," said Shannon Shepp, executive director of the Florida Department of Citrus... Prior to Hurricane Irma, Florida was expected to produce about 75m boxes of oranges this season, according to private estimates...

[fruitnet.com/americafruit; 18 June 2018]

Argentina: The entry of bulk citrus banned in Northwest provinces

The National Health and Agricultural Food Quality Service (Senasa) banned the entry of citrus fruits in bulk in the provinces of the Argentine Northwest (NOA) to prevent the spread of the bacterium of the HLB disease to that region."...In practice, this definition implies that the entry of unprocessed citrus fruits and certain seedlings that may be hosts to the disease is now banned in the provinces of Salta, Jujuy, Tucuman, and Catamarca. The prohibition involves all trade in sweet citrus fruits (oranges and mandarins) from the Northwest (NEA), the main producing region of this type of fruit." The NOA Region hasn't presented any positive case of HLB so far, and its location is well defined. It is isolated from other citrus producing regions by long distances," states the sanitary norm...It entered the country a few years ago through Misiones and several cases have been detected in the citrus productive areas of the NEA. The HLB also affects several ornamental species, such as myrtle or Arabian jasmine...

freshplaza.com; 12 June 2018]

Mexico: Nuevo Leon citrus fruits target Japan and Europe

In order to export more oranges and grapefruit to Japan and Europe, citrus producers from Nuevo León will start a phytosanitary pilot plan to obtain a recognition from the National Service of Health, Safety and Agri-Food Quality (Senasica) that will allow them to operate production zones that are free of fruit fly...On July 5, the producers will present their final work plan to the authorities. Hopefully, they will they will obtain the first recognition in December, and achieve optimal results in the next harvest.

[freshplaza.com; 21 June 2018]