

Global Citrus Scan (2018_37)

John Edmonds (31 August 2018)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South Africa: Citrus workers strike again in Eastern Cape

Farmworkers in South Africa's Eastern Cape went on a day's strike on Tuesday, reportedly accusing some employers of refusing to pay them the recently agreed minimum wage of R20 per hour. They also demanded the reinstatement of workers expelled during a previous strike in June and the withdrawal of a high court interdict against officials of the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO), according to the Citizen...Hannes de Waal, spokesperson for the Sundays River Citrus Producer Forum, said the march was a violation by SANCO of a High Court interdict which his organization had obtained. "A number of individuals with their own agendas" were working against the interests of both producers and employees, he was quoted as saying. "An interdict was issued against such individuals as they do not have the right to threaten workers and farmers, nor do they have the right to access workplaces. They are therefore expected to stay a minimum of 500 metres away from such places and respect the fact that they have nothing at all to do with the relationship between employer and employee." He said the forum was in contact with SANCIO leadership and had come to the conclusion that SANCO was "a great organisation with fine principles" and that this was a breakaway group...De Waal was quoted as saying: "We need to study the demands received and will certainly reply to them. It is our view that all growers are complying with the R20 minimum wage, unless anyone can prove that fact to the contrary."...

[Freshfruitportal.com; 30 August 2018]

Argentina resumes lemon exports to Japan

Argentina has exported a shipment of lemons to Japan after surpassing the cold treatment in transit controls that the Asian country demands to access its market, according to official sources...The export of Argentine lemons to Japan was formally opened in 2003, but the authorized protocols on cold treatment were inconvenient for Argentine producers, which hampered sales. Last year, Argentina exported its lemons to 52 countries for a total of 249 million dollars...

[Freshplaza.com; 30 August 2018]

Spain: Citrus campaign to start with greater volume of Satsuma mandarins and smaller calibres

The summer has not been excessively hot on the Valencian coast, with the exception of the heat wave recorded in early August, and this is having a positive impact on the early mandarin varieties Iwasaki, Okitsu and Owari. Their producers hope to recover the volumes lost in the previous campaign...The first Spanish Okitsu will compete in the European market with the mandarins and clementines from the southern hemisphere, which have better colouration and a sweeter taste. For this reason, the exporter insists on the importance of waiting for the fruit to be at its optimum point of ripeness before selling it...According to the exporter, Okitsu and Iwasaki mandarins are especially popular in markets such as Sweden and Finland, as well as in Belgium and the United Kingdom.

[Freshplaza.com; 28 August 2018]

Florida Citrus Acreage Declines Again

Florida's citrus acreage continued a long descent in 2018, decreasing 2 percent to 447,012 acres. The total number of acres is the least since the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service began keeping count in 1966...There was a gross loss of 20,114 acres in 2018, partially offset by new plantings of 12,153 acres, leaving a net loss of 7,961 acres. Grapefruit suffered the largest decline, tumbling from 36,084 acres in 2017 to 30,923 in 2018. Orange acreage dipped from 405,832 to 403,457, and specialty fruit dropped from 13,057 to 12,632 acres...Florida's citrus acreage has declined in every Commercial Citrus Inventory report issued since 1998. Losses since 2005 have been due primarily to the devastating citrus disease HLB...

[citrusindustry.net; 28 August 2018]

Calif. farm groups say mitigation measures fall short

...Western Growers president and chief executive officer Tom Nassif says the USDA's efforts "will fall substantially short of making fruit, vegetable and tree nut farmers whole for the damages...as a result of the trade war with China"... Once China and other export markets find replacement suppliers, it will be extremely difficult to dislodge them." Likewise, California Citrus Mutual reiterates concerns the group has voiced earlier that the mitigation measures won't really work for the benefit of specialty crop industries in general or citrus growers in particular. Exports of lemons and navel and Valencia oranges to China were dramatically affected in May and June as the Asian nation retaliated for two rounds of tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump, CCM explains on its website.

[www.westernfarmpress.com; 29 August 2018]