

Global Citrus Scan (2018_45)

Portia Gasa 2 November 2018)



Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

South Africa under pressure to get it right on FCM and CBS

On 24 October, officials from the National Plant Protection Organisation of South Africa (NPPOZA) of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Citrus Growers' Association gave growers, packhouses, forwarding agents, exporters and traders, an overview of the past season during the annual citrus coordinating meeting... Tankiso Mpholo, the national coordinator on citrus black spot (CBS) at DAFF, told delegates during his presentation that there were a total of 105 local interceptions of CBS during the past season on South African citrus, coming quite early in the season already. The majority of interceptions were still made on Valencias from Limpopo and Mpumalanga where a decrease was visible. There was also an increase of interceptions on lemons and grapefruit. More than a thousand orchards were voluntarily withdrawn from sending to the EU, mostly in Limpopo and Mpumalanga, a figure that is up by about a hundred over last year. "Whenever we negotiate with the EU, this is what we argue: the growers are still the biggest participants in CBS risk management, so for us this increase in orchard withdrawals is very comforting as this shows accountability and responsibility." There were two CBS interceptions which is South Africa's best performance since CBS measures have been in place but, as Tankiso noted, this figure might have been higher if Valencia exports to the EU hadn't been stopped by 22 September...

In the European Union there were nine FCM interceptions, seven made in the Netherlands and two in the UK, a huge drop compared to the 68 of last year but, however, still unsatisfactory in a zero tolerance environment. Of the nine FCM interceptions, four came from Limpopo Valencias, one from an Eastern Cape Valencia, two from Limpopo soft citrus and one each from Western and Eastern Cape navels. He showed participants an extract from a letter that South African authorities have received from the EU on this matter, which states that South Africa needs to do more to prevent a recurrence. "In conversations with the EU they've basically told us that if we can't manage it for ourselves, they'll manage it for us," he said, noting that the South African industry was under pressure to get FCM under complete control.

[Freshplaza.com; 29 October 2018]

Australian lemon growers should export

Australia is seeing an increase in lemon plantings, as well as increase from new growers entering the industry, says Citrus Australia... According to Queensland grower Michael McMahon from Abbotsleigh Citrus -part of the Nutrano Produce group- only 4% of Australian lemons are exported, and with 9% going into processing, 87% are sold onto the domestic market... The prices Abbotsleigh received in Indonesia for lemons recently was lower than the domestic market. "We still made a profit but we're thinking long-term and investing in development of export markets," McMahon told foodmag.com.au. He sees opportunities in China, Indonesia, Japan, Canada and the USA.

[Freshplaza.com; 29 October 2018]

South African lemon growth confirmed

In a year of record South African citrus exports across all categories, lemons did not disappoint. The South African lemon season is almost over, and it is clear that the category is continuing its march of volume growth. Although final exports will be slightly less than the seasonal forecast, total shipments will still be about 6 per cent more than last year's final volumes. South Africa is expected to ship 19.9m cartons this season compared with 18.8m cartons last year. It was originally thought that volumes would break through the 20m mark for the first time this year. Lemons, along with soft citrus, are expected to grow substantially in future due to recent increases in plantings.

The Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) has also indicated that the total South African citrus export crop will be even bigger than previously announced. The latest prediction places the crop at 135.6m cartons compared with the forecast of 131.7m cartons. This is an increase of 18 per cent year-on-year and a very clear indication that the industry is well on the way to exporting 160m cartons by 2025. The biggest lemon growing region, the Sundays River Valley, exceeded expectations this year with a crop of 8.65m cartons. Other regions were short of predictions.

[Fruitnet.com/asiafruit; 29 October 2018]

South African Ag Minister anticipates greater fruit exports to U.S.

South African Agriculture Minister Senzeni Zokwana has pledged his support to the fruit sector exporting to the U.S., saying there is room to grow. He made the commitment was during last week's Produce Marketing Association (PMA) Fresh Summit event held in Orlando, Florida, which brings together more than 20,000 industry participants. Speaking at the official opening of the summit, Zokwana announced that current negotiations are in the final stages for extending citrus access and granting avocado access... The U.S. indicated in June that it would soon allow citrus imports from all regions. At present only growers in the Western and Northern Cape are eligible to ship to the U.S. market. The South African Government has said exports from these areas should start in 2019...

[Freshfruitportal.com; 24 October 2018]