Global Citrus Scan (2019_18)

(John Edmonds 14 June 2019) Citrus Growers Association (CGA)

Wonderful launches seedless lemon brand

…"As the leading grower, shipper, packer, and distributor of citrus in North America, Wonderful is uniquely positioned to offer this new and innovative variety of seedless lemons," said Adam Cooper, senior vice president of marketing at The Wonderful Company. "As consumers' appetite for seedless varieties in produce continues to grow, Wonderful Seedless Lemons will disrupt the industry and become a top category driver for branded produce."…The Wonderful Seedless Lemons' marketing campaign will introduce new branded packaging creating a bigger marketplace for bagged lemons, as well as eye-catching in-store point-of-sale (POS) displays to capture consumer attention while shopping. The company says that retailers who have carried its POS have experienced more than two times lift in velocity growth versus those without. Additional marketing campaign initiatives will roll out during the brand's debut this fall.

[freshfruitportal.com; 10 June 2019]

China exerts a strong and early pull on South African navels

An Eastern Cape citrus exporter is sending more navels to China than ever before…"Our quality allows us to send more to China where there's a definite opportunity for South African fruit, albeit within the limitations of cold treatment capacity to send there," says Snyman Kritzinger, marketing manager of Grown4U in Kirkwood. "The need for fruit in China is higher than normal for this time of the season. Spain and Egypt have basically finished sending there, Australian fruit is too expensive (50 to 60% more expensive than South African fruit because of their labour costs) and with the Trump-China trade issue, Chinese buyers aren't taking American fruit." Traditionally, they send Late Navels to China because they're generally firmer and better coloured than the early ones. "This year, contrary to the North and the Western Cape, our fruit is particularly firm and the internal quality is very good. The colour isn't 100% there, but the Chinese market forgives us if colour is only 90%, due to shortages..." He sounds a note of caution, though. Packouts are poor, primarily because of wind damage and mealybug, and at Grown4U class 2 and 3 smaller fruit are sent for juice machine programmes, never for wholesale..."But unfortunately there are some people who're currently sending class 1, 2 and 3 oranges to China, without exercising self-discipline. At the moment the market is taking it because it's so short on fruit, but those class 3s are going to spoil the market in the long-term." "Price indications in the Chinese market are very good but we know what happened last year on Midknights and grapefruit. It was a sad story, a lot of tears were spilled…"It's not an easy navel year," he says…"Europe's very negative about navels. And just to give you an idea: Morocco has just started picking their late navels (Barnfields, very nice fruit, from what I've seen), waiting until after Eid, while we have also started picking. Spain will probably have fruit until week 30, staying in the market at least two weeks longer." …In this could lie an opportunity, Snyman feels, provided that navel exporters exercise patience now and wait for volumes to clear…In week27, Nadorcotts and Tangos will start… "Tangos are a week or 10 days earlier, and putting the orchards under netting makes them even earlier." "The Tangos look a lot better than last year on sizing."…

[Freshplaza; 13 June 2019]

"Good market for South African grapefruit and mandarins"

…"The market in Europe is almost empty and that is resulting in high prices for the South African grapefruit. South Africa has slowly started shipping to the EU, after sending the largest volumes to Asia and Russia. Larger batches are now being shipped to the EU, but due to the colouring and fewer kilos in the trees, this shipments have been more limited. Therefore, there will continue to be a fewer offer so good prices," says Andres Ribas van Oosterom, of Vientosur. The lemon market, however, is dealing with some challenges. "Argentina has struggled with the impact of wet weather during the summer until April and the appearance of Black Spot in the lemons, and that, in combination with the poor quality standards achieved, means not much is shipped to Europe. In the past two weeks, less than 50% of the total export volume has gone to Europe, while in other years that share has ranged between 60% and 70%," says Andres. "South Africa has shipped less than 50% of the volume that it normally sends to Europe.There are many small sizes in the production areas in the Eastern Cape, which means that people still have to wait to be able to ship larger sizes, but that will make it easier for the Spanish Verna lemons to be consumed first." Meanwhile, most of the volume of Satsuma mandarins has already been loaded. "Peru still has to make some shipments, even though there has been less interest in this variety in recent years. South Africa is again fully devoted to its Clementines, of which a lot less than previous years has been loaded so far this season. Therefore, there are not enough good Clementines in the market," says Andres…"However, the prices of the Navels here are still low. Spain has delivered a lot of Navels to the industry, and the cold stores are full. As a result, there is not much enthusiasm to ship Navels to Europe…

[Freshplaza; 11 June 2019]